



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**News Release**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

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Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General  
Phone: (808) 586-1500  
Fax: (808) 586-1239

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**UNLICENSED CARE HOME OPERATOR  
CONVICTED FOR ELDERLY NEGLECT**

(HONOLULU) – On November 7, 2007, Fifth Circuit Judge Randal Valenciano convicted 41-year-old Jason Craig of Kalaheo, Kauai of assault in the second degree, a class C felony, and operating a care home without a license, a misdemeanor, after a two-day trial.

Despite the fact that he was never a licensed care home operator, in December of 2004, Craig arranged to care for 82-year-old Ryoji Hirokawa, who was stricken with Parkinson's disease and dementia, at the rate of \$4000 per month. On March 28, 2005, Craig dropped off Hirokawa at his doctor's office for an appointment where his treating physician found him to be emaciated, extremely weak, and dehydrated. Hirokawa lost 20 pounds while under Craig's care. The physician also discovered a severe bed sore on his lower back and other smaller ulcers on his buttocks and shoulder. Hirokawa was immediately admitted to Wilcox Hospital in critical condition. The hospital staff determined that Hirokawa was suffering from sepsis and had had a small heart attack. Hirokawa was able to recover from his injuries after treatment at the hospital but passed away several months later at a nursing home.

Hirokawa's wife did not know Craig did not have a license and later found out that Craig had not been providing the medications to Hirokawa that she had supplied to Craig for her husband's treatment.

Craig faces a possible five-year prison term for the assault in the second degree conviction, with a mandatory minimum sentence of one-year and eight months. He also faces up to a \$10,000 fine for the assault in the second degree conviction and up to one-year jail term and up to a \$2000 fine for operating a care home without a license conviction. Sentencing is set for February 21, 2008.

For more information, contact:

Gary K. Senaga

Deputy Attorney General

Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

(808) 586-1058

[hawaiiag@hawaii.gov](mailto:hawaiiag@hawaii.gov)