

# United States Senate

September 11, 2020

Randy Kirton  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Avalon Health Care  
206 North 2100 West  
Suite 300  
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Dear Mr. Kirton:

I am writing because of serious concerns about Avalon Health Care's policies and actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within its facilities. Avalon Health Care operates three facilities in Hawaii: Avalon Care Center - Honolulu, Hale Nani Rehabilitation & Nursing Center, and the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home. Unfortunately, all three of these facilities have experienced COVID-19 outbreaks, with the most recent at the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home.

The outbreak at the state veterans home is tragic. As of today, more than 59 residents and 19 members of staff have tested positive for COVID-19 and at least 9 residents have lost their lives, with several additional deaths likely a result of COVID-19. It is increasingly clear to me that the state home is understaffed and ill-equipped to stop this outbreak on its own. In order to stop this outbreak as soon as possible before more veterans and staff become sick and die, Avalon must make sure that every possible resource is available to this facility.

In addition, given that outbreaks have occurred at all three of Avalon's facilities in Hawaii, I am alarmed that Avalon's facilities are not able to adequately protect its residents and staff. Therefore, I urge you to immediately review the practices, and in particular the staffing and infection control practices, at your facilities in Hawaii and in other states to identify and resolve any deficiencies that could result in the spread of COVID-19. Residents of nursing homes are some of the most vulnerable to COVID-19, and each Avalon facility needs to be sufficiently prepared to keep its residents and staff safe during the pandemic.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



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BRIAN SCHATZ  
United States Senator