

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many in our department will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Timothy H Hodgens
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many in our department will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sgt. Ricky C. Uedoi
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

From: ewilson [ewilson@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:21 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: ldecaires@honolulu.gov
Subject: Testimony to HB 1718/1719/1725

NAME: KAPENA WILSON
POSITION/TITLE: POLICE OFFICER
ORGANIZATION: KAUAI POLICE DEPARTMENT

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, February 13, 2009
TIME: 8:30 A.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 309

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

HOUSE BILLS 1718 / HB 1719 / HB1725

I am writing as a response to the above mentioned house bills as a private citizen. I joined the county police department for numerous personal reasons. One of the major reasons is job security and benefits. I could have stayed in the private sector and make more money, but I followed my heart into the career I am now in. I have made huge sacrifices for the public and my job which I passionately love. Prior to my joining, the older generation that was hired before me, when they retired, their spouses was able to collect their retirement and benefits upon their deaths. It all stopped around the time I got hired. Employees only are allowed the benefits. So, for a low pay job, the benefits are for me only. So, I try my best to stay in shape having been informed that scientific statistics shows that an average police officer only lives another 5 years after he / she retires due to the high stress they go through during the course of their career. Do I want to enjoy my retirement when I get to that time? Sure do! And for the job I do, I deserve it too! Seems like the state wants to match their program with the private sector. Now it is apparent that the state government wants to take away what is rightfully ours, what we work hard for, what no other occupation in this civilian world can imagine possible unto them physically and psychologically. Currently our death benefit is

something like \$20,000. The GI's serving in middle east are paid nearly half million in death benefits. They don't need to work till age 65 like how this state government will soon be forcing us to do. What will \$20,000 do for a family here in Hawaii should an officer or fireman die in the line of duty? Cover funeral expenses only! Sorry children, your father or mother died in the line of duty and your parent is only worth \$20,000! No you cannot collect on his /her retirement or medical either to help you through high school and / or college.

Will there be any exceptions to these house bills for emergency workers personnel? I can't fathom to picture a 65 year old police officer in uniform working the beat having to deal with criminals in their prime age of 20's. The state may see a huge increase in police officers transferring out to the mainland PD's in the near future. Imagine a 63 year old fire man having to haul a fire hose fighting fire. There may be a surge in increase of workers comp claims...an increase in accidents and / or accidental deaths. Can a human in his late 50's to mid 60's match the strength and abilities against one in his 20's - 30's ? Honestly, I can see a worker sitting behind a desk having to work to the age of 65. But emergency personnel put their lives on the line everyday, whether its fighting fires or running down criminals involved with drugs and weapons like firearms and a high tendency of violence, yet the state wants to keep us in uniform till our mid 60's? Emergency workers like it or not comes in contact with people who have infectious diseases and the risks are great. Emergency workers should be spared from these house bills and their pensions, medical, and future should be EXEMPT from these house bills. Emergency workers dedicate their much valuable lives on the front line every day. I think the state should reconsider the writing on these house bills to exempt all emergency workers affected, this includes police officers and firefighters. The Mainland is looking more promising, more money, bigger retirement, cheaper living, same benefits.....

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kimberly_Masse/LANAI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees

To whom it may concern,

I am a Police Officer with the Maui Police Department. My current position is the School Resource Officer at Lanai High & Elementary School. I have worked hard all my life and when I decided to become a police officer at age 31, I chose to do so for the retirement benefits. I served four years in the U.S. NAVY and have worked other jobs along the way. I chose this **career** so I wouldn't have to worry about my retirement years.

I am proud of what I do and I work hard every day to make our world a better place. It would be an injustice for you to take away our benefits so you can fix what the government messed up in the first place. We risk our lives each and every day for you and all the people of Hawaii and we deserve to feel safe in our future. Please do not pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Officer Kimberly MASSE
Police Officer III
Maui Police Department
Hearing set for 02/13/09 at 0830 hours
Measure #HB 1719

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Ryan K. Rodrigues [Ryan.Rodrigues@mpd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 1:42 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: house bill #1737 and 1719

Ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature,

I am writing this communication in reference to house bill 1737 and 1719. I would like to express my extreme displeasure with the fact that this would even be a consideration for you as a law making body to touch, change or take away. These benefits were promised to us as a part of our employment when we first signed up for our careers. These benefits were our reward for working hard and making those sacrifices during our 25 year commitment to our community. I along with many others feel that these bills are a slap in the face to all of us. I personally have been working 18 years for the County of Maui and have moved from my birth home in Hilo to make Maui my life. I have since married and have 3 children to provide for 17yrs, 14 yrs, and 5 yrs old. I have worked hard all my life as my employment record will indicate receiving many awards attesting to that fact, making this community a better place to live for all to enjoy. Imagine my shock and alarm to hear that all that I , we have worked for will be taken away from us. Our retirement is our REWARD. WE DESERVE TO HAVE IT IN TACT. NOT JUST BECAUSE IT WAS PROMISED TO US AT OUR HIRING, BUT BECAUSE OF THE SACRAFICES WE HAVE MADE WITH OUR TIME, FAMILYS, AND RISKS OF OUR EMPLOYMENT MAKING AND WORKING TO MAKE A SAFER COMMUNITY FOR US ALL TO ENJOY. By taking away our retirement benefits like you are proposing, you will create more problems then you will solve. Employees will become disenchanting with their work, with their ideals and the quality of work will suffer, the productivity of work will get worse. Because of the fact there will be nothing to work hard towards or look forward too at the end of our 25 year career. Yes I am a county employee, Yes I am a Maui County Police Officer. And I am fully aware of the social problems that have been increasing since the economy went south. We work on the front lines dealing with these issues every day. Our benefits are all some of us have to look forward too to help us in living in the STATE OF HAWAII because of the OUT RAGEOUS PRICES. PLEASE DO NOT PUNISH THOSE THAT ARE WORKING ON THE FRONT LINES IN THESE TOUGH TIMES, FOR WE ARE FEELING THE EFFECTS OF THE ECONOMY SLOW DOWN AS WELL, YOU WILL COMPOUND THE PROBLEM BE MESSING WITH THESE BENEFITS IF YOU TAKE IT AWAY. And as for the suggestion that you will take it away for a short time and revisit this issue. WHO ARE YOU FOOLING. WE ALL KNOW HOW IT WORKS. TAKE IT AWAY. AND IT WILL NEVER COME BACK AGAIN. YOU MAY REVISIT IT AS YOU SAY. BUT WE KNOW WHAT THE AGENDA WILL BE. And in reality if the measure goes ahead their will be a mass exodus of senior leadership in all counties and statewide enforcement entities, Causing a great loss in public trust, enforcement, and experience in these fields. Further as a registered voter and a very much concerned US citizen it is my DUTY to covey my strong opposition to this ridiculous and ludicrous bill as means to fix our economy. Lastly, if you answer to justify this bill further is the lack of funds in the retirement fund. DO NOT BLAME THE ECONOMY, BUT BLAME THE POOR MANAGEMENT OF THOSE FUNDS. IT IS NOT LIKE WE WENT TO BED AND WOKE UP THE NEXT DAY AND THE ECONOMY WAS BAD. (REFER TO NEWS REPORT ON RETIREMENT FUNDS DATED 02/10/09 HAWAII NEWS CHANNELS.)

Mr. Ryan RODRIGUES
Husband
Father
Police Officer III Maui County Police

Department

02/10/09 1342 hrs

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Samuel C. Gasmen [Samuel.Gasmen@mpd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:52 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill 1719 related to public employees

To whom it may concern,

I'm an 18 year veteran with the Maui Police Department and have stuck it out to stay with this department despite the facts that officers in the west coast are better paid than the officers that from Hawaii. I choice to stay here on Maui to finish my twenty five (25 year) service because of the retirement program we have.

I know a lot of officers are staying here because of our retirement; however, if this bill will pass and if the Council members are entertaining the thought of messing with our retirement which include our medical, Hawaii will lose many outstanding police officers to retirement or transfers to different departments in the west coast.

Hawaii cannot afford to lose the local police officers to a mainland department. Moral within the police departments throughout the state are low as it is. If it is the wishes for the members of the senate to have members of the police departments in the state to have low morale and looking elsewhere to raise their family because of their leaders are turning their backs and renegeing on promises that was made so they can protect and serve our community faithfully without question and complete their tour of duty in twenty five (25 years), then you, the member of senate entertain of passing this bill and dishonor all the men and women that served this community to protect and served without question, to lay it on the line so others may live.

Respectfully submitted for your perusal.

Faithful public servant

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

I have been a public employee/sworn police officer with the Maui Police Department since May of 2002. I am highly concerned about the recent proposed bills including but not limited to the following:

HB 1536 RELATING TO SALERIES
HB 1106 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
HB 1718 RELATING TO EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS
HB1719 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
HB 1725 RELATING TO HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFIT TRUST FUND

I understand the House of Representatives have a hearing set for Friday, February 13, 2009 in Honolulu.

House Speaker Calvin SAY is trying to produce solutions to introduce bills that will "share in the pain" for the economy. But I find it disturbing that his ideas are to slash the retirement and medical benefits for state and county workers. It seems as though we as public servants are being penalized. Cutting public employee and retiree benefits will not solve the state's budget crisis, and that it's unfair to target public employees.

Knowing that the proposed bills will adversely affect all those state and county workers who do not retire by July 2009, that is only the beginning. Should the proposed bills pass, the catastrophic repercussions will not be limited to the workers, but their family, coworkers, the communities and ultimately the state.

Imagine take those that are eligible for retirement now, that have stayed beyond twenty five (25) years of service, they will be forced to retire. Their leadership and knowledge will be gone, leaving the space to be filled with the newly promoted. Now that leaves the patrol division short handed thus creating excessive overtime expenditures and safety conditions. Who else suffers, families since the officer will be required to do overtime, hold over and call backs. Then what happens to the community? The community is already struggling with the economic crisis and unemployment. Because of that we experience more calls for service, more thefts, crimes against property, assaults and domestic abuse. What if the force is so depleted due to the mass exodus of those forced to retired, and there is no one to respond. Now put that on a medical emergency, heart attack, stroke, car accident. What happens if our parks and division personnel are cut so

that the parks are unsafe for our children? Imagine no lifeguards at pools and beach fronts.

On a personal note, I served twelve (12) years in the Hawaii Air National Guard, defending our Country and State. I was taught to believe that one person really can make a difference. I then chose a career in service with the Police Department because of the benefits, stability and my desire to continue community service. Please don't let them take away our benefits that we earned. We make this state and county a safer place while putting our lives on the line each and everyday. Are you saying that our lives are not worth the benefits that we were promised?

As our elected official I hope that you take my/our concerns seriously and OPPOSE these bills! I know there is no easy answer, but I/We do know that if these bills pass, there will be catastrophic repercussions felt by all.

My family and I thank you for your time and hopeful consideration.

Audra Sellers

**OFFICER AUDRA SELLERS
MAUI POLICE DEPARTMENT
55 MAHALANI STREET
WAILUKU, HI 96793
PH: 808-244-6303
FAX: 808-244-6308
CELL: 808-268-4777**

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many in our department will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dennis G. LEE
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many in our department will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sgt. William HANKINS
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many in our department will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Charles M. Hirata
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

**Testimony to the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
on
HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees
HB 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund**

**DATE: Friday, February 13, 2009
TIME: 8:30 A.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chairman
and members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 326
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and members of the Committee,

As a Maui County employee for the past 22 years, I wish to submit written testimony *against* HB 1719 and HB 1725. This bill goes against the very reason I chose to work in public safety for the county government.

Colleagues of mine brought it to my attention that this bill before your committee is aimed at suspending state and county contributions to the EUTF if we retire after July 1, 2009 regardless of date of hire and years of service.

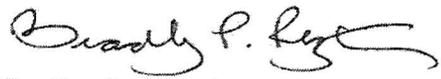
The recent global economy has greatly affected the state of the economy in Hawaii to include revenues generated by the lack of tourists visiting our great state. State and County governments are not immune from this economic downturn as we depend on spending by both kama'aina and malahini alike.

Therefore, everyone in government has got to look at ways to manage our own affairs in order to stimulate stability and sustainability. This bill goes against the very nature of having seasoned qualified government employees working together in order to stimulate our own government affairs by forcing them to retire, albeit in some cases earlier than intended. We need to retain these qualified senior government employees and use their knowledge for this very reason.

Therefore, I urge you to vote *against* this bill as it will have a detrimental affect on the state of affairs both in county and state government.

Your attention in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bradley P. Rezendes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Bradley P. Rezendes
Lieutenant, Maui County Police Department
55 Mahalani Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state and county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

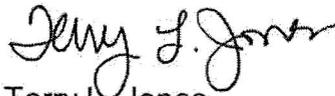
I recall being a young single mother and having my mother persuade me to take a County job because of the benefits. I can recall arguing with her that I was getting paid more in the private sector but she told me having a County job was stable and I'd have good benefits, even when I retire. That was more than 19 years ago. Although I am unable to retire soon, I am thinking about my future and my family's. I have been with the County for more than 19 years and have 12 ½ more to work until I could retire at the age of 55. If this legislation passes, I will have to work for 10 more years giving me a total of more than 40 years with the County. I don't think that's right!

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. ***You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.***

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees and I strongly urge you to vote against this proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry L. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "T" and "J".

Terry L. Jones
Secretary II
Maui Police Department

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paring the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service. Take a police officer for example, who started his career at the age of 23, would be required to work to the age of 55 (32 years of service) for his maximum retirement benefit. With this bill, he would be required to work another 10 years for his medical benefits.

Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, we do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Derrick Lopez
Maui Police Department

From: Helen T. Kanae [Helen.Kanae@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:38 PM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Joseph Souki
Subject: House Bills Affecting Retirement and Benefits

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative:

I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1719- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1725- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept myself and a lot of workers to become civil service employees. The majority of these workers have been loyal to government work and been with their respective agencies for a good amount of years. I've been with Maui Police Department for 19 years.

By eliminating benefits from employees, it will create a great majority to seek retirement and those who do remain may seek other employment when the economy does improve. There is no incentive for employees to remain with the State or County governments with the elimination of benefits.

Also, by creating such situation, public safety would be a major concern. As jobs would not be immediately filled or certain jobs would have to be eliminated

Thus, through no fault of the employees should these benefits be taken away from us. Therefore, I wish to voice my opinion that I oppose these proposed bills, which would eliminate benefits to State and County employees.

Sincerely,

Helen Kanae

Helen Kanae

To: LABtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Cheryl Rapoza, Sr. Clerk Typist
Telecommunications Systems Section
Honolulu Police Department

Date: February 11, 2009

Subject: Labor & Public Employment Committee
Hearing, Friday Feb. 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
HB 1106 Relating to Public Employment
HB 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees
HB 1725 Relating to Hawaii Employees-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund
Hearing, Tuesday Feb. 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
HB 1723 Relating to Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust
HB 1725 Relating to Retirement
HB 1726 Relating to Hawaii Employees-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund
HB 1727 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

I urge the Labor & Public Employment Committee members to oppose the above bills. It is a reality that the economy is in a poor state, both nationwide and worldwide. In Hawaii, we have one of the highest cost of living. When I started with the City almost 4 years ago, I accepted employment knowing the pay was much lower than what I was getting in the private sector, but knew the long term benefits as a government worker would outweigh the lower wages.

Because there is no control over the private sector where it comes to cutting staff members and benefits to save on costs, the burden falls on the public employees and the local government system. To have public employees bear the burden due to finances of the State of Hawaii is an unfair practice.

Personally, my husband, retired, and I will no longer be able to afford our home; we'll have to forego medications and make more cuts here and there. We may even have to drop the medical insurance altogether. We would have to choose between our home, our health, and our food. We have enough financial problems trying to stay afloat in Hawaii's ever increasing fees and costs and now we have bill proposals to "add to the fuel". It's frightening to think that your decision determines our livelihoods and the quality of our lives.

It will be chaos if the bills are not opposed. If the bills pass, it would affect thousands of lives. We would all have to make choices of whether to pay for our homes, for medical insurance, and other living necessities. It will lead to more people losing their homes, more people living on the beach, less police, firefighters, and paramedics to act as first responders which would then trickle its effect down to Hawaii's community as a whole.

An alternative to the above bills would be to possibly raise taxes so that all Hawaii consumers would bear the burden.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Arthur G. Dadez [Arthur.Dadez@mpd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki
Subject: HB# 1715, 1719, 1723, 1726 and 1727

Dear Sirs:

For the life of me, I do not understand how anyone can entertain such ridiculous ideas as depicted in the House Bills mentioned.

I am a second generation law enforcement officer and grew up in the shadow of my father's career hoping to become a law enforcement officer someday. I was exposed to many of the facets of the job, the highs and lows but experienced what it was like to serve my community. When it came time for my father to retire, there was not question whether he would be taken care of and he and my mom are enjoying their respective retirements in their golden years.

When I entered into my career of law enforcement, I knew I was not going to get wealthy but the idea of helping people and improving my community interested and motivated me to become a law enforcement officer like my father. Because my father retired from the Maui Police Department, I knew when my time to retire comes; it will be my turn to enjoy the rewards of my sacrifices and my immediate family will also be covered under the umbrella of my retirement. These House Bills takes this all away!

I am 57 years old and have served with dignity and integrity for 23 years with the Maui Police Department. With the likelihood of these House Bills passing and becoming law, this will force me to retire short of my full benefits of 25 years of service.

How many like me are their in the State of Hawaii who are in the same predicament as I am should these House Bills pass and become law? There will be a mass exodus with Executive Staff and Mid Level Management retiring. This will seriously compromise and jeopardize the safety, health, and well being of the very community I have served so faithfully these 23 years.

I beseech you, your intelligence, and your common sense to consider what the ramifications of these House Bills will be should they become law.

I am disappointed with the presentation of these House Bills and for allowing these House Bills to even reach a Hearing. I feel betrayed and my trust in your leadership and ability to take care not only one of your constituents but the State of Hawaii has diminished.

I am not in support of these House Bills.

Lt. Arthur G. Dadez
Maui Police Department
District I-Wailuku
Bravo Watch Commander

February 12, 2009

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita,

I am writing regarding the following House Bills that I am greatly OPPOSED to:

Hearing on February 13, 2009
House Bill No. 1718- Related to Retirement Benefits
House Bill No. 1719- Related to Retirement Benefits
House Bill No. 1725- Related to Medical Benefits of Public Employees

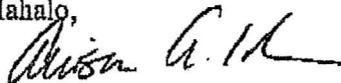
Hearing on February 17, 2009
House Bill No. 1723- Relating to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1727- Relating to Medical Benefits of Public Employees

I started my civil service career in 1988 with the Dept. of Labor and Industrial Relations, and currently with the Maui Police Department for the last 8 years. The benefits promised to me and many others at the time of hire are what drew all of us to become civil service employees. You are again removing benefits established under collective bargaining and renegeing on promises made to employees at time of hire.

The passing of these bills will definitely be a devastating blow to all whom already are having difficulty in these economic times. Please look at other fairer alternatives to address the state's revenue problems and not looking at civil service employees to become the scapegoat for the state. Everyone should share in the burden during these tough times.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,



Allison Ishikawa
Pukalani, Maui Resident

February 12, 2009

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita,

I am writing regarding the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

Hearing on February 13, 2009

House Bill No. 1718- Related to Retirement Benefits
House Bill No. 1719- Related to Retirement Benefits
House Bill No. 1725- Related to Medical Benefits of Public Employees

Hearing on Tuesday February 17, 2009

House Bill No. 1723- Relating to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1727- Relating to Medical Benefits of Public Employees

Born, raised and educated in Hawaii, (Maui) my civil service career began 26 years ago, 16 with the Maui Police Department as a Juvenile Counselor, Maui County Employee of the Year 2005 & 2000. Like many others with difficult jobs, when I first decided to work for the state/county, it was not the pay that drew me to the job but the idea that, like you, I could hopefully help families in need, with some reward being the benefits promised.

The passing of these bills which was introduced by Mr. Calvin Say will definitely be a devastating blow to everyone already having difficulty in these economic times. (Taking away from the middle class AGAIN) Not only will it turn away many quality professional and non professional employees from a civil service positions but many will retire or leave as soon as they can. The Health of our senior citizens will decline, future plans for children of civil service employees will be at jeopardy and government positions will be difficult to fill meaning even more agencies will be eliminated, and without quality employees desperate people who usually look to government agencies won't have any one to turn to, making overall public safety a major concern.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Having some public forums on Maui with our Maui Reps should be something you and your constituents should be doing to address some of the state's revenue problems. I realize that there is no clear cut answer but we need to work together on these matters.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,



Keith K. Maniz
February 12, 2009

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And Members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to HB 1719 Related to Public Employees. This bill would suspend contributions to the EUTF for employees who retire after 1 July 2009. Coverage would resume after the employee meets medicare retirement age. It also allows for the retiree to retain coverage by paying for the premiums out of pocket until they reach medicare retirement age.

As it is I'm eligible to retire at the age of 52 having joined the department at 27 years. If this legislation passes I won't be eligible to retire until the age of 57. As a Police Officer I don't pay into the Medicaid program. Therefore, after 32 years of service, thanks to this legislation, when I retire I will have to pay for my own medical benefits. Because of this I'll have to get another job, post-retirement, to aid in paying for those medical benefits and to build up the necessary social security and medicare credits with the Federal Government.

This kind of legislation will have the effects of pushing out employees who are in the upper echelon of departments as well as those with the eligibility and years of service. In my department the potential effect is the loss of something close to 30% of our force at a time when we've just reached a full force. The protracted effect of this will be the loss of the years of experience and knowledge that has yet to be passed on. That potential 30% represents the potential loss of chiefs, captains and some lieutenants.

Those who are not yet vested in the system would themselves have to re-think the intelligence of continuing to contribute to a system that in the future would offer

them no benefits. The temptation to leave for would simply be amplified by the passage of this bill.

Our Police Department has recently begun to overcome staffing shortages partly due to the necessary standards in hiring for Police Officers and related offices. The addition of more obstacles would be counterproductive to the goals of providing adequate emergency services to the community.

I ask that you vote against this bill keeping in mind that those who work for you also voted you into office.

Respectfully submitted,

John K. Sang
Police Officer II
Maui Police Department, Lanai Patrol

Concerned Citizens

Submitting Written Opposition to HB 1719

	First Name	Last Name	Affiliation/Position
1	Jean	Tanaka	Public Employee
2	Gloria	Fernandez	RN
3	Elaine	Olson	
4	Pat	Tompkins	City & County Employee, HGEA
5	Gwen	Dang	Dept. of Human Services
6	Merle	Kishida	Hawaii State Judiciary
7	Taylor	Maddisson	Public Employee
8	Steve and Lucy	Meek	
9	June	Callan	
10	Linda & Alan	Miyahira	State Employee
11	Gail	Tamanaha	Dept. of Prosecuting Attorney
12	James	Kino	Fire Dept., Maui
13	Connie	Funari	
14	Terry	Low	
15	Marti	Buckner	Water Resources Planner, Maui
16	Guy	Danley	County of Maui
17	La'akea	Chang	County of Maui
18	Clint	Coloma	Hawaii Fire Dept.
19	Karleen	Hultquist	Dept. Environmental Mngt., Maui
20	Laurie	Kaneta	County of Hawaii
21	K	Sakata	County Employee, HGEA
22	Randall	Miura	State Employee
23	Cindy	Kagoshima	County of Maui
24	Simone	Bosco	Planning Dept., County of Maui
25	Judy	Egger	
26	Crystal	Sakai	County of Maui
27	Roxanne	Yu	County of Maui
28	Victoria	Dennis	Maui Memorial Hospital ICU
29	Ralph	Nagamine	County of Maui
30	William	Poteete	Radiology Dept., Kauai Veterans Memorial
31	Jane	Dellaport	RN
32	Dan	Clark	Public Works Dept., Maui
33	Avelina	Cabais	Planning Dept., County of Maui
34	Jeff	Dack	Planning Dept., County of Maui
35	Jeanne	Hamamura	State Dept. of Defense
36	Tom	Schemel	
37	Jarod	Hiramoto	City & County Employee, Honolulu
38	Ellie	Lum	
39	Geri	O'Leary	Special Services, Honolulu
40	Jo Ann	Schindler	
41	Ken	Kajihara	
42	Leslie	Spencer	School Healthaide
43	Tremaine	Balberdi	Planning Dept., County of Maui
44	Ken	Esclito	RN

45	William	McKeon	Paul Johnson Park & Niles Attorneys at Law
46	Kristi	Ueoka	
47	Andrea	Whalen	
48	Jocelyn	Ugalino	
49	Tui	Anderson	Dept. of Water Supply, Maui
50	Marguerite	Ah-Kee	
51	Arnold	Imaye	Dept. of Water Supply, Maui
52	Nina-Lehua	Kawano	Planning Dept., County of Maui
53	Jennifer	Shishido	State Employee, HGEA
54	Guy	Joao	
55	Joanne	Agnes	
56	Christian	Wong	Hawaii Fire Dept.
57	Lorna	Young	Hawaii State Hospital, LPN
58	Kit	Uyeda	State Employee
59	Karen	Hirose	State Social Worker
60	Meghan	Statts	State Worker
61	Fredericka	Aikau	Library Assistant
62	Wendy	Kobashigawa	
63	Nalani	Kauamo	
64	Priscilla	Echallas	County of Maui
65	Roxanne	Sarme-Chun	
66	Julie		
67	Derrick	Falces	
68	Susan	Dowsett	Public Employee
69	James	Pu	
70	James	Perry, Jr.	
71	Merry	Prince	HGEA BU-13
72	Randy	Pico	County of Maui
73	Suzette	Esmeralda	
74	Leilani	Soakai	Dept. of Health
75	Michael	Amore	
76	Pam	Morinaga	
77	Edie	Watanabe	State Social Worker
78	Laura	Seaton	Dept. of Public Works, Maui
79	Laurie	Newman	
80	Carol	Takitani	County of Maui
81	Roberta	Chun	
82	Kelly	Zimmerman-Levien	
83	Elden	Masusako	
84	Charlene	Sakamoto	County of Maui, HGEA
85	Connie	Comiso-Fanelli	RN
86	Gregory	Houghtaling	Fire Dept., Hawaii
87	Mary	Crispi	Hawaii Public Employee
88	Antonie	Wurster	
89	Yvonne	Ching	Judiciary
90	Penni	LaBatte	Public Employee
91	Javier	Aceret	Public Employee

92	Susan	Nakagawa	State of Hawaii
93	Paulie	Schick	
94	Jean	Chock	Public Employee
95	Shari	Yamaguchi	City Employee
96	Imogene	Stringfield	
97	Lee	Kravitz	Public Employee
98	Harry	Sprinkel	
99	Holly	DeMello	City & County of Honolulu
100	Rose	Zastrow	State Employee
101	Stacie	Sato-Sugimoto	Public Employee
102	Diane	Nakashima	University of Hawaii
103	Cera	Tollifson	
104	Wayne	Lee	Civil Servant
105	Cara	Scanlan	
106	Erica	Hashimoto	Public Employee
107	Nancy	Nicola	Public Employee
108	Tracy	Adams-Naipo	
109	Mandie	Guerra	Public Employee, Kona
110	Ron	Steben	
111	Albert		
112	Christian	Tarumi	
113	Troy	Stupplebeen	County of Maui

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jean T. [jeanta@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jean Tanaka. As a public employee for 21 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719

HB 1719- As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service." I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote **“no”** on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: fernandeb006@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

I am an employee for the State of Hawaii, Department of Health, and work as a Public Health Nurse for the Leeward Oahu Nursing Section. I also live in the district that I work in. As a constituent, I am opposed to the following House Bills:

- HB 1106 Relating to furloughs
- HB 1108 Relating to interest arbitration and cost considerations
- HB 1715 Increases the minimum age and length of service requirement for retirement of new public employees
- HB 1718 Medicare Part B reimbursement only for employees retired prior to 12/31/09
- HB 1719 Suspend EUTF payments for retirees who retire prior to Medicare retirement age
- HB 1720 Reimburse Medicare part B premiums only to those employees retired before 7/01/09.
- HB 1721 EUTF benefits for active members capped at a specified maximum cost
- HB 1722 EUTF to provide the minimum health benefits plan required under Hawaii prepaid health care act
- HB 1723 Makes employer contributions to EUTF non-negotiable and capped at 55% of costs
- HB 1725 Prohibits EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage from 7/1/2009-6/30/2015; public employees would pay for entire cost of the drug plan
- HB 1727 Prohibits EUTF from providing dental and vision coverage from 7/1/2009-6/30/2015; public employees would pay for entire cost of the dental and vision plan
- HB 1737 Eliminates the high three calculation for retirement

Please take into consideration how these bills, if passed, would affect the hard working State Employees. As a Registered Nurse, who has also worked in the hospital setting, the effects of rising insurance cost will have a negative impact on when people access health care. There are questions that should be answered before passing legislation that will decrease health care options.

- 1) How will the population be able to afford insurance premiums upward of \$750 for families monthly that do not include preventative screening such as vision or provide dental care? When given choices, people may choose to purchase groceries instead of paying for health insurance. Preventative care will take a back seat and people will seek medical attention when it becomes an emergency or urgent situation.
- 2) How will the law makers help residents who have chronic conditions access health care, if it does not include preventative care? Vision screening is important to certain conditions such as prematurity and diabetes.
- 3) What will the costs be for emergency and urgent care at the emergency rooms? When prices increase, people will opt to pay for the least amount of health insurance which most do not cover preventive care.

4) What will happen to those employees with health conditions who will be eligible for retirement in the next 6 years, who do not meet the medicare age requirement? Those with chronic health conditions will be forced to continue working or use their pension to pay for health insurance. It is a little late in the game for these state employees to start considering other options.

The economy will not fix itself, however, decreasing health benefits, increasing retirement age or premiums for insurance should not be the remedy for the failing economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gloria K.A.O.H. Fernandez, RN
Wai'anae, Hawaii

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: elaine@spamcop.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.txt

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Elaine Olson
Organization: Individual
Address: 17 Upu Pl Kula, HI
Phone: 8088786958
E-mail: elaine@spamcop.net
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: tompkinse001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: Testimony 02 13 09

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Pat Tompkins
Organization: Individual
Address: 87-152 Liopolo Street Waianae, HI 96792
Phone: 808.292.3281
E-mail: tompkinse001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

This letter is in opposition to House Bills 1106, 1718, 1719 and 1725.

My name is Pat Tompkins. I have been a City & County, HGEA Unit 13 employee since 1993. I will be 59 years old next month. I thought I was going to join my husband, who will be 62 next month, in retirement in 3 years. Now I'm not so sure either of us will be able to retire in the foreseeable future.

When I joined the public sector workforce in 1993, certain promises were made regarding the benefits that would be available to me and my husband when I retired.

I believed then and continue to believe now, that A PROMISE MADE IS A PROMISE KEPT.

Besides a desire to serve my community, what convinced me to accept employment with the City at a much lower rate of pay than I had earned previously in the private sector, were the retirement benefits. I don't use most of the medical insurance coverage now, as an active employee, because my husband has a much better, cheaper benefit through his employer who also pays the cost of most of my coverage. But we needed the retirement benefits because he wouldn't have medical insurance when he retired.

I've worked hard, served my community, and now, after almost 16 years, certain members of this Legislature have proposed changing the retirement conditions and rules for current employees as well as retirees.

HOW DARE THEY!

I made a life decision 16 years ago to join government service based on an employment agreement that contained certain rights and benefits that applied both during the term of my active employment as well as when I retired.

These bills, and others that will be heard next Tuesday, are bad news for public employees and they are bad news for the public in general.

Please consider the following points:

HB 1106 proposes to allow furloughs. Each day of furlough is really a 5% pay cut for those furloughed. 5% that will no longer be flowing into the economic pipeline here in Hawaii. Groceries won't be bought, clothing sales won't be made, savings accounts will not increase. Likewise, State revenue from income, GET, gas as well as other taxes will decrease, increasing lost revenues for the State and local governments. Furloughs will start a domino effect that will necessitate additional budget cuts. Public worker spending is the last secure source of revenue for our local businesses and tax base. Public workers don't expect to get raises in our next contracts to help offset the increased costs we're already experiencing. But please don't reduce the effective value public worker wages further with the imposition of furloughs.

HB 1718 proposes to halt reimbursement of Medicare Part B for those who retire after 12/31/09. The ERS/EUTF requires covered retirees to carry Medicare Part B. This helps lower the premiums to the EUTF and Employers for the secondary health insurance coverage provided by the EUTF to those who are also covered by Medicare that becomes the primary insurer when the retiree turns 65. Currently the monthly premium for Part B is \$96.40/mo. and usually increases each year. The non-reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums would result in a net reduction of a public worker retiree's income.

HB 1719 proposes to halt medical insurance premiums for any current public employee who retires after 07/01/09 and has not reached the age of Medicare eligibility, currently 65. This would force affected retirees to either pay the full cost of medical insurance coverage which would be available through the EUTF, currently estimated to be in excess of \$1,000/mo for a family policy, for up to 10 years. This could reduce the individual's retirement income for that 10 year period by \$120,000 or more. For many, that \$1,000/mo. payment would reduce their monthly retirement benefit by more than one-half. The result would be that most would have net incomes below the poverty level.

HB 1725 proposes to halt prescription drug coverage under the EUTF for a period from 07/01/09 through 06/30/15. Why have medical coverage if you don't have drug coverage? Lack of prescription drug coverage will result in both active employees and retirees being unable to afford to fill the prescriptions their doctors felt were necessary to treat either chronic or episodic conditions. Many maintenance drugs for chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure or cholesterol, cost hundreds of dollars a month. Paying for those drugs out of pocket for actives and net retirement income for retirees would push more individuals into poverty. Still others may become permanently disabled or actually die because of the lack of affordable prescription drugs.

Is increasing the number of people in poverty, who end up declaring bankruptcy for health related reasons, or who die because they are unable to afford medical treatment really what is intended as a result of these bills? Do people on welfare really deserve better coverage than the public workers who manage their care or provide their treatment have available to themselves? I'm sure it isn't. Yet that is what would happen if these bills are passed. It is sad to think that someone could work for government or be retired after many years of service and also be in poverty. That would truly be an injustice.

The stated intent of all of these Bills being heard in the next few days is to reduce the State's bottom line right now. However, these bills do that at the sole expense and on the backs of public workers.

What is being avoided is requiring the Governor and members of the Legislature from having to look long and hard at all programs to see which are absolutely needed and which are not. All

of you must decide where limited dollars should be spent. What is not being said is that these bill avoid that responsibility by making public workers look like the bad guys, leading the public to think that these cuts will actually solve problems with the bottom line. They won't.

Here are a few places to look to lower the bottom line for the long run:

Enact a real freeze on hiring. Hundreds of jobs have been advertised and many filled since the alleged freeze was put in place.

Review the core mission of each department and make sure each agency within that department is providing services that achieve that core mission. Eliminate the programs and services that don't.

Keep public dollars keeping public workers employed instead of privatizing services. When services are privatized, there are no controls over the amounts paid for wages, where items get purchased and cost overruns. Everyone knows the way to get a government contract is to low-ball the bid and then get whatever you can in change orders. That mentality and practice has to stop.

If contracting out must occur because there are not sufficient staff or expertise within government, then make sure cost controls are in place and enacted.

Streamline the contracting process for health and human services. It takes far too long to execute contracts and pay our service providers. This ends up costing government added dollars in increased costs because the non-profit organization's bids and unit rates must include costs for lines of credit to pay expenses in advance of reimbursement of costs.

Eliminate, to the extent possible, non-bid contracting. When there isn't any price to which to compare the cost of a contract, there is a lot of opportunity for overcharging.

Eliminate, to the extent possible, the appointments of individuals who do not meet minimum qualifications to a position. There are hundreds who have been hired by the current administrations, both State and local, on either emergency or 1 year contracts that have been renewed over and over again. Worse yet, some of those hired in this manner have now had their positions "converted" to either limited term or civil service. That has to stop. Positions should be posted in the prescribed manner and a fair and open competition should take place with the most qualified, not the best connected, being chosen for employment.

In closing, public workers know economic times are tough. We're working harder and smarter and we will continue to do our share to help strengthen our home state. But we are not willing to be made the scapegoats for all that ails Hawaii. No one person or entity created this situation. Likewise, no one person or entity will be able to get us out of it. We stand ready to support our elected officials but only if they support us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pat Tompkins
Waianae, Hawaii

From: Russell Dang [dangr004@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for LAB, Room 309, 8:30 a.m., February 13, 2009

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

**TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 1106, 1719, 1725
RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of my family. My name is Gwen Oka Dang and my husband is Russell Dang. I have been a public employee for 29 years for the Dept. of Human Services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. I am only 52 years old and 3 years shy of my anticipated retirement age of 55 years. I will have 31 years of service at that age. My husband has been employed with the State since 1982 through Hawaiian Home Lands, Dept. of Land and Natural Resources and since 1990 with the City and County Fire Department. He is 54 years of age and a candidate to retire possibly at the end of the year if he chooses to. We have a soon-to-be 10 year old daughter. We have gone through caring for elderly parents and understand the financial and emotional realities of that situation also.

My husband and I feel as if we are being slapped in the face after many years of hard work and service to the public as a result of the many bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. The manner in which these bills are presented by separating the similarly related subjects such as vision, dental, and drugs, medical premiums and retirement benefits gives the impression of deceit and conspiracy rather than negotiation and open communication.

We both knew, that at this time, we would need to make some sacrifices, compromises and concessions. We have friends who have lost their jobs. I have always been very aware of the labor market and the challenges society faces since my job entails assisting individuals with disabilities to be meaningfully employed. Though I did not care for a furlough, I was willing to do it. I would have even been willing to pay the vision, dental, drugs portion for the specified time period had I been asked. BUT, seeing the barrage of bills that potentially could result in lost wages from furloughs, paying additional medical premiums, and most of all being told to pay the premiums or lose my medical upon retirement because we were not of Medicare age despite the number of years served, infuriates us. **WE ARE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND NOT PUBLIC SERVANTS.**

On this date, I am specifically concerned about **HB 1719, 1725, 1106**. Though I understand the need for **HB 1106** since it will preserve my benefits in the event of a furlough, I **disagree** that the **Governor alone** should have the absolute authority to determine the details. After all, I have read that the Governor has utilized EUTF monies to build shelters for the homeless, borrowed and used money from our ERS, allowed her directors to utilize funds not allocated for the programs purpose. In general, has violated laws that protect funds and programs.

I know first hand that a reduction to salaries would be a hardship to some employees. Some of my co-workers cannot meet basic bills with their current salaries because they are single individuals without family support trying to find a place to rent, single parents with children living on one income, dealing with medical hardships and parent or child care. I also know that furloughs especially **along** with increased medically related payment listed in **HB 1725** would force public employees to shut down spending or do without services that may jeopardize the health and well being of themselves or family members. Spending is what helps the economy. Furloughs would reduce taxable income for the State because of lowered salaries. As a co-worker of mine stated, 2 days of furlough a month equals 24 days or one month salary.

I was raised by my parents who went through the Depression era. They advised me to save money for the future, but also to spend accordingly because that is what keeps the economy growing. My father was a retired State employee and my mother worked for a large private retail company and made more money during employment and after retirement. Their thoughts were: If people didn't spend at the retail company my mother worked for it would close and she would be out of a job. Isn't that what is happening now and a reason why many companies are shutting down. If everyone stops spending, even those who have jobs because of fears, who will support and purchase goods to keep the economy flowing? If people aren't working, where will the taxes supporting government come from?

HB 1719 is extremely bothersome to my family and other State government employees I have talked with. As public employees, we chose to work to serve the community and public. We were told and given literature when hired that the benefits of employment with the State were free medical after meeting certain retirement requirements and a pension based on wages. We were willing to take the hit upfront through lower salaries, automatic deductions for retirement and higher medical premiums for the sake of that **promised** retirement future.

HB 1719 arbitrarily picks dates for retirement to get the benefits earned and promised upon hire. HB 1719 decides who can and who can't get this benefit based on an arbitrary date, disregarding the number of years of service or age. If the EUTF is truly concerned about being unable to provide benefits and can demonstrate this need, come up with a more equitable system. Why force employees to work until Medicare age, which is slated to increase the age requirements shortly. Are you trying to increase State income by having employees die on the job so you don't have to pay the medical promised? Do you really want people who may develop age related impairments continuing to work because of financial need to pay for medical benefits that they can't afford on retirement pensions? Are you willing to chance having older employees claim workers compensation due to injuries that may more easily occur with age, or increase the public assistance rolls for food stamp and MedQuest because an employee retires because of illness or caring for elderly family members and can't make it on the retirement benefits having to pay the medical premiums?

Based on the ERS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2007, the average monthly benefit for all retirees was \$1,773.00 with a range of \$272.00 through \$2765.00. Based on the Hawaii EUTF 2008-2009 Retiree rates the cost of a non-Medicare Medical Plan with prescription ranged from \$403.84 to \$470.00 for a single plan; \$788.922 to \$916.86 for a two-party plan; \$1,166.60 - \$1358.72 for a family

plan. I don't know how many retirees can pay for the premiums if HB 1719 requires retirees to pay the full premium before Medicare age? Could you? I know my family can't so if this bill passes I will continue to work since my husband shouldn't based on his type of occupation. Think of what this bill would do for employees working in hazardous occupations with potential for injury. Will the State really save money or just divert it into TDI, workers compensation, or the rolls of public assistance benefits?

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET that all THESE BENEFITS that you want to take away, SUPPLEMENT THE LOW WAGE BASE AND HIGH MEDICAL PREMIUMS, used by the State to bring in qualified people who could earn more in the private sector. Do you think that just because the economic times are hard, you can take that away? What are you going to do when the economy recovers and the State cannot get qualified applicants, OFFER RETIREMENT AND LOWERED MEDICAL COST SHARE BENEFITS AGAIN?

Over my many years I have seen the many mistakes of this State in trying to save money using public employees. I have been through the COMPRESSION that was to save the State money through reduction of step movements for employees which resulted in concurrent work at two part time jobs for seven

years to supplement my income until Shredding occurred. That was a big expense to the State even though I was never retroactively compensated for that money lost during compression. I convinced myself that at least I was being compensated accordingly when the shredding occurred, that I could quit the 2 part time jobs to spend time with my daughter and unfortunately my newly disabled, elderly father. I have also gone through the States changes with the contributory retirement system to the non-contributory system in an attempt to save money and now through the Hybrid, a scheme made to put money into a failing State contributory retirement system.

At this time there are many employees rushing to ERS to file for retirement because of HD 1719. If passed, the State would be paying full retirement/medical benefits and hiring new positions to fill voids left by that retiree because there is no other qualified person to fill the position within the current State workforce. If memory serves me properly I remember recently reading a local magazine question and answer interview with a politician. The question raised the possibility of an early retirement offering for State employees. The response was that it cost the State more money and that would not be done again. Isn't this a similar situation but instead of giving an incentive for people to retire, HD 1719 is offering a disincentive to remain employed? Are we really saving and at whose expense?

We refuse to be good soldiers anymore and sit through another group of legislators and governors trying to use public employees to get out of poor management decisions during their administrations. I am tired of all the threats to take away what was promised when hired. I want to retire while I am healthy but I can see myself working with ill health forced on me by the unreasonable workload as result of too much work for too little personnel. My occupation as a rehabilitation specialist requires a specialized Master's degree in order to be certified in the profession and meet the requirements of the Federal law. My agency continues to have difficulty finding qualified employees with the required credentials because of the low pay base. Many of those employed have left because of the demands and the fact that they can earn more in private and Federal jobs using the credentials.

We all need to make some sacrifice at this time. How much, I don't know. Work with us through our Union to understand the facts and figures, reasons for the proposed cuts. This was recently done through agreements with the Union and the Honolulu Advertiser, why can't it be with us? Let's be

open, honest and have clarity about what is really going on. I know the economy has been in a downturn, but I'm not convinced it warrants all that is being pushed on us and I

don't believe it will resolve the problems. We need to really look at all the programs, consultants being paid for, etc. to see that money is being wisely spent. If it is, my husband and I would be willing to agree to some of the recommended reductions. HOWEVER, at this point, we don't understand or have documentation of financial crisis to warrant all that is listed in the bills!!!

We need LEADERS, not followers who rush out of panic. You were elected to be LEADERS, to be calm and evaluate, make good plans for our State and your State employees.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees. Please work with and inform the public employees and our representative Unions of the true status of our government's finances. The Union knew that there would not be a raise during this negotiation period, they are not unworldly or unreasonable. My family was willing to forego a raise in the future until the economy recovered, we were ready for a furlough for a specified period of time to help out, we would be willing to take on more payments to our medical benefits for a specified period of time, we would even consider partial payment of medical benefits upon retirement until Medicare age, **BUT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO DO ALL NOR CAN WE DO IT ALL, AND WE WILL NOT DO IT WITHOUT A REAL CAUSE.**

Thank you for your time in hopefully reading my entire testimony and considering my families position and concerns.

BILL: H.B. NO. 1719, Relating to Public Employees
BEFORE: House Committee On Labor And Public Employment
DATE: February 13, 2009
TIME: 8:30 a.m.
LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309
TESTIFIER: Merle H. Kishida, Hawai'i State Judiciary

Chair Rhoads and Members of the committee,

My name is Merle Kishida and I have been a Hawai'i State Judiciary employee since 1991. I strongly oppose this bill.

I am currently working as an Estate and Guardianship Clerk, but I may very well be your next newspaper delivery person. This bill proposes to strip away crucial health coverage currently provided by the State for those State employees who retire after July 1, 2009.

As a divorced woman in my 60s, I'll have a difficult time finding another job. I'll have to take jobs that nobody else wants. In fact, I am seriously considering taking on a paper route. My co-workers laughed when I told them about this idea, but I am dead serious.

This is not a dilemma I envisioned facing at this stage of my life, especially as a state employee. Although I understand the need to make shared sacrifices in these tough economic times, I think a better balance can be struck between fiscal responsibility and the elimination of important retirement benefits.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Taylor Maddisson [tamaddisson@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:50 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Taylor Maddisson.

As a public employee for 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker

Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough.

Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public

service." I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state?

A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we are the sole breadwinners. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the

authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able

to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe

retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical

benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public

service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us

can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans my sister had made to ensure that her child graduated from college before she retires are suddenly up in the air. She now has to make the choice - get out now so that she can afford to stay healthy during

her retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic

times and risk losing her current level of care during her retirement. She has worked for the city for **38 years**. Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

From: Lucy Meek [lsmEEK@pepeekeo.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:15 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: re:HB 1719

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Members of Committee on Labor and Public Employment:

I strongly oppose HB 1719.

I believe it is ethically wrong to change an agreed upon contract already enforced.

This bill is contrary to the national stimulus effort. It would have the same effect as a highly regressive tax increase punishing the middle class.

It would be wrong to permanently remove an agreed upon benefit to address a temporary situation. If something were to be done it should only be done for a limited time.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Steve and Lucy Meek
P.O. Box 982
Pepeekeo, HI 96783
Phone: 964-3261

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: June_Callan/SPED/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:24 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Sen. Carol Fukunaga; Rep. Sylvia Luke
Subject: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

Honorable Representative Say,

I strongly oppose all permutations of your ill-conceived proposals to steal legally earned benefits of state workers.

When a social and legal contract is made between a government and its workforce, the agreement should be binding for both sides unless amended by mutual consent. It is not acceptable for the government to step in unilaterally and make drastic changes that damage the health and welfare of its loyal employees.

Can you imagine a more dishonorable scenario than asking a worker to serve for 30 years with the promise of a normal retirement, and then change the rules just as the worker is about to retire?

SAY what?! Now at the last minute you are telling us we have to work 10 more years to get full benefits?

After putting in close to 30 faithful years and reaching a mature age when medical care becomes truly important, especially considering the wear and tear on the body from all the hard hours worked, you have the nerve to try and take away our medical coverage? It is a grotesque travesty for you to victimize one class of hard-working people to make up shortfalls in the general fund.

I have served the State of Hawaii as a public school teacher for almost 27 years. I hold a Bachelors degree in Elementary Education, Masters degree in special education, a certificate in Technology Information Resource Management and the internationally recognized RESNA credential in Assistive Technology. In my position as resource teacher at the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support for the past 18-1/2 years I have provided technical assistance to schools, answered to Federal, Legislative and Board of Education inquiries, represented the State of Hawaii in three Due Process cases as an expert witness and have helped to prevail in two highly litigious cases, saving huge amounts of taxpayer money.

It is unconscionable for legislators who are receiving pay raises for part-time jobs and are vested in their retirement plans after an incredibly brief period to be proposing these draconian cuts in medical benefits for state workers. There are many teachers who have stayed with the profession, even though the pay is low, with the understanding that they would be taken care of once they retired. When you don't make enough money to put away a sizeable nest egg for retirement like those of you who hold lucrative second jobs, it was consolation to know that medical care would be covered when needed.

I urge you to completely abandon this misguided proposal and develop more realistic and equitable solutions for

our budget problems.

June Callan

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Linda [miyahiraa006@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:42 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Mark Nakashima; repchang@capital.hawaii.gov
Subject: HB 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727, 1719, 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Aloha Representative Nakashima and Representative Chang,

We are Linda and Alan Miyahira, both state employees, who live in your district and voted for you. Linda has been an educational assistant for the past 10+ years and works at Kaumana Elementary School. Because of budget cuts, she has been informed that her position has been cut for the coming school year. Alan has worked as a carpenter/maintenance worker for 25 years. We are members of HGEA and UPW. As taxpayers, we spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. It is unacceptable for the House to look to public employees to balance the budget. We are at the mercy of lawmakers who look to the easiest source to take from – public servants. We work hard at our jobs, pay our taxes and want to be able to have a comfortable life. It's near to impossible to survive in Hawaii. Every time we receive a nominal raise, it's taken away by the ever-increasing cost of medical benefits. We chose to work for the state because of the benefits offered – not the salary. We are both close to retirement and don't need to have the benefits changed on us. We implore you to be fair by looking to all citizens of Hawaii to balance the budget, and not just the public sector. Please vote no on the above bills.

Mahalo,
Linda & Alan Miyahira

February 11, 2009

Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives

Re: Testimony in Opposition to HB 1719,
Relating to Public Employees
Hrg. Date: February 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members:

I am writing in opposition to HB 1719, Relating to Public Employees.

I have been a government employee since 1975. My family has had to make many sacrifices due to the lower salary the government paid vs. the salary I could have made in the private sector. They have also made sacrifices due to the loyalty and commitment I made to my job over the years, working long hours and essentially being 'on-call' due to the demands of my position. I chose to work in government service because of the security and benefits the job offered, but I also have a passion for the work that I do and in serving the public. My work has always extended past the eight hours I am required to be at the office each day.

Both my parents were government employees. Each of them had over 30 years in government service. Although they sacrificed financially by working in the government, they stayed in government service for the security and benefits the job offered, as well as the satisfaction they had from performing their jobs. They each retired comfortably due to these sacrifices and the benefits they earned from their many years of serving the public.

I am a year and a half away from retiring and receiving full retirement benefits under the original contributory plan. My plan was to work to age 55 and my family has made personal and financial decisions over the years based on the benefits I believed I would receive after retirement. The introduction of HB 1719 has created an immense disruption in my family's life. I am now faced with the possibility of retiring in four months with a reduced monthly benefit and need to plan accordingly.

I understand the economic challenges facing our State. However, for the reasons above, I do not feel that government employee benefits should be reduced to balance the State's budget.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

Gail A. Tamanaha
Law Office Manager
Dept. of the Prosecuting Attorney
County of Maui

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: James Kino [James.Kino@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Public Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union
Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees House Bill 1725 Relating
to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

James L. Kino
Fire Department, County of Maui

----- County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: ffunari@netscape.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1715, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1723, HB 1726, and HB 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Chair Rhoads and members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employment:

I am writing to you to voice my opposition to the measures you are attempting to pass in our State Legislature. The proposed bills you are considering relate to Public Employees, our Retirement, our Health Fund, and our Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund, etc. I am a widow, with huge responsibilities to pay a mortgage and the outrageous utility bills (electricity, water) every month. I am surviving by the will of God and a dependable job, and I am counting on receiving the related benefits I have been working towards for over 23 years. I want to retire when I am ready, and to still be able to keep paying the mortgage and the bills, to see a doctor when the need arises, and not because you are telling me I must retire now to receive any benefits.

The steps that you and our nationally elected officials are taking to bring the financial crisis under control are aimed not at rewarding those who have been loyal and hard working and keeping up with their finances, paying their mortgages and taxes and insurances thus keeping the economy rolling, but only to penalize us. Please, let's take a stand for the silent majority for once and help the hard-working people you have in these beautiful islands in the State of Hawaii.

Another opposition comes to mind: By forcing our police officers and firemen and corrections officers, etc. to consider early retirements now will have a huge detrimental effect on public safety issues. Are you prepared for this?

Connie Funari
(808) 244-6307

Netscape. Just the Net You Need.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Terry Low [tortuga96746@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1719

This bill is a huge take-back from state and county employees and is certainly unwarranted even in these dire economic times. County and state employees who have been planning an retirement based on the existing system are affected unfairly. Some of those retirements may open up job positions that will positively influence Hawaii's economy. This legislation is a knee-jerk reaction that should not be rushed through for expediency sake. This has as much effect on younger employees as it does on older ones ready to retire. Many highly qualified and capable young teachers for example are being squeezed out of jobs because of our budget shortfall already. Many will join the ranks of those seeking unemployment, and worse yet, drop out of education altogether. Making a little earlier retirement attractive to older employees could help reduce the loss of those qualified employees. Please vote against this legislation.

Mahalo,
Terry Low
4762 Hauaala Rd.
Kapaa, HI 96746

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. Therefore, I do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marti Buckner
Water Resources Planner
County of Maui

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Guy M. Danley
County of Maui

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

La'akea Chang
County of Maui

February 12, 2009

Rep. Karl Rhoads
Committee Chairman
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Sir:

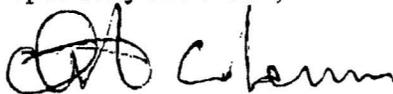
This testimony is being submitted for **Bill HB 1719, "Relating to Public Employees"**.

My name is Clint Coloma and I have served the public as a Firefighter for twenty-six years with the Hawaii Fire Department on the Big Island. Most of us that joined the fire service did so for different reasons, and one of them is the medical coverage for retirees.

The passing of Bill HB 1719 will severely impact the operations of our Fire Department. A mass exodus of seasoned, highly experienced firefighters will leave the service because of this legislation, approximately twenty-three (23) personnel. The Department would be left without personnel in key positions namely the Fire Chief, Assistant Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, Captains, Fire Equipment Operators, Fire Rescue Specialists and Firefighters. Presently, our department is relatively young; approximately 40% have less than five (5) years or less. By passing this Bill, you leave the public and their safety in relatively inexperienced hands.

Please think this through very carefully when you and your committee meet.

Respectfully submitted,



Clint Coloma
Battalion Chief-Special Operations
Hawaii Fire Department
February 12, 2009

KARLEEN HULTQUIST
52 KOPI LANE #103
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793

February 11, 2009

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita
Committee on Labor & Public Employees
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita:

SUBJECT: HB 1719 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
HB 1725 RELATING TO THE HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH
BENEFITS TRUST FUND

I am against this **HB 1719** that suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees who retire after 7/1/09, regardless of date of hire and years of service. I am a county employee and I have worked hard for years for this benefit when I retire. If the state and county stops contribution how will EUTF able to continue to pay for the benefits of hundreds of retirees and people who have already retired or are planning to retire. The legislators took funds several years back from our retirement fund when our fund was doing extremely well. Has the state even put that money back?

As far the date that you want to suspend the contribution, you must realize that you will be forcing hundreds of workers to want retire early thereby causing more shortage in staffing and putting the communities at risk. Departments such as police, fire, ocean safety, etc. already have problems with staffing shortages. This will only make matters worse.

With regards to **HB 1725** where you want to take away prescription drug, vision and dental for six years is horrible. What about employees that right now are out of leave due to illnesses such as cancer? Are you going to make them suffer even more by not being able to pay for their medications that they need while they are undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatments so they can get better to be able to come back to work.

I understand that we are in an economic crisis, but penalizing and taking away benefits that employees have worked hard for only to balance the state budget makes no sense. If you want to balance the budget raise the GET so everyone has to pay and not just penalize state, city & county workers. You are punishing the minority to please the majority!

I am asking, no begging you not to pass these bills just to see if it will help balance the budget because it won't. One idea to reduce spending would be to take a good look at the house bills that you are duplicating, such as **HB 84** that reduces jury exemption age from 80 to 75 and **HB 160** that states jury duty age limit to 70 years old or **HB 90** and **HB 143** in which one

prohibits minors from using a mobile telephone while driving unless equipped with a hands free device and the other just plain out prohibits use of a mobile telephone unless equipped with a hands free device. These four bills are redundant and there are probably more house bills that should not even be on the agenda at this time because they don't deal with things I would consider important like naming the Kamehameha Butterfly as the state insect, or inflicting more anti-smoking laws when other laws such as littering aren't being enforced. These kinds of bills are the kind of bills that I would consider a waste time and money.

Sincerely,



Karleen Hultquist
County of Maui
Department of Environmental Management
Private Secretary

Xc: Representative Joseph M. Souki
Representative Gilbert Keith-Agaran

February 11, 2009

TO : REPRESENTATIVE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2009
TIME : 8:30 A.M.
PLACE : CONFERENCE ROOM 309

RE : HB 1719 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

I am writing this letter to voice my strong opposition to HB 1719, which proposes to suspend medical coverage for state or county employees who retire after July 1, 2009.

While I understand that coverage would resume once the employee beneficiary reaches the age of Medicaid eligibility, and further, that the employee beneficiary would be able to continue coverage during that interim period by paying the premiums formerly paid by the state or county, neither of those provisions are acceptable.

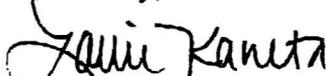
I cannot believe that the government that I have served so faithfully for almost thirty years would now propose to effectively leave me without any health insurance at the time in my life when I may need it the most.

I am employed by the County of Hawaii, and have served in various clerical and secretarial positions since 1979. During that time, I managed to build my own home, pay all of my bills, support the community in numerous charitable functions, and I'm still driving the Honda Civic that I purchased in 1990.

I am not a wealthy woman. I live a fairly frugal lifestyle, and for legislators to require me to surrender an essential benefit that I've earned through years of hard work because of an "economic downturn" caused in large part by people who chose not to live within their means, is not just unfair, it is cruel and unjust.

My story is not remarkable. There are many more people like me who now find their financial and physical future in jeopardy because of a political proposal. We are not the legislators or the leaders of government. We are just the workers. Please don't betray us.

Sincerely,



Laurie Kaneta
1541 Alu Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
and Members
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
25th State Legislature, Regular Session of 2009
State Capitol, Room 326
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members:

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Opposition to House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees**
Friday, February 13, 2009. 8:30 a.m. Conference Room 309

I am K. Sakata, a county employee and HGEA member. As an individual, I strongly oppose H.B. 1719. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on paid health benefits in retirement. This bill forces retirement eligible employees to retire in 4th quarter, and creates more frozen vacancies that will impact a department's ability to provide services ably. Please look for other ways to balance the budget, such as raising the excise tax, etc.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

K SAKATA

K. Sakata

February 11, 2009

Representative Karl Rhoads
Hawaii State Capital, Room 326
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representative Rhoads,

As a concerned state employee, I am writing in objection to HB 1719; as it relates to the suspension of state and county contribution to the EUITF for employees who retire after July 1, 2009.

I object to this legislation on the basis that it is an issue of "Broken Trust" between the State of Hawaii and their employees. As an employee who entered state service 31 years ago, I understood that as a result negotiations between the State of Hawaii and its public employee unions, that I would receive certain retirement benefits, which medical coverage was a part of. As such, I planned and coordinated my personal and professional life accordingly. To suddenly change the rules of the game is a breach of responsibility, integrity, and honor. What happened to the age old values that our great nation was built upon? Are agreements no longer honored? Or are we still a society and nation of integrity and trust, where we honor and uphold commitments made?

I do realize that the State of Hawaii, along with our federal government is currently facing an economic crisis not seen since the great depression. As such, I understand and accept that extraordinary measures are needed during our time of national crisis. However, the RESPONSIBILITY and SACRIFICES in meeting such challenging times should be shouldered by EVERY citizen, not just a targeted group such as the public employees.

I appeal to your sense of fairness, trust, respect, responsibility, and honor. Please do not support HB 1719 or any other legislation that undermines commitments and responsibilities made decades ago to public employees.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,


Randal Miura
94-1049 Palaiki Street
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

Ph: 808-677-5447

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Cindy Kagoshima
County of Maui

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

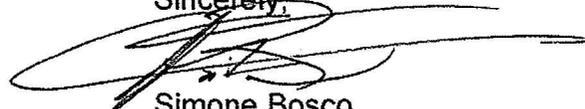
SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit Trust Fund

I am not in support of the above referenced bills. These bills appear to be in deep conflict with the long term commitments which the members of the Hawaii Employer-Union and Public Employees have made to serve the State and Counties of Hawaii. They will undoubtedly hurt many employees and alternatively the interests of the governments which they currently serve.

Public employees have foregone many other opportunities to remain dedicated to serving their State and/or Counties. Many have based their long term employment and life plans upon the benefits which civil service has promised them, particularly retirement benefits. They trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well-managed and attractive retirement system. To propose stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is not only unconscionable, but will deeply affect the reliability and trust which many loyal civil servants have demonstrated throughout many decades.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simone Bosco', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Simone Bosco
Staff Planner
Planning Department
County of Maui

Lois Tambalo

From: Rep. Kyle Yamashita
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 2:15 PM
To: Lois Tambalo
Cc: yamashita3-Chelsea
Subject: FW: Against Cutting Benefits/Pay for Public Employees

From: judylegger@aol.com [mailto:judylegger@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 11:32 AM
To: Rep. Kyle Yamashita
Subject: Against Cutting Benefits/Pay for Public Employees

I am against House Bills 1715, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, and 1727, all of which reduce benefits for government employees in Hawaii.

Cutting public employee and retiree benefits will not solve the state's budget crisis and it is unfair to target public employees.

Reduce expenses first by requiring pay cuts of those at the top. They can most afford it (you included). Then look at putting in place voluntary furloughs of 1 day per month. You may be surprised at how many people would be willing to take a day off without pay in order to help others and reduce budget deficits.

Pass legislation to legalize gambling. Other states have made money doing so. Las Vegas is the most popular destination of people living in Hawaii. Let's keep some of that gambling money here. And don't use the excuse that it would take 2 years to implement. Put some energy into accomplishing something for a change.

Judy Egger
Makawao, HI

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

**SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund**

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Crystal Sakai
County of Maui

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Roxanne Yu
County of Maui

February 8, 2009

Kyle T. Yamashita

12th Representative District
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 422
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
phone 808-586-6330; fax 808-586-6331
From Maui, toll free 984-2400 + 66330
E-mail repyamashita@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Dear Kyle:

This letter is in reference to Bill 1719, which seeks to deny retirement benefits to those that retire prior to reaching Medicare retirement age. By allowing passage of this bill has the capacity to increase the state's shortage of qualified nurses and may precipitate a mass exodus of those already employed in the state of Hawaii. Nurses in Hawaii already earn considerably less than their counterparts on the mainland. Those that work for the state's hospitals full time are also working an additional 24 hours per month in order to earn those benefits. Thirty years at the bedside is a very long time in such a labor intensive, physically and emotionally demanding profession. Similar occupations that are more male dominated such as fire fighters, and police are able to retire after 25 years of services. The dangers and demands of these occupations are all similar and should receive equal benefits.

Nursing is a female dominated profession composed primarily of middle age women ill equipped for the physical demands of lifting and wrestling with many of the state's obese or chemically impaired patients. Many members of our workforce are plagued by chronic back pain. By forcing the female dominated profession of nursing to remain employed full time at the bedside to age 65, 67 will lead to a deterioration of the state's healthcare. Please vote NO on this bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Victoria Dennis, CCRN, BSN
Maui Memorial Hospital ICU

6911 Moana
Honolulu, HI 96808

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Ralph Nagamine [Ralph.Nagamine@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 10:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1719 Relating to Public Employment

To the Committee on Labor and Public Employment,

I oppose HB 1719 because this proposed Bill is blatantly unfair to change the retirement rules for existing civil servants who have already invested many years for a retirement plan that includes paid medical benefits during retirement. The proposed Bill would be less offensive if made applicable to only new employees hired after the effective date of the Bill
Ralph Nagamine

- - - - -
County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Ray Poteete [RPoteete@hhsc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 7:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bill 1719, do not support

To whom it may concern;

I have worked in the Radiology Department at Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital for 33 years.

All of my time here is a reflection of my dedication to the people of Kauai.

I am 54 years old and I am going to retire next year.

I have contacted the EUTF to insure I am covered for my Medical upon retirement.

Now I see BILL 1719- No coverage for Health plans if you retire after this year.

I would hope you **DON'T** support this bill.

I have always told any new employees how good the State Benefits are.

We have always been paid lower than the private sector, but we always made up for low wages with our benefits.

I have talked to 2 friends who retired early. I see them back working and asked them why they are working.

Each person said it was because they needed to have medical coverage. It was too expensive when on a retirement budget to pay the medical costs.

Sincerely,
William Ray Poteete
Box 664
Waimea, Hi 96796
808-639-1942

Confidentiality Notice: This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Doc Del [docdel@maui.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:03 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to House Bill 1737 and 1719

Dear Labor Chair Karl Rhoades and House Labor Committee,

I am a Registered Nurse who has been trained at Maui Community College, graduated in 1977 and went to work immediately for Maui Memorial Hospital for 25 years; and in the past 6 years have worked at Kula Hospital in Upcountry Maui. I have been a dedicated and loyal state employee. I have almost 32 years in service. I have a good work record. I was considering retirement in the next 4 years. These bills (HB1737 and HB1719) may affect my retirement and it makes me very worried. I don't think this is fair to blanketly cut my benefits especially so near to retirement. Please oppose these bills. Thank you

Jane Dellaport, R.N.
P.O. Box 292
Keokea, Kula, Maui, 96790

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:08 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Protecting our State & County retirement benefits

From: ondocean@maui.net [mailto:ondocean@maui.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:04 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Henry J.C. Aquino; Rep. Karen Awana; rephanohano@hawaii.gov; repkeith-
agaran@capitol.gov; replee@capitol.gov; repnakashima@capitol.gov; repsaiki@capito.gov; repsouki@capitol.gov;
reptakumi@capitol.gov; reppine@capitol.gov
Subject: Protecting our State & County retirement benefits

Labor Committee members,

I would like to comment on proposed house bills that strip our hard earned benefits. I am a thirty-two year employee with the Public Works dept. here in Maui County. I have negotiated contracts and supported the PAC committee with UPW then HGEA for most of those year.

I am astounded that our endorsed candidates would author and move toward such destructive legislation: The overtime removal for salary consideration affects all police officers, firemen, inspectors, water & sewage treatment plant supervisors, all of us that said 'Ok, I'll go out after my regular shift, it will pay off someday when I retire'. Also, the bill removing medical benefits, forcing all of us to pay our own medical until medicare age.

It is my understanding that there are ten to twelve bills aimed at the public worker and their benefits. The bills that I have read and ask you to vote "no" are HB 1715, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726, 1727, 1737, and all others that take away our anticipated retirement benefits.

You can be assured that if these bills proceed through the House and on to the Senate, it will a ghost town amongst the halls and baseyards of the County and State.

What a letdown after all the enthusiasm generated by our Island born President of the United States. I wonder if he is aware that our Speaker of the House of Representatives of his home state has gone republican, and is proposing such destructive legislation.

Thank you for reading my email.

Dan Clark (270-7423)

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

Everybody in the world is feeling the impact of economy bubble that had burst and causes lots of business to crumble and ramble down. We have always thought that the State and the County will be immune to this kind of situation but because our Country had gone so deep that it's so hard to climb up. There are no magic or easy answers. These bills will do nothing but counter the intent of the existing bills that made our State and County unique as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people, who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around. Where is the spirit of Aloha in this bill?

I have foregone higher salaries because I believe in civil service and trusted the "**promise**" that I would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making the State and County employees the scapegoat of our financial and economic crises and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

Also, to turn around now and renege the promises made at hire is unethical. I, therefore, do not support these bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


Avelina Cabais
Land Use and Building Plans Examiner,
Planning Department
County of Maui

yamashita1- Kathy

From: jdack1@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT COMM. HEARING 2-13-09, 8:30 A.M., HBs 1718, 1719 & 1725

Hello,

My name is Jeff Dack, and I live in Wailuku. I am testifying today a private member of the public. However, I am also a civil servant working for the County of Maui's Planning Department and I am a member of HGEA. I and other members of my family also contribute to the community through volunteering, frequenting local businesses, and paying taxes.

Our family is struggling to keep up with expenses. I don't think it is fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard and one of my projects will certainly bring hundreds of thousands or even over one million extra dollars directly into the Maui County budget each year with no added service expenses if it's adopted by the County Council.

Public service is important to me and all of us. It's very disillusioning to see important employee benefits for me and my family threatened, such as the variety of health care and retirement "take-backs" to be heard by the Labor and Public Employment Committee in the near future. Please disapprove these benefit reductions.

I urge you and the House to find other ways to save or raise money, such I am working to do for Maui County.

Thank you,

Jeffrey Dack
283-1334

TESTIMONY ON
HOUSE BILL 1719
RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

FEBRUARY 13, 2009

CHAIRMAN RHOADES AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE,

I am Jeanne Hamamura, employee of the State Department of Defense. I am testifying on House Bill 1719, Relating to Public Employees.

I strongly urge members of this committee not to support this Bill. I believe that this proposal is robbing public employees of their earned benefit. I work hard at my job and dedicated many years of service to the State of Hawaii and to be confronted with this blow is heartbreaking. It is just so unfair to all public employees who have increased workloads because of restrictions on filling vacancies to shoulder this burden. Please consider this proposal carefully.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this written testimony.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1719 – Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby
Committee Clerk
Representative Lyla Berg, 18th District
Phone: (808) 586-6510
Fax: (808) 586-6511
Email: repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: t.schemel@att.net [mailto:t.schemel@att.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:56 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: HB 1719 – Relating to Public Employees

To Whom It May Concern:

Please add my name to the list people who opposes the bill to change the age at which state employees earn medical benefits at retirement.

This is one of the few perks given to state employees have made the commitment to live and work in Hawaii. This was a **PROMISE** made to me when I decided to move here 20 years ago.

I made a significant financial sacrifice, compared to the state benefits I could have received had I decided to remain in my home state. How can you now change the rules?? It is not fair!

Tom Schemel

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:08 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1719 & HB 1737

From: Jarod Hiramoto [mailto:jarodh@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:08 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Marcus Oshiro
Subject: HB 1719 & HB 1737

Hello Representative Rhoades and Representative Oshiro,

I am Jarod Hiramoto, an employee of the City and County of Honolulu. I recently became aware of these two House Bills that have passed first reading, HB 1719 & HB 1737. As an employee of the City, I am truly concerned with these two bills and concerned on how it will affect my retirement & medical benefits as well as that of my wife and family in the future. I initially joined the City/State Government as a career and viewed these benefits as part of the incentive of serving our Community. Seeing these two bills go further in this year's Legislature truly dissappoints me, as well as my family, and the people that I work with. My only request as a voting member of the public is that you NOT vote for nor hear in Committee these two House Bills this Legislative year.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Aloha,

Jarod HIRAMOTO

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:15 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: vote against HB1719, 1725, 1727, and 1737

From: Ellie Chun [mailto:coffeegirl2909@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:21 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: vote against HB1719, 1725, 1727, and 1737

The slew of bills slashing state/county employee benefits is most unjust. I entered civil service 24 years ago, taking a \$350 pay cut from my job in the private sector, with the thought that the retirement and health benefits for myself and my family compensates the lower pay. Having benefited from my cheap labor these past 24 years, as I now approach retirement, the legislature wants to take away these benefits that I have worked for all these years. I feel cheated!

Calvin Say talks about sharing the pain, yet all his bills target only the public employees. We have one of the lowest excise tax rates in the nation. Why not raise it and let everyone share in pulling the state out of the current economic crisis?

Please vote against these bills that place the burden of balancing the budget on just a small segment of the society!

Thank you,
Ellie Lum

yamashita1- Kathy

From: berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:45 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW:

Liz Labby
Committee Clerk
Representative Lyla Berg, 18th District
Phone: (808) 586-6510
Fax: (808) 586-6511
Email: repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Geri_O'Leary/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Geri_O'Leary/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:15 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject:

February 11, 2009

To: The Honorable Representative Karl Rhoades
Chair, House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Geri O'Leary

RE: Opposed to passage of HB 1719
Hearing Date: Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

My name is Geri O'Leary and I am a speech/language pathologist who works for Special Services, Honolulu District, McKinley Complex. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I feel that this bill:

Targets and discriminates against senior employees; almost forcing them to retire by June 30, 2009. Passing this bill could possibly initiate a class action suit which would be most

costly for the State.

Could cost the State a loss in tax revenue. Currently, the State is taxing our salaries; if senior employees retire in mass, the State will lose this income at a time when it is badly needed.

How will that affect the State budget?

Will cause the State to lose valuable, experienced teachers, speech pathologists, police officers, firemen etc. In my position in the DOE, it is the experienced speech pathologists (SLP) that are called upon to go to hearings when there are parental/legal disputes. We are the ones asked to help train and prepare the younger and less experienced SLPs so that they can provide adequate services to the State's handicapped youngsters. Most of us have been members of diagnostic teams and are needed to train school personnel regarding the process to determine educational eligibility. If we are forced to choose between early retirement with benefits or wait until we are 65 to retire, the State will lose valuable workers. Also, what message is this sending to younger employees?

Penalizes employees that have been faithful workers in the State for more than 25 years. We have put up with negotiated low salary increases, accepted lower percentages for retirement compensation (around 60% vs. 80% or greater in many other states) because of the medical and age provisions in the State's retirement package and to change it without even a year's warning for employees to prepare is unfair. It is disgusting way to treat your employees.

Having to retire will cause a reduction in income for employees to spend in local businesses. This is not what is needed at this time. Economy needs to be stimulated for recovery.

It seems that HB 1719 is just what we don't need—something to add to the panic, depression and feeling of distrust. Has the State consulted with economists as to what will be the fallout if thousands of employees retire by July 2009? It seems that what the State should be doing is looking for ways to create jobs, provide tax cuts, encourage spending etc. to stimulate the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:24 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Please Vote No on HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727

From: Jo Ann Schindler [mailto:joann.schindler@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:23 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Please Vote No on HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727

Chair Karl Rhoads, House of Representative's Committe on Labor & Public Employment:

I would like to express my concern about the "take-aways" proposed in the following bills: HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727. These bills will negatively impact State and County employees and retirees, notably those who are newly retired or nearing retirement after a lifetime of work and planning for their later years.

Speaker Calvin Say's desire to address the State's financial situation is commendable. However, I believe that these bills place an unfair share of the burden on government employees who, like their neighbors, have been affected by the national and local economic downturn. We have just learned the news about the \$2.95 billion devaluation of the ERS portfolio in 2008. Many have also suffered declines in their personal retirement and other savings accounts. Moreover, previous unfair raids on ERS funds have further impacted the long-range performance and health of the employees' retirement fund:

<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2007/Jul/24/ln/hawaii707240336.html>

Speaker Say's proposals – at best well-intentioned attempts to put more options on the table – are frightening additions to an already disturbing mix. It is counterproductive to jeopardize the health plans of aging workers and retirees whose conditions of hire included specific retirement benefits.

I have been saddened by news coverage of multinational, national, and local companies that have closed their doors, resulting in financial disaster for their employees and pensioners. However, I do not believe that the solution to this sad state of affairs is to "share the pain" by placing an additional burden on government employees whose pension fund has already been unfairly tapped.

Please help preserve the existing medical and financial safety net for our government employees and retirees. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Schindler

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Opposition to House Bills 1737 and 1719

From: Ken Kajihara [mailto:kkaj@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:46 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Fw: Opposition to House Bills 1737 and 1719

Dear Representative Rhoades,

I am writing to voice my opposition to House Bills 1737 and 1719. These measures may elicit uninformed public support, but as one of many who have dedicated their lives to public service, I ask that you take steps to kill these bills. I have over 32 years of extraordinary service but I also speak for newer employees, whose trust in government must be preserved in order to retain a quality workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak up for what I believe to be right.

Ken Kajihara

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Pono= Please do the right thing and vote NO.

From: Leslie Spencer [mailto:ls Spencer007@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:24 AM
To: Rep. Henry J.C. Aquino; Rep. Karen Awana; Rep. Marilyn Lee; Rep. Cynthia Thielen; Rep. K. Mark Takai; Rep. Roy Takumi; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Calvin Say; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kymberly Pine; Rep. Mark Nakashima; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Scott Saiki; Rep. Faye Hanohano
Subject: FW: Pono= Please do the right thing and vote NO.

Aloha Representatives,

I am a School Healthaide, (hope you folks know everything we actually do!) taking care of ALL our keiki, our future, with love. I am a taxpayer and I voted for you and yours, along with all of our state and county employees.

My years of passionate public service, (employed Nov. 1993) with HGEA as my union,, knowing that my salary is definitely a low one, however feeling secure knowing that I would be able to depend on health benefits and retirement for my future.

Regarding bills: HB 1719 and HB 1725 I urge you to vote "NO".

As you are aware, times are tough, and there must be other solutions to balance this damaged budget.

Mahalo,

Leslie Spencer

Windows Live™: Keep your life in sync. [See how it works.](#)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Tremaine Balberdi [Tremaine.Balberdi@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ, and who serve your communities, and will certainly think twice about future elections.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawaii. I, therefore, wholeheartedly, do NOT support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tremaine Balberdi
Secretary to Boards and Commissions
County of Maui
Planning Department
250 South High Street

Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
808-270-7253

----- County of Maui.
IT Security measures will reject attachments larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kenneth Esclito [kesclito@hhsc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:46 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: RE: HB1719 and HB 1725

I am opposed to the passage of HB1719 and HB1725. Myself, along with numerous co-workers, have worked in the State of Hawaii system for many years. We have put up with wages that are a joke compared to the private sector all because of the anticipated retirement benefits, which are now in danger of being reduced or taken away altogether. I feel that these measures are very unfair especially in light of the pay raise the Legislature has awarded itself this year in spite of the worsening economic picture.

Ken Esclito, RN

Confidentiality Notice:

This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:52 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby
Committee Clerk
Representative Lyla Berg, 18th District
Phone: (808) 586-6510
Fax: (808) 586-6511
Email: repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: William McKeon [mailto:wmckeon@pjpn.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:58 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: mmorita@hsta.org
Subject: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

My wife is a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I have many friends who are teachers. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I will tell my wife that she should retire in order to receive the benefits for which she has worked these many, many years. It is patently unfair to change the rules as you go when teachers like my wife have but put with low pay and poor working conditions because they were relying on the State's promise that they would get medical at retirement. This is a really bad bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

William M. McKeon

William M. McKeon, Esq.
Paul Johnson Park & Niles
Attorneys at Law
2145 Kaohu Street, Suite 203
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
Tel: (808) 242-6644

Fax: (808) 244-9775

CONFIDENTIAL: The information contained in this e-mail message may be PRIVILEGED, CONFIDENTIAL and PROTECTED FROM DISCLOSURE. If you are not the intended recipient, any further disclosure or use, dissemination, distribution or copying of this message or any attachment is strictly prohibited. If you are not a designated recipient of this message, or believe you have received this e-mail message in error, please notify the sender immediately by reply e-mail or by collect telephone call, and delete the e-mail. Thank you.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: krisueoka@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kristi Ueoka
Organization: Individual
Address: Wailuku, Hawaii
Phone:
E-mail: krisueoka@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:24 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: andrea.whalen@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: andrea whalen
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: andrea.whalen@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:33 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Jocelyn.Ugalino@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jocelyn Ugalino
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: Jocelyn.Ugalino@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Tui Anderson [Tui.Anderson@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills 1715, 1718, 1719,1723, 1725, 1726 and 1727

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bills 1715, 1718, 1719,1723, 1725, 1726 and 1727

I realize we are in tough economic times, however slashing governmental employee benefits is not the solution. Many employees can receive higher pay in the private sector, the benefits offered to county and state employees are some of the reasons we have chosen to work for the public. Living in Hawaii is challenging enough and we all make sacrifices to stay here. If these bills are passed we will lose many valuable employees whom dedicate their lives to the betterment of the community.

Quality employees are hard enough to find, why make it less attractive for us to stay?

I urge you to not pass these bills, think about how the community as a whole will be affected by this.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Tui Anderson
Water Conservation Specialist
Department of Water Supply
County of Maui

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: margueriteahkee@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.wpd

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Marguerite Ah-Kee
Organization: Individual
Address: 2726 Leolani Place Makawao, HI 96768-8645
Phone: (808) 572-9635
E-mail: margueriteahkee@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Arnold Y. Imae, Planner
Water Resources & Planning Division
Department of Water Supply
County of Maui

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
 And members
 Committee on Labor & Public Employment
 House of Representatives
 State Capitol
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

**SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
 House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
 House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
 Trust Fund**

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Nina-Lehua Kawano
 County of Maui
 Planning Department

TO: House Labor and Public Employment Committee

Hearing Date & Time: 2/13/09, 8:30 a.m.

Bill No.: HB 1719, Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits

From: Jennifer Shishido, State employee and member of HGEA

Testimony in Opposition

I am opposed to this bill for the following reasons:

1. This bill would severely affect state operations:
 - a. Many state employees who are eligible to retire but would be willing to work a few additional years would retire before 7/1/09. This would create a nightmare situation where mandated services or operations would not be carried out. Many state offices are already having employees do multiple functions at the expense of other functions, creating backlogs and gaps in services and legally required documentation.
 - b. Many state offices already have difficulty hiring and retaining employees because of the low pay. Qualified applicants who choose to come to work for the State do so because of the benefits. When the state cut back on the medical benefits for retirees a few years ago, the applications for positions fell. Unless the pay is raised, by cutting the benefits, the number of applicants for state positions will continue to fall.
2. This bill is unfair:

It retroactively punishes workers who came to work for the state and sacrificed salary for benefits over the years. Salaries were not enough to invest in other retirement investments so the typical state employee came to rely on the state retirement package, which included free medical benefits, which includes not having to pay for the Medicare portion.

If the state can't keep its promises, then no one can trust the state to do anything.

Please hold this bill. Thank you.

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: **Oppose**

Testifier will be present: **No**

Submitted by: Guy K. Joao

Organization: Individual

Address: 266 Pailolo Place, Kaunakakai, HI 96748

Phone (808) 553 5777

E-mail: guykjoao@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

The State of Hawaii is suffering due to the economy and now the government workers benefits are being focused on. For the same jobs in the private sector, we are paid less but the benefits package is the backbone of government workers statewide. Now when we can least afford it, this proposal seeks to break the back of all government workers statewide. The same back that have help up the state government since its beginnings. The government benefits package helps workers compensate for any other shortfall in income. Many current employees and their dependants have pressing medical needs which require daily medication. If these benefits are cut and workers are unable to afford medical coverage and needed medication, what is the cost? How many lives need to be put at risk so the State Budget can look good on paper? Does the legislature have the same proposal for their benefits package? Do they have the same proposed restrictions of their retirement? If not, why? Our taxes pay for all these things too. Other options need to be looked into because the cost will be too high if this legislation passes. It is shameful that this proposal appeared in the state where we supposedly take care of one another like "Ohana" – like family. I oppose HB 1719.



Guy K. Joao

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jagnes@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: JOANNE AGNES
Organization: Individual
Address: 5400 LIKINI ST #402 HONOLULU, HI 96818
Phone: 808-387-5093
E-mail: jagnes@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:
Changes should only affect new employees.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Christian Wong [mercuri@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:59 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: 2009 RETIREMENT & HEALTH BENEFIT LEGISLATIVE BILLS

Christian Wong
Captain
Hawaii Fire Department

COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Friday, February 13, 2009
8:30AM

Measures:
HB1718
HB1719
HB1725

Committee is requesting 3 copies for paper submissions. No specified number of copies requested for email submissions.

Testimony

I am a firefighter. On December 18, 1995, you and I entered into an agreement. I agreed to serve, and you agreed to take care of me and my family. Since that day many things have happened.

Each day, I pack my bag and drive to work, to spend 24 hours away from my family and friends while in the service of our community. For over thirteen years I have done so, because you agreed to pay the majority of my medical insurance premiums.

I have aided your loved ones, in the dead of the night, providing them with comfort and care to the best of my abilities because you agreed to make sure that if I am ever sick, you would provide me with medicine.

I have eaten heat and soot and shit from my superiors, because you agreed to make sure my teeth would be fixed if they ever broke.

I have seen horrible sights. Pools of blood, broken bodies, a woman's brain splattered across an entire stream bed. I have seen drowning victims, stroke victims, people whose lives were taken, people who took their own lives. All their faces are with me, they will always be with me; these faces are now a part of me. Lifeless, contorted, faces screaming out in silent agony. But each day, I pack my bag and go to work, because you agreed to make sure my eyes would be cared for so they can see my son's smile.

I have faced the beast, stared into its soul. I have seen hell on earth. I have been burned, I have been brave. I have been scared. I have fought fire until my body would no longer function. I have run into burning buildings, I have had my lungs filled with toxic gases. I have breathed in diesel fumes and watched as my brother firefighters succumbed to cancer. I have seen their children develop cancer. I am afraid of cancer. But each day I pack my bag and go to work, because you agreed to make sure I would have medical insurance so my body would be taken care of when my service was done.

When you drive our roads, what do you see? Do you see trees? Do you see the ocean? I see graves. 47 mile marker, drunk man drove his motorcycle into a guard rail. 44 mile marker, car cut in half, driver completely crushed. 23 mile marker, girl died in head on collision. I still can hear her screaming while I'm trying to get her blood pressure. But each day I pack my bag and go to work, because you agreed to release me from this horror film after 25 years.

What do you think it's like to leave your wife in the morning knowing you won't see her until the following morning? What do you think it's like knowing that you may not come home? How do you think my wife feels knowing I may not come home? What is it like to spend 1/3 of your life away from your children? What is it like when they beg you to stay and spend the day with them with tears running down their cheeks? But each day, I pack my bag and go to work, because you agreed that I would get to spend all my time with them when all this is done.

I am a firefighter. You and I have an agreement. I'll be damned if I let you break it.

Hawaii State Legislature Submit Testimony by Email

Bill HB 1719

My name is Lorna Young and I am an LPN at the Hawaii State Hospital. I have been a single mom for 30 tough years and will be expecting my first grandchild this year. I have been looking forward for retirement and helping with her care while her parents work.

This year I have been working for the State of Hawaii for 33 years. In the month of June I will be 55 years old and am looking forward towards retirement either this year or next year. I was anticipating on getting all the retirement benefits that I will be entitled to. I have put in my request for my first counseling session. According to this proposed bill I must retire on 7/1/09 if I am to retain the benefits that the previous retirees have. I don't know how many other proposals that might affect my retirement income. Working for the state has been a challenge financially (outside employment most times paid higher), but the state always had the best benefits during active employment and for retirees. It would be a shame if this bill is passed.

When I did the on-line calculator on the EUTF website....I might have enough money if I retire for my bills. I would only have to work part-time for my play money. If this bill is passed, and if I don't retire on 7/1/09, would this mean I am forced to continue to work full time in my present job until I am 64???before Medicare kicks in. Or would this mean if I retire that I would have to get another full time job to meet my monthly expenses, which doesn't make sense!

I belong to UPW and was under the impression that once a benefit has been obtained, you cannot go back on it. I feel like a victim, when they took away our pay increments, they took away our reward system for the years of service we have contributed towards our job. All the years I have endured as a single mom with no pay raises or minimal pay raises to meet my regular expenses (that had inflated because of the economy) had been hard on me. I am a good employee and have always gotten very good PASS reports. I feel like my bubble has been popped when I heard about this bill....I hope to God that this doesn't pass.

If the state is trying to save money and reduce their workforce, would offering early retirement help? Can this replace the need for bill HB 1719 and the possibility of furloughs?

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice-Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employees

Scheduled Hearing: Friday, February 13, 2009, 8:30 am, State Capitol Conference Room 309

Not in support of HB1719,

Related to suspending state and county contributions to EUTF for employees retiring after 7/1/09 prior to Medicare retirement age

I am testifying in opposition to HB1719. I am a state employee with more than 30 years of service but am only 56 years old. This bill is highly unprincipled and severely affects employees close to retirement. I have counted on the retirement benefits offered by the state and had planned to work until age 62. At this point, I am seriously considering retiring now to avoid loss of benefits.

This bill discriminates against long-time government employees who have served the public for decades. If cost-cutting measures are to be implemented, then the change of benefits should start with any new employees starting July 1, 2009.

I am willing to take a 10% pay cut or one day furlough, but do not agree to the change in retirement benefits starting July 1, 2009.

Many other long-time employees who are in similar situations as I am are also planning to retire now to avoid the decrease in retirement benefits starting July 1, 2009. The government will be left with hundreds, if not thousands of vacant positions. Highly skilled employees along with institutional memory will be lost. The government will be hard-pressed to replace the retired employees.

Based on the reasons state above, I ask that this HB1719 not be passed out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kit Uyeda
98-331 Kilihe Way
Aiea, HI 96701
Ph: 488-4622

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Karen Hirose [karenhirose@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 6:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1719

To: House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
for hearing on HB1719 - Relating to Public Employees on Friday, February 13, 2009

My name is Karen Hirose and I have been a state social worker since 1977. I strongly oppose HB1719 which proposes to suspend state/city contributions to EUTF for all state/city employees who retires after July 1, 2009 until the retiree reaches Medicare retirement age.

While I have the years of service and can retire at any time, I decided to postpone this due the downturn in the economy and its' effects on my financial investments. If this bill should pass, I would be faced with the choices of: retiring at the end of June to avoid the added costs of covering the state's share of the medical premiums for five years; working until age 62 and using part of my social security income to pay those medical premiums; or working until age 65 to avoid paying those medical premiums.

If the intent of this bill is to help trim the state budget, then if workers in my situation decide to postpone retirement because they have decided on the second or third of the above choices, what has been accomplished? Perhaps one should consider incentives to those employees who are in the top level of their pay scale to retire rather than such a negative approach.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this bill.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kila [kilastatts@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 6:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony on HB 1719

Dear Honorable Representatives:

I am opposed to HB 1719. I have worked for the state for the last 14 years and even though I do not get paid a lot of money, I knew that I could count on having a retirement package that would help me live in Hawaii when I retire. This bill would take all of that away and I will end up having to struggle to make ends meet after I retire after 30 years of service.

I don't believe that it is right for the House to try to balance the budget at the expense of state workers. Please look at other ways to balance the budget that doesn't penalize state workers, who work very hard to provide a public service to all of Hawaii's people. In our Department, we have cut spending about 30% and have been creative about creating new revenue streams for our Division. Times are tough for everyone and I think you all need to share the burden of the budget on all Hawaii's residents, not just state workers.

Thank you for your time to read my testimony and I hope that you make the right decision.

Meghan Statts

yamashita1- Kathy

From: RickiAikau@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 8:41 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testing

Per email testimony is in regards to

HB 1106 HB 1726
HB 1718 HB 1727
HB 1719
HB 1723
HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Aloha!

I am Fredericka Aikau, an employee with HSPLS. I am a Library Assistant. I am objecting to, and voting "NO", to the proposed changes to our benefits. We work so very hard, with very little pay. The main reason we do so is the medical benefits, as well as the retirement package. You must not take these away from us, or - for what do we work such a strenuous, physically and mentally, job? We are proud to offer public service, but must pay our bills. To avoid an increase in homelessness, as well as health related problems, it is imperative that none of these proposals are taken seriously, and are stricken immediately.

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: wendy.kobashigawa@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Wendy Kobashigawa
Organization: Individual
Address: Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone:
E-mail: wendy.kobashigawa@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

Future retirees should not be penalized by eliminating their medical coverage until they reach medicare retirement age. Retirement is usually planned out years in advance to ensure that the retirees can live on their fixed income. By denying medical coverage, many will be forced to continue working as they won't be able to adjust their planned retirement savings to accommodate this sudden decision. Has comparisons been done to determine which is more cost effective...keeping an employee on payroll for several more years or paying retirement/medical benefits?

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:49 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Nalani.Kaauamo@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Nalani Kaauamo
Organization: Individual
Address: 180 Wailua Rd Haiku, Keane, Hawaii
Phone: 808-248-7858
E-mail: Nalani.Kaauamo@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Priscilla Echalas [Priscilla.Echalas@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:53 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Fwd: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

>>> <mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov> 2/10/2009 9:22 AM >>>
Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Priscilla Echalas
Organization: Individual
Address: 1827 Kaohu Street Wailuku, Hi
Phone: (808) 270-7444
E-mail: Priscilla.Echalas@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

The State of Hawaii's economy is again suffering and government workers benefits are at the focal point. We are one of the lowest paid and yet we are the ones who are being asked to give up one of our most important benefit. I have been working for 25 years in hope of retiring at a reasonable time in my life while my health is still good. This bill will certainly dash that. Without the medical benefit after retirement is not an option for anyone. We cannot afford to pay the medical premiums that will be levied on us. There are many of us within that time frame of a few years to retirement who have been diligently working to attain that golden age of accomplishment. To have that rug pulled out from under us to balance the State's budget is an inexcusable means of meeting that goal. There are other alternatives like curtailing pay raises or work furloughs that could be explored, but HB1719 is certainly not the "PONO" way. We live in a State where we take care of each other as evidenced through our support of our local sports and famous celebrities. How can we continue this morale if the very people who have helped to keep this State safe and beautiful are being subjected to such a harsh treatment? I know for myself, and countless other brothers and sisters that I have been blessed to work with, will not have that same enthusiasm. This bill may save millions, but at what cost? The economy will get better, as it always has, and we will survive. I oppose HB1719.

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:05 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Roxanne.Sarme-Chun@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Roxanne Sarme-Chun
Organization: Individual
Address: 12th Street Lanai City, HI
Phone: 808-565-7086
E-mail: Roxanne.Sarme-Chun@co.maui.hi.us Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

The State of Hawaii's economy is again suffering and government workers benefits are at the focal point. We are one of the lowest paid and yet we are the ones who are being asked to give up one of our most important benefit. I have been working for 3 years in hope of retiring at a reasonable time in my life while my health is still good. This bill will certainly dash that. Without the medical benefit after retirement is not an option for anyone. We cannot afford to pay the medical premiums that will be levied on us. There are many of us within that time frame of a few years to retirement who have been diligently working to attain that golden age of accomplishment. To have that rug pulled out from under us to balance the State's budget is an inexcusable means of meeting that goal. There are other alternatives like curtailing pay raises or work furloughs that could be explored, but HB1719 is certainly not the "PONO" way. We live in a State where we take care of each other as evidenced through our support of our local sports and famous celebrities. How can we continue this morale if the very people who have helped to keep this State safe and beautiful are being subjected to such a harsh treatment? I know for myself, and countless other brothers and sisters that I have been blessed to work with, will not have that same enthusiasm. This bill may save millions, but at what cost? The economy will get better, as it always has, and we will survive. I oppose HB1719

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: flash_rascal@hawaiiintel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Julie
Organization: Individual
Address: Makawao, HI
Phone:
E-mail: flash_rascal@hawaiiintel.net
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:
House Representatives~

I ask for your support in rejecting House Bills 1719 & 1725. Many of us who chose to work in government made that decision with the knowledge that government employees are not equally compensated with those in the private sector for the same type of work.

We understood that, however, our focus was on the bigger picture, retirement. I come from a family of government workers. I was taught at an early age to prepare for retirement. I was informed by my family that the medical benefits you would receive in retirement would outweigh the difference in salaries. I chose government specifically for this reason. To take away or change these medical benefits after 18 years of service is unfair to all government workers who have already put in their time.

These proposed changes should ONLY APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEEES. New employees are notified upon acceptance of their medical benefits & they would be able to plan for their future.

I have known several retirees who are struggling to make ends meet on their retirement income. Due to increasing medical conditions that come with age they are wondering where they can cut back to save a little money. Is it fair to make our retired generation decide whether to put food on the table or take care of their health?

Should you allow HB1719 & HB1725 to go forward, many of our retirees may forego medical treatment that is necessary. It is also my understanding that prevention is much more cheaper in the long run. A person to waits for treatment until it is to later or the pain in unbearable is much more costly to all!

In regards to HB1725, why would you consider canceling a person's drug, vision, and dental. I am a single parent raising 2 children. The children are under my government plan. Should you force me to pay 100% out of pocket for drug, dental and vision, I would have no money left over to live off of to may my mortgage, food, utilities, education, and out of pocket medical expenses.

By forcing me to pay 100% for my drug, dental, and vision, you will be forcing me to seek government aid. Is this what you want?

The legislature should pass a bill to crack down on DEAD BEAT DADS who hide their income so that they don't have to pay CHILD SUPPORT. That is a much bigger issue. There are so many single parents who have to raise the children on their own because the non-custodial parent plays the systems and works for cash so they don't have to pay CHILD SUPPORT.

The legislature should be looking for additional money, by increasing fees and assessing costs to the providers and all the drugs addicts & alcoholics who have the excess money to purchase all these luxuries.

By allowing HB1719 & HB1725 to pass, the legislature and the State of Hawaii are breaking their contract with government employees. We agreed to be hired as a government employee with the understanding that our medical benefits would be taken care of in our retirement.

It is wrong to attack the middle class government worker who is just trying to make ends meet. Why make the rich richer & the poor poorer. Many of us government workers have only one job and one source of income, our government job! Many people in the legislature hold at least 2 jobs, their primary full time job and the job at the legislature. Many are also attorneys in private practice. Why not have the legislature give up all the pay increases that they voted for last year to fix the State's economy. What a representative makes part time, \$35,000-\$50,000 is equivalent to what a government worker may make in an entire year. Is that fair?

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:22 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Derrick.Falces@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Derrick Falces
Organization: Individual
Address: 1827 Kaohu Street Wailuku, Hi
Phone: (808) 270-7182
E-mail: Derrick.Falces@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

The State of Hawaii's economy is again suffering and government workers benefits are at the focal point. We are one of the lowest paid and yet we are the ones who are being asked to give up one of our most important benefit. I have been working for 33 years in hope of retiring at a reasonable time in my life while my health is still good. This bill will certainly dash that. Without the medical benefit after retirement is not an option for anyone. We cannot afford to pay the medical premiums that will be levied on us. There are many of us within that time frame of a few years to retirement who have been diligently working to attain that golden age of accomplishment. To have that rug pulled out from under us to balance the State's budget is an inexcusable means of meeting that goal. There are other alternatives like curtailing pay raises or work furloughs that could be explored, but HB1719 is certainly not the "PONO" way. We live in a State where we take care of each other as evidenced through our support of our local sports and famous celebrities. How can we continue this morale if the very people who have helped to keep this State safe and beautiful are being subjected to such a harsh treatment? I know for myself, and countless other brothers and sisters that I have been blessed to work with, will not have that same enthusiasm. This bill may save millions, but at what cost. The economy will get better, as it always has, and we will survive. I oppose HB1719.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Sue Dowsett [sdowsett@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:10 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1719;Oppose

Hearing date: 02-13-09/0830
Conf rm 309

I am a long time public employee who took this job 26 years ago because of the long term stability and benefits available; especially upon retirement. I love what I do and have endured years of extraordinary stress as a police officer. The work we do is hard, stressful and affects our home life. Any efforts to take away and reduce our benefits is not right. I was given oral and written assurances of the benefits available to me. Reducing those benefits violates that "implied contract" upon being hired.

I have willingly performed this job because I believe in it and felt that long term it would help support my family. Our medical benefits are very precious to us. I could have taken another job but, the primary benefits which attracted me to this job were the medical coverage--now and upon retirement.

I implore you to look at other ways to reduce the budget except through and on the backs of the public workers who are already doing more with less.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Susan Dowsett
Kailua, Oahu
261-1841

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:35 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: James.Pu@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: James K PU 111
Organization: Individual
Address: P.O. Box 448 Hana, Hi
Phone: 808-248-8254
E-mail: James.Pu@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:21 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: James.Perry@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: James P. Perry, Jr.
Organization: Individual
Address: P. O. Box 74 Hana, Hawaii
Phone: 808-248-8278
E-mail: James.Perry@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service.

This legislation, if passed will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009, and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire. I do not support House Bill No. 1719.

Sincerely,

Merry Prince
HGEA BU-13

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Randy Pico [Randy.Pico@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 1:06 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Kyle Yamashita
Subject: Testimony for HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Randy Pico
Organization: Individual
Address: 1827 Kaohu Street Wailuku, Hi
Phone: (808) 270-7182
E-mail: RandyPico@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

The State of Hawaii's economy is again suffering and government workers benefits are at the focal point. We are one of the lowest paid and yet we are the ones who are being asked to give up our most important benefits. I have been working for 21 years in hope of retiring at a reasonable time in my life while my health is still good. This bill will certainly dash that. Without the medical benefit after retirement is not an option for anyone.

We cannot afford to pay the medical premiums that will be levied on us. There are many of us within that time frame of a few years to retirement who have been diligently working to attain that golden age of accomplishment. To have that rug pulled out from under us to balance the State's budget is an inexcusable means of meeting that goal. There are other alternatives that could be explored. like for instance there are to many executives and assistants who get 25% and more at pay raise, they already make top wages maybe they should get a 4% raise like the rest of us, but HB1719,HB1727,HB1725 and all the new bills is certainly not the "PONO" way.

We live in a State where we take care of each other as evidenced through our support of our local sports and famous celebrities. How can we continue this morale if the very people who have helped to keep this State safe and beautiful are being subjected to such a harsh treatment? I know for myself, and countless other brothers and sisters that I have been blessed to work with, will not have that same enthusiasm. This bill may save millions, but at what cost.

The reason for choosing a county job and sticking to it for all these years for low pay is for these benefits we gave our service and to even think of bringing this to the table really shows the thanks. Economy will get better, as it always has, and we will survive. I oppose HB1719,HB1725,HB1727,and any other bills that take away benefits for the working class. the person who has proposed these bills will surely not be the peoples choice and have no place in our government office.

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Suzette Esmeralda [Suzette.Esmeralda@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:09 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1718 & HB 1719

I am against these bills. Most public employees have been loyal to their jobs because of the retirement benefits - especially the medical. Given the cost of medical these days, it wouldn't be worth retiring until you reach the retirement age as you will be paying quite a bit out of pocket just for medical.

I am also against this bill because there are those, such as my brother-in-law, who is a public employee with only a few years till he is eligible to retire, who NEEDS the medical for my sister. My sister was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis a few years ago and has since then had to quit her job unable to work. She relies on her husband and requires good medical coverage. Consideration needs to be given for situations such as these. Also, public employees who have been working for the State and County for most of their lives don't deserve to have anything taken away from them.

thank you,
SE

yamashita1- Kathy

From: berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW:

Liz Labby
Committee Clerk
Representative Lyla Berg, 18th District
Phone: (808) 586-6510
Fax: (808) 586-6511
Email: repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Leilani Soakai [mailto:lrsoakai@camhmis.health.state.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:29 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject:

FROM: Leilani Soakai
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

My name is Leilani Soakai and I am a Human Service Professional at the DOH Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division, Maui Family Guidance Center and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

It's unfair for them to change my health benefits because I signed on with the negotiated benefit of being able to work for 10 years vested and get 50% of medical covered for my spouse and I. My spouse recently became unemployed when he was laid off last month and now I've become the sole provider of medical care for him, my two children, and I. With this change I would need to work until age 65. I have put in 11 years and will need to put in 32 more years, a total of 43 years to get the same benefits as I do now, which makes this a very bad bill. As a public employee I give beyond already just to serve the public doing what no one else in the community does, and expect to be rewarded for filling the need, not cut back.

This bill may devastate state services when vested employees leave prior to June 30th to keep same benefits and find work elsewhere with better benefits, leaving a gap in service to the community most in need for mental health services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

"When your heart decides the destination, your mind will design the map to reach it"

Leilani Soakai
Human Service Professional
Maui Family Guidance Center
270 Waiehu Beach Road, Suite 213
Wailuku, HI 96793
Direct Line: (808) 243-1265 Main Line: (808) 243-1252 Fax: (808) 243-1254

Confidentiality Notice

This communication is intended only for the use of the addressee. It may contain information which is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient or the agent of the recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, copy or disclosure of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please immediately notify Leilani Soakai at (808) 243-1265 or via return internet electronic mail at lrsoakai@camhmis.health.state.hi.us and expunge this communication without making any copies. Thank you for your cooperation.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:03 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

From: Michael_Amore/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Michael_Amore/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:54 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Re: HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

Dear Representative Rhoads,

I just want to express my non-support for HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727. These bills aim at reducing government employees' health benefits. Please examine other avenues of saving government funds instead of diminishing state workers' health care coverage.

Mahalo,

Michael Amore

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1719

-----Original Message-----

From: pam morinaga [mailto:pammori2002@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 3:17 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Fw: HB 1719

see email below addressed to Rep. Say:

--- On Mon, 2/9/09, pam morinaga <pammori2002@yahoo.com> wrote:

> From: pam morinaga <pammori2002@yahoo.com>
> Subject: HB 1719
> To: repsay@capitol.hawaii.gov
> Date: Monday, February 9, 2009, 8:04 AM
> Representative Say,
>
> You are seriously affecting those of us who are single and
> have worked for the State and are planning on retiring in a
> year or so. I am such a person and have
> planned my retirement around the fact that my
> medical premium would be taken care of when I retire.
> How can you affect someone's life by such a Bill??
>
> In fact, I may retire early so that I
> will not be affected by this possibility. I am looking
> at my options of taking a penalty versus losing my medical
> premium coverage.
>
> Retirement should be something one looks forward to but it
> is giving me a lot of stress at this time.
>
> I wonder why you wrote the Bill to include both my
> portion of the premium that I pay not PLUS the portion that
> the State pays for active employees-- a double
> wammy!!!
>
> p. morinaga
>
>
>
>

February 10, 2009

Representative Karl Rhodes, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Dear Representatives Rhodes, Yamashita and members of the Labor and Public Employment Committee,

I am writing in opposition of HB 1718, HB 1719 and HB 1725 specifically proposed changes to retirement and medical benefits for public employees.

I've been employed with the State as a social worker for 30 years. Although I'm eligible for retirement, I had intentions of working for a few more years because I enjoy my job and have gained much experience and knowledge that I share with colleagues and families. HB 1718 and HB1719 target the experienced, seasoned employees who can still offer years of services and many of us will opt to retire before July 2009 in fear of losing the benefits that we thought we were working towards all these years. If HB 1719 were passed, I would be forced to retire on 6/1/09 because I cannot predict if I would be able to work to age 65. Why would I want to continue employment with the State if there is possibility that I must pay \$5,460 a year in medical premiums should circumstances force me to retire before I reach 65?

HB 1725 would require the employee to assume the total cost of premiums for drug, vision and dental benefits and this is in addition to the medical premiums, which is proposed to increase in another House bill. I'm certain this sudden increase in premiums will probably result in one of the largest pool of underinsured families, as employees would not be able to afford to absorb the cost of the benefits. Another real scenario would result in employees dropping their family plan and applying for QUEST to get coverage for their children.

Although Representative Say has stated he wanted to avoid lay offs of public employees these bills are in reality forced attrition and leave us with a difficult decision to retire to keep intact benefits or finding other jobs with better benefits. If everyone must "share in the pain" as Representative Say is quoted then the more equitable approach would be a furlough where every public employee is subject to essentially a pay cut.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,
Edie Watanabe
284 Aina Pua Place
Kapaa, HI 96746

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:10 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: laura.seaton@mauicounty.gov
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Laura Seaton
Organization: Individual
Address: 529 Kaikoo Street Wailuku, Hawaii
Phone: 808-270-7845
E-mail: laura.seaton@mauicounty.gov
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

As a personnel officer for the Department of Public Works, County of Maui, I truly believe what this bill proposes will be an undue, unnecessary hardship for the retired employees who have worked very hard for most of their adult lives serving the citizens of their home. So many government workers have worked in labor, equipment operation, custodial services - positions of sometimes very hard physical labor - or have worked in positions of incredible stress and ever increasing workloads.

In retirement, these employees have already had medical benefit amount cut, and even after 30 years of service, asking these employees to pay 100s of dollars a month for several years out of paycheck that is less than what they are making as workers, is asking too great a sacrifice of these people.

I deeply encourage you - as you address this bill and many others before you that cut pay and benefits and increase costs for government employees - please do not make it so easy to further burden the workers who have worked very hard running the government you legislate.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 3:52 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: laurie.newman@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: laurie newman
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: laurie.newman@co.maui.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/9/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Carol Takitani [Carol.Takitani@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 4:05 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1719 Please do NOT pass this

Would you vote to suspend state and country contributions to the EUTF is it affected your own mother????

What about the dedicated 30-year employee who cannot retire before July 1, 2009???

Please do vote against these changes.

Thank you!

- - - - -

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Roberta Chun [Roberta.Chun@co.mauhi.us]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 4:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: RE: hb1719 & hb1725

hb1719 & hb1725...mahalo

>>> LABtestimony <labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov> 2/9/2009 3:49 PM >>>
Hi Roberta,
I was just wondering which bill you are referring to.

Thanks,
Kristen
Vice Chair Committee Clerk
From: Roberta Chun [mailto:Roberta.Chun@co.mauhi.us]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 3:27 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: retirement

Please do not pass this bill, for hearing on Tuesday Feb 17, 2009 @ 0830 a.m. conference room
309 state capitol.....
Mahalo,
Roberta Chun

- - - - -
County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments
larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine
high-risk file types in attachments.

11 February 2009
15 Hale Makai Place
Lahaina, HI, 96761

Labor Committee,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed bills 1719 and 1737. I am against cutting the state workers retirement calculations and I am concerned that this proposal will increase the severity of our nursing shortage and will lead to unsafe working conditions and the potential lawsuits that will follow. This will end up costing a lot of money because they will have to hire expensive travel nurses to cover those who will retire. Many seasoned nurses who are a few years away from retirement are considering retiring now to save their pensions. We deserve to have our medical, dental and vision plan covered by our employer. We pay a good portion of the monthly premium as it is. To consider calculating our pension based on our base pay feels like a slap in the face, after spending decades working nightshift and holidays spent away from our families. We deserve to spend our senior years in dignity, not scraping by hoping that we will be able to put food on our table.

It is time to think outside the box. It would save millions to put office workers on four day work weeks, like they have in California with every Monday off. Much money could be saved by not having them work on the holiday as well as office electricity and water, including gasoline costs to the employee. How about changing benefits for new employees perhaps combining vacation and sick leave to paid time off days like they have at some private hospitals. This would be a way to trim the budget without taking away what workers have been promised when they were hired. How about increasing the sales tax, we have one of the lowest rates in the state and it would help the state budget and would be partially paid for by the tourist that come here. It's hard enough for the people of Hawaii to afford to live here. Why not build more windmills and solar energy systems so that the energy costs to the state will be reduced. Don't take away our medical and pension benefits without trying some of these other options first. How about putting an end to the welfare abuse and the people that come to Hawaii from other countries to have their babies and get medical care that they have no intention of ever paying for.

Sincerely,

Kelly Zimmerman-Levien
e mail: Zimleviens@aol.com

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kito Masusako [Kito.Masusako@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: RE: testing

Dear Ms. Kato,

I am referring to any and all bills that adversely affect my retirement and medical benefits:

1. HB 1108
2. HB 1718
3. HB 1719
4. HB 1720
5. HB 1721
6. HB 1722
7. HB 1723
8. HB 1725
9. HB 1727

Thank you,
Elden K. Masusako

>>> LABtestimony <labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov> 2/10/2009 7:50 AM >>>

Dear Mr. Masusako,

Thank you for your testimony. The House Labor Committee has several hearings scheduled in the next week. Please let us know which House Bill you are referring to so that your testimonial can be properly addressed.

Kathy Kato
Vice Chair Clerk

-----Original Message-----

From: Kito Masusako [mailto:Kito.Masusako@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 2:18 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testing

Twenty nine years ago I left a much more lucrative career in the automotive industry and started my career in County government. My County salary was less than half of what I earned as an automotive technician and potential business owner. The one and only reason for my career change, downgrade in pay and giving up on becoming a business owner was to provide future security for my new family and myself. My family and I have made many sacrifices in the past twenty nine years due to the career change, justifying the sacrifices by the benefits that were to come at the end of my career with the County. I have been counting on and planning my retirement according to what was negotiated for in good faith by our union, and promised to me by you elected officials.

How can any of you in good conscience, decide to take so much of my earned and promised benefits and future well-being away from me a year from my retirement?! Am I supposed to start a new career at sixty-five years old to supplement my income so that my wife and I can have a well-earned and respectable retirement as we have planned for the past thirty years. Why is it that we rank and file civil service employees are always the first to be singled out whenever the State administration and/or legislature fails to manage the State's finances properly. If you were to add up all the percentages of pay raises we have received in the past thirty years, it would hardly add up the thirty-six percent you recently voted for yourselves, not to mention the raise the governor received, and all during a failing economy.

Every time our contract has been negotiated, the State seems to have been in a "particularly difficult time", and the rank and file ends up with an all of three or four percent raise over two years.

If these proposed "penalties" on the rank and file are passed into law, you would be no different than corporation CEO's shamelessly and arrogantly accepting ridiculous bonuses and incentive packages after poor and failed performances. It seems the easy way out to address incompetence and short-sightedness in financial management is by reneging on or taking benefits and pay away from those already on the low end of the pay scale, or raising taxes. In other words, making others pay for your shortcomings and mismanagement. Is our present financial situation more the fault of you legislative money handlers and our administration or is it more the fault of the State and County rank and file and the general public?

It is true what Mr. Calvin Say said, that everyone should "share in some pain." It's obvious that he doesn't mean himself, members of the legislature and administration who have unconscionably benefitted during this hard time. It's easy to make the "hard" choices when it doesn't affect you and yours directly. He and some others seem to be posturing and grand-standing for obvious future political ambitions. It's one thing to sometimes be disrespected by public opinion, which is somewhat expected and tolerated, but to be disrespected and insulted by our own legislators, governor and employers is unforgivable, especially when it's for future personal gain for some. Is Mr. Say trying for favorable public opinions for himself at the expense of State and County workers? Are employees in the private sector being required to make similar sacrifices, as they stand to benefit from our sacrifices? You legislators and our governor had your chance to "share in some pain" and set a very good example by refusing your pay raises, at least till a future time.....but we all know how you voted..... and actually expected it. Your excuses for accepting your raises were so lame and transparent that they were quite embarrassing. You all will do whatever you all will do and for whatever reasons,hopefully your true consciences and an understanding of PONO, if you have one, will be your guides.

- - - - -

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine high-risk file types in attachments.

- - - - -

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Charlene Sakamoto [Charlene.Sakamoto@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: RE: testing

HB1725
HB1719
HB1737

>>> LABtestimony <labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov> 2/10/2009 5:48 PM >>>

Dear Ms. Sakamoto,

Thank you for your testimony. The House Labor Committee has several hearings scheduled in the next week. Please let us know which House Bill you are referring to so that your testimonial can be properly addressed.

Kathy Kato

Vice Chair Clerk

From: Charlene Sakamoto [mailto:Charlene.Sakamoto@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:03 PM
To: LABtestimony; gov@hawaii.gov; ltgov@hawaii.gov
Cc: senator@akaka.senate.gov; senaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov; senawana@capitol.hawaii.gov; Sen. J. Kalani English; senhanohano@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkeith-akaran@capitol.hawaii.gov; senlee@capitol.hawaii.gov; sennakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov; senpine@capitol.hawaii.gov; senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov; sensaiki@capitol.hawaii.gov; sensouki@capitol.hawaii.gov; sentakumi@capitol.hawaii.gov; senyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov; Mayors Office; senator@inouye.senate.gov; bill.medeiros@mauicounty.us; danny.mateo@mauicounty.us; gladys.baisa@mauicounty.us; "jo anne.johnson"@mauicounty.us; joseph.pontanill@mauicounty.us; michael.molina@mauicounty.us; michael.victorino@mauicounty.us; wayne.nishiki@mauicounty.us; sol.kahoolalahala@mauicouty.us
Subject: testing

Hi My name is Charlene Sakamoto and I was born and raised on the island of Maui. I have put my trust in a lot of you by voting for you. I work for the County of Maui and am a member of HGEA. I am also a taxpayer and a parent of 5 children. I spend my money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing, and other needs such as household expenses. I also have other expenses such as a mortgage, land taxes, gas to get to and from work, school expenses, and etc. My husband and I both work so hard to survive and live on the island.

I don't believe its fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work very hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I left the private sector after 20 years of service to come to work for the County of Maui knowing that I was taking a pay cut but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family even after I retire.

I think its so wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me because it will not affect only me but also affect my family.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. We are the work force and it seems like the little people are being targeted on and we are the ones that will be suffering by these proposed changes. Cost of living on the islands are so high as is and now you want to strip

us of what little we have how do you think that is fair. We are actually in a time of Depression and it seems like the rich will get richer and not suffer but the low and middle class are the ones that will suffer. Why are you targeting state and county employees..why not look into other ways such as cutting non-essential programs, cut down auto expense by not allowing so many employees to use either county or state vehicles, do not give raises to anyone making more than 50 thousand dollars. Please protect the working force during these tough times because we put our trust in you and now we will see if you really will stand up for us.

County of Maui.

IT Security measures will reject attachments larger than 12 MB, and will block or quarantine high-risk file types in attachments.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: CComiso-Fanelli@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 7:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill 1719

Dear Karl Rhoades,

I am an RN for Adult Protective Services, doing the darkest side of nursing possible with low pay compared to the private sector, but with good benefits. As a State employee for many years, I take pride in my job knowing I'm serving the community who may not get serviced otherwise. We do not have the right to refuse nursing services to those in need as civil servants.

I took a job with the State after working at Straub for many years because I felt like I really made a difference, though the pay was less, the benefits were better. After years of service and expecting health benefits even after retirement, it is unacceptable that it would even be considered to take it away. It is blatant disrespect for State workers who sacrificed lower wages in order to receive better benefits.

Because our salary is meager compared to private sector, I work three jobs in order to support myself and my son. I have no family alive to help me and will not be able to afford to pay for what should already have been mine after years of service. That would be akin to stealing!

Please consider the devastating effects this will have on those who have already made the monetary sacrifice in order to retire in dignity. I implore you to do the right thing.

Heaven forbid after years of taking care of the sick and disabled, I too will become one who is unable to afford medical treatment and care for myself.

Sincerely,
Connie Comiso-Fanelli, RN-APS
832-0242

The late Dr. Adrian Rogers (1931 to 2005) Memphis, TN, offered the following observation several years ago and it bears great significance today:

"You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the rich out of freedom. What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving. The government cannot give to anybody anything the government does not first take from somebody else. When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that my dear friend is about the end of any nation."

"You cannot multiply the wealth by dividing it."

Internal Virus Database is out-of-date.

Checked by AVG.

Version: 7.5.549 / Virus Database: 270.8.1/1731 - Release Date: 10/17/2008

7:01 PM

--

NOTICE: This information and attachments are intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged and/or confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited and may be punishable under state and federal law. If you have received this communication and/or attachments in error, please notify the sender via email immediately and destroy all electronic and paper copies.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: deets@u.washington.edu
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:05 AM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

FROM; Gregory Steven Houghtaling, Firefighter, Hawaii FD Honokaa/C shift

TO; Committee on Labor and Public Employment

For the hearing on 2/13/2009 @ 0830ish in conference rm 309.

And for measures HB1718, HB1719, & HB1725

Although I am relatively new to the HFD (hire date 7/16/07) and Hawaii in general I have been a paid union FF for 23 years on the mainland.

We pay 12.5% of our salary to our retirement. This is far more than most Firefighters(FF's) pay into their state retirement. If you our Lawmakers want to make for a short fall of cash why not raise our taxes (equal % for all in the form of payroll/state income tax)? Are you all taking your own retiree health benefits away? Or your currently working members drug prescription benefits?

This attack on our benefit package is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to undermine a contract we (public employees and employers) have agreed upon outside of contract negotiations.

If you do your homework I believe you will find that the Fire Dept. employees are less expensive to insure than other public employees (Washington state found this to be true and the City of Everett paid the Firefighters some of the savings to be on their self insured health insurance)in general.

We emergency service workers do and see things that nobody should have to. We risk much and are paid little. When was the last time you had to tell a father that yes indeed the two burnt/dead children under the blanket with their mother and her boyfriend are his.

Instead of taking away benefits for the retiree why not ask all public employees to take equal and temporary reductions in benefits?

Mahalo for your time and consideration in this mater and if you have any questions or coments for me please feel free to contact me at any time.

Greg Houghtaling
C# 360 509 2049/H# 808 966 5015
15-1817 Laamia st(14th), Keaau, Hi, 96749 deets@u.washington.edu

PS please ignore the below stuff its my wifes email address I share.

Denise L. Houghtaling RN, MSN, FNP-C
Doctoral Student

University of Washington
School of Nursing
Health Sciences Bldg. T427
Seattle, Washington.

**"Remember the greatest bridge between hope and despair is a good nights sleep"

***"It is not the years you live in your life but the life you live in your years"

78-7019 Mana Opelu Ln
Holualoa, HI 96725
324-4052/937-3767
mcrispi@hotmail.com

Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives, State of Hawaii

Chairman Karl Rhoads & Committee Members:

Concerning HB1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits – OPPOSED
Concerning HB1719 Relating to Public Employees – OPPOSED

I am a Hawaii public employee for more than a quarter century, dedicated to furthering the education and public welfare of the residents of Hawaii. I have weathered several recessions and remained a public servant during boom times when I might have earned more in the private sector, because I believe that what I do is important to the members of our communities. I accepted the salary delay several years ago that cut my annual pay for the year by one paycheck. I accepted being forced into the EUTF when I had cheaper health insurance through my labor union.

I am nearing retirement age, and see all of the bills currently before your committee designed to curtail retirement benefits as poor reward for many years of dedicated service. Employees look forward to retirement from the date they are hired, anticipating that their health benefits will continue as promised, and their Medicare premiums paid, as they have been for decades.

If HB1719 should pass and retirees are forced to pay their medical premiums from age 62 to age 65 (or older for younger employees), many will be forced to continue working or retire without medical coverage, or spend a third or more of their State retirement for medical insurance. Assuming that a single retiree has to pay his/her insurance, you will be reducing the retirement pay by \$3600 per year or more. For a couple it could equal more than half of their state retirement. This will ultimately cost the State because retirees will not have discretionary income to spend; Medicaid costs could increase because of retirees who try to do without medical coverage and have a catastrophic illness, reduced contributions to charitable organizations such as the Food Bank and United Way who depend upon us to help the less fortunate, and in loss of good employees who choose to abandon or avoid government jobs for better pay and benefits.

A factor to consider: if the average 62-year-old employee has 25 years of service, he/she is at or near the top of the pay schedule. Can the State afford to keep senior employees working past 62? If each step of the HGEA salary schedule is an increase of \$160 per month and there are 11 steps, letting senior workers retire early without penalty could save more than your current proposals, because the State could recruit new employees at lower wages, 'creating' jobs to help the economy. Now is the time to do it, because in good economic times the starting salary of a State employee is not competitive with the private sector. And think of the good will and positive publicity that you would create!

This recession will pass sooner or later, but the changes you are proposing will not. You will force more of the population into reduced circumstances that will echo throughout the State's economy. Please look for win/win solutions – they exist.

Mahalo,

Mary Crispi

From: ANTONIE WURSTER [AVWALOHA4321@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:49 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 1718, HB 1719, and HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Kindly consider a broader and more comprehensive approach to the rising cost of health care than the harsh take away bills, HB 1718, HN 1719 and HB 1725.

- HB 1718 targets retirees, who would need to pay a substantial part of their Social Security payments for Medicare Part B if the State discontinues reimbursement of the cost, currently over \$1,000 per year. Do you think it wise to load that cost onto public employee retirees when all other costs are rising? Do you believe that all will find Part B affordable?
- HB 1719, by discontinuing State contributions for health benefits for those public employees retiring after July 1, 2009, may result in the loss of the most experienced, as they leave public service to protect their benefits. Is this a wise move?
- Is it wise to halt prescription drug coverage when drugs prevent more serious conditions that would require expensive hospitalization?

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Yvonne.N.Ching@courts.state.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony opposing a variety of bills to be heard on 2/13/09 and 2/17/09

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this testimony this morning. I have been a State employee for over 30 years and plan to retire in a few years. My retirement plans are based on the medical, dental and pharmaceutical benefits that are in place right now as I write this. It would be a grave mistake for the State to reduce those benefits.

Many baby boomers who are state employees will be retiring very soon and already face severe financial losses in our retirement plans through ERS or deferred comp. The added burden of unexpected medical costs due to cuts in benefits or increasing the age for eligibility will further crush our plans.

If you earmark a date for benefits to be reduced, you will see a stampede of employees trying to get grandfathered into the old benefit plans. Can you imagine the impact on departments statewide? The state will face an incredible and irreversible loss of knowledge and experience.

If any changes are made to benefits, it should be applicable to new employees hired after the effective date of the legislation. These new employees would not have based their lifetime financial decisions and plans on the benefits that you are now being asked to take from us.

For the above reasons, I urge you to vote NO on the following bills to be heard on the following dates:

Friday, February 13, 2009

HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09

HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09

HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;

HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;

HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

I urge you to act and vote responsibly and be accountable to your constituents and their future.

Sincerely,
Yvonne Ching
ITCD
Judiciary, State of Hawaii
PH. (808) 538-5336
FAX (808) 538-5802

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Penni LaBatte. As a public employee for 7 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1719, HB 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is

playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Javier Aceret. As a public employee for 18 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is

playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Susan Nakagawa [ssnaka@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: TESTIMONY REGARDING HOUSE BILLS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom It May Concern:

I oppose the following House Bills:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

I am an employee that has worked in public service with the State of Hawaii for 12 years and will continue to do so for the next 10+ years. I have a family that depends on my income and therefore cannot support the House Bills that Speaker Calvin Say has addressed. It will be an extreme hardship for our family to survive if health benefits and wages are touched. Although I don't plan on retiring yet I am very upset about the fact that all the benefits that I thought I would get when I retire will change if these House Bills go through. Years ago I made the decision to leave the private sector and work for the State not because of the pay but mainly for the benefits that the State had to offer. I am sure I am not alone when I say I am not the only one that feels this way. You have thousands of dedicated employees that have put years of service to the State. Why should we be penalized and have our wages and benefits taken away from us. What do we have to look forward to when we retire.

Please look for other solutions to balance the State budget.

Thank you.

Susan S. Nakagawa

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Paulie Schick [paulieschick@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:15 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for today and Tuesday morning bills

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony Opposing:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage

I implore you to oppose the above listed house bills. They target the aged who went into public service, at lesser than private sector pay, on the promise of retirement benefits.

Now on the eve of retirement, i become 62 on june 14, there are numerous bills threatening to reduce or negate benefits, effective July 1. 2009. Targeting the elders is demeaning our society. Equally is it unfair to the people who have been in public service for 32 years, such as my brother-in-law, but is only 53 years old. He was planning to retire at 55. Now he's faced with the prospect of being a public servant for another 12 more years! In addition, it will burden the ERS when it has lost more funds due to the economic downturn than at any other time. Further, because of no transition or training time to develop replacement staff with specific skill sets, it will cripple our government services to force a mass exodus of retirees who need to do so in order to keep the medical benefits high three. etc. You should not bail out our economy by taking away hard-earned benefits from public employees.

Thank you.

Paulie Schick
paulieschick@hawaii.rr.com

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jean.A.Chock@hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony HB 1719 Specifically

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jean Chock. As a public employee for 39 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1719 is a major concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, the he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

HB 1725 says that from July 2, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and health lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: SHARI PADUA [sharipadua@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:02 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bills

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning.

My name is Shari Yamaguchi and my mother is Marjorie Padua, we both work for the City. As public employees for 5+ years, we are deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1719 is also of concern to us. As civil servants, we chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, we believed that we would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards our years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans we may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:31 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: ikamaka2003@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position:
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: imogene Stringfield
Organization: Individual
Address: 45-710 keeahala Rd kaneohe Hi 96744
Phone:
E-mail: ikamaka2003@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

for myself i am a single mother, for 18 yrs i work for the state looking for benefits for myself when i retire so i would'nt have depend on anyone or welfare food stamps or even living on the streets i thought i woul'nt have worry about my health benefits. I still live with my mother because i could'nt afford raising my 2 children in an apartment or even try to buy a house there was no way . I am born here in hawaii an want to be able to stay here with my family.Please don't don't take away our benefits There has to other option.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Lee N Kravitz [lk.hi@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: THEFT OF PUBLIC WORKERS HARD EARNED RIGHTS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Lee N. Kravitz. As a public employee for 33 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726, and 1727 that steal from us in an attempt to balance the State budget at our expense, instead of raising the GET so all of us, residents and visitors alike may properly share in this burden. HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state?

A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of great concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.
Mahalo,
The Kravitz Ohana (Claudia, Kent, Kailey, and Lee).

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:45 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: sprinkelh001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Harry Sprinkel
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: sprinkelh001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

HB1719 Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09 There is a large number of State employees who are commonly referred to as the baby boomers. These employees are all reaching 30 years of loyal employment with the State and for the last 30 years or more have been promised that when they retire that the State will contribute for health benefits after they retire. They stayed with the State all these years for less pay than they could have earned in the private sector because of the State benefits before and after retirement. To eliminate this benefit now would be renegeing on your promise and deeply effect the amount of income of future retirees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: DeMello, Holly M [hdemello@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727, HB 1536, HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: DeMello, Holly M
Sent: Friday, February 06, 2009 4:53 PM
To: 'gov@hawaii.gov'
Subject: economy

Dear Governor Lingle,

I am very concerned about the economy. I have never written to someone in government, much less the governor. I work for the City & County of Honolulu and have been in various positions over the years. My supervisor has just passed out the different legislative bills that are being considered for us.

I object very much to all of it. I am divorced, single, 55 years old and I earn \$13.34 an hour. I will be at this pay rate for the next three years. I am barely making ends meet now and if there are cuts of any kind passed affecting the working poor, the government will have a bigger problem on their hands and that will be more and more homeless people. More and more homeless people will mean more and more mental health services will be needed. Believe me, I have been through both.

I am writing on behalf of all the people like me, who have gone through so many hard times already and are trying to put our lives together again. The blame for the deficit goes directly to our government officials, no one else. None of us have access to any government money and yes, shame on us because we have not demanded stricter stipulations as to how money is spent by the government. Restrictions need to be started for whatever programs, plans or expenses are not needed – not essential. Just like I live without cable, road runner, home phone, car insurance, and any kind of a decent vehicle, so does the government. If you being the governor would only pour our money into educating our children and developing exceptional programs for their mental well being, we would become a wealthy state. It is badly needed. You need to cut the government spending to the bare bones, like so many of us have to with ourselves. If you take any more from us and there is not much to take, we cannot survive.

I invite you or anyone else as a government official to live on \$13.34 an hour and then take away from that. We are already living below poverty. How much further below the poverty level do you want us to go?

I hope you read this and really, really give it thought, because this is from a real person who lives from paycheck to paycheck. You need to listen to us and do what is right. Whatever you have been doing hasn't worked otherwise we wouldn't be in this mess. Come out of your meetings, trips, and office and talk to us so you will really know what is wrong with our state. There are a lot of good people in small places and they have excellent ideas and the expertise to run the state's finances

better than it has been run. If things were run well, we would have a surplus rather than a deficit. You and no one else have to change things. You are in charge and no one else. Just like a household, the state has to get rid of the excessive spending and get down to the bare bones. Go without the big vehicles, luncheons, new furniture, anything to cut the spending; not take away from people who already don't have enough to live on.

And in case you are thinking, why don't I do something more than work for \$13.34 an hour. I am. I go to school half time and I'm aiming for a MFA in writing.

Sincerely,

Holly deMello

From: Rose Zastrow [zastrowrose@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:21 AM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To my State Legislature, please be advised that your decisions effect everyone within our state. As a state employee I do not live in a bubble, the money that I earn is spent within our communities and I pay taxes just like everyone else. To imply that I am being over paid, or that somehow my salary reduction/furlough can save the state from financial ruin is ridiculous and I resent it.

As a Public Employee I work very hard to provide service to my fellow citizens and your proposed solutions leave people with the impression that we are a drain on society. If you wish to be fair about the solutions then everyone must share equally, that could be done by a small increase in the sales tax or excise tax rather than inciting the general public into thinking we are stealing their money.

All of your proposed bills listed below are unacceptable. Please remember that not only are we tax paying citizens, we are a strong voting power.

**Sincerely,
Rose Zastrow**

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees

HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09

HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09

HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

- AND -

HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;

HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;

HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;

HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

From: S.Sugimoto [sato.sugimoto@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: TESTIMONY

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamamoto, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Stacie Sato-Sugimoto, as a public employee for over 3 years; I am deeply upset and concerned about the bills introduced by speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1726, and HB 1727.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. I sacrificed a larger salary and chose to work for the state because of my desire to help others, and because of the coverage it offered for me and my family. I thought it was a win-win situation where I may not get the nice salary but I had passion for my job, and in return I knew I had good coverage for my family. Now, I feel that we are being punished for being civil servants.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives.

As I sat and read through each proposed bill, I started to feel ill, just the thought of how many sacrifices you are asking state workers to make is just appalling. Yes there are concessions that need to be made, but trying to "balance the budget" by taking essentials like healthcare away from your own employees seems very disturbing to me.

I sincerely urge you all to please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees. We are dedicated to our jobs, in my case I'm dedicated to make a difference in the children's lives I touch, however how can I continue to do this making less money, and having less benefits? How will I support my own children?

In Peace,
Stacie Sato-Sugimoto, MA, LMHC, NC

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Diane Nakashima [diane.nakashima@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for 02/13/09

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Labor Committee Members,

My name is Diane Nakashima, and I am an education specialist with the University of Hawaii.

I don't believe its fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. We are already working more with less in our areas. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as the private sector, but felt that I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. I think its wrong to take these benefits away from me, especially since I am quickly approaching my twilight years.

Please don't make the public employees the scapegoats for this economic crisis.

Please vote No to HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725.

Respectfully,
Diane Nakashima

From: Cera T [aliiBRAIDS@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:30 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Cera Tollifson and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

We cannot afford to have this bill pass. It would cause many people unable to pay for medical insurance. They have worked all these years loyally for the state, only to have the benefits they so deserve to be taken away from them. That would be so wrong.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Wayne Lee.

As a public employee for 7 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

Yours Truly,

Wayne Lee

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:25 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: momimakame@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.doc

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Cara Scanlan
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: momimakame@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Cara Scanlan. As a public employee for 3 ½ years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB1106, HB1719, and HB1725.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we

are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Erica Hashimoto. As a public employee for 7 ½ months, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106; HB1718; HB1719; HB1725; HB 1723; HB1715; HB 1726; HB 1727

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to

bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Erica Hashimoto
Dept. of Health
AMHD-HSH

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Nicola, Nancy [nnicola@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:15 AM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chairman Rodes, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Nancy Nicola. As a public employee for 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills being introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB's #1106, HB#1719, HB#1725.

HB#1106 is supposed to "protect the rights of public employees" in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: "What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?"

I also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of great concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice-leave now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of myself and my family.

HB#1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. Although the bill is temporary, it is unacceptable to expect us to carry that full cost for all those years. With talk of salary cuts and constant rise in our premiums, this is just one more financial burden to the hard working and dedicated employees who work the state and city. President Obama is talking of making our nation one of full health coverage and our state is proposing the opposite.

My husband and I are both state/city employees and these bills would be detrimental to our family and futures.

Please VOTE NO on these bills that take away benefits from public employees!

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:19 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: tnaipo@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Tracy Adams-Naipo
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: tnaipo@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Tracy Adams-Naipo. As a public employee for 18 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we

are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote “no” on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: MGuerra@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:19 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, 1719, 1725
Attachments: ATT00001.jpg

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Mandie Guerra. As a public employee for 5 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1719, 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums

is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers, retirees and people with a disability. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Thank you,
Mandie Guerra



Mandie Guerra
VRSBD
Kona Field Office
(808) 323-0025
(808) 323-0028 Fax

--
NOTICE: This information and attachments are intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged and/or confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited and may be punishable under state and federal law. If you have received this communication and/or attachments in error, please notify the sender via email immediately and destroy all electronic and paper copies.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Ron Steben [ron_steben@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:09 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1718, HB 1715, HB1719, HB1723,HB1725, HB1726, HB1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:
 Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Ronald Steben.
 As a public employee for 1 year, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker
 Calvin Say. Specifically: HB1718, HB 1715, HB1719, HB1723,HB1725, HB1726, HB1727.

HB 1106 is supposed to ‘protect the rights of public employees’ in the event of a furlough.
 Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the “least amount of disruption to public service.”
 I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state?
 A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole
 breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the
 last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the
 authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the
 community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say’s bill, which
 disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible.
 Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don’t mean much and
 promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have
 made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the
 air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or
 stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of
 care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it’s not irresponsible for him to suggest that
 this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and
 my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling
 with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that
 we could experience is putting our families in Hawai’i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai’i’s children,
 elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are
 overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote “no” on HB
 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and
 commitment to the state of Hawai’i.HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees
 will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage.

This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only
 temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require
 medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our
 elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from
 accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation

is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees

Thank you,
Ronald Steben

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:44 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: sugarshidaki@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Albert
Organization: Individual
Address: 3337 Winam Ave Honolulu, Hawaii
Phone: 256-2177
E-mail: sugarshidaki@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

I've been in the state for 24yrs. and by Dec. 31st I will make 25yrs. and eligible for retirement. I gave my all to the state and this is what I have to look forward to when I retire. That is not only unfair but should be against the law. We work hard for all these years and they want to take it out on the middle class again. Go get the money from the rich because soon we will have only two classes, the rich and the poor. I beg you to vote NO on this bill. Mahalo.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Christina Tarumi [christarumi@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:14 PM
To: EDNtestimony; Rep. Calvin Say; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Marcus Oshiro
Cc: Rep. Maile Shimabukuro; repcabinilla@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Kymberly Pine; mmorita@hsta.org
Subject: HB 1719

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov
FROM: Christina Tarumi
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

My name is Christina Tarumi, live in Ewa Beach, I commute to and from work 1 ½ hrs. daily, and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I believe this bill is absolutely unfair and unwise. The State of Hawaii should be trying to attract teachers who are committed to teaching our students for the long haul. There is nothing more effective than an experienced teacher who chooses to sacrifice and stay in the profession when it is so easy to find more lucrative jobs in the private sector. I've been teaching for 11 years and am first to admit that if I knew when I first started that the climate for teaching in Hawaii and across the U.S. would turn so hostile toward teachers with NCLB, severe budget cuts, drug testing...I probably would not have become a teacher. There are very few professions that I can think of where someone is responsible for the futures of so many people, with or without the support of parents and then be blamed for low achievement. Unfortunately for my own finances, I found that I really enjoy teaching 12 and 13 year-olds. How many people can say that they REALLY want to or are even capable of spending 6 hours a day with 32 7th graders? I invite you to come to my classroom and do what I do everyday, and THEN tell me that if I retire before I am 65 I will not receive my full benefits. Why would anyone in their right mind become a teacher today?

We spend a lot of time supporting new teachers who have no intention of staying in the profession past 2 years. The DOE wastes a lot of money training these same teachers who never get better at what they do because they leave before they build experience and learn best practices. This revolving door is the reason why our state is bleeding money. If you want to save more money, stop wasting it on people who treat teaching as something fun to do for a little while until it gets too difficult. You need to hire and keep teachers who will commit to teaching as a career, and you will not do it by taking away retirement benefits. Why are you trying to penalize teachers who have already given their lives to teaching Hawaii's children? Please think about us as you deliberate this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I encourage all of you to visit schools in your area frequently and see the good work that teachers and students do everyday. My classroom is always open for you to visit.

Sincerely,

Christina Tarumi

Waianae Intermediate

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
House Bill 1719 Relating to Public Employees
House Bill 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefit
Trust Fund

The purpose of these bills appears to be an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crises the State of Hawaii and respective Counties are facing. These bills will do nothing but counter their intent as they will undoubtedly hurt the very people who are instrumental in turning our financial situation around.

Public employees are truly dedicated and many have foregone higher salaries because they believe in civil service and trusted the "promise" that they would eventually benefit from a well managed and attractive retirement system. To now propose making them the scapegoat of our financial and economic woes and stripping them of their health benefits and their retirement benefits is simply unconscionable.

In passing legislation such as this, there is no question you will cause a massive influx of employees who will choose to retire now in order to preserve and maintain the benefits they have worked so hard to have. You will also certainly lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve your communities.

To turn around now and renege on promises made at hire is simply not how it's done in Hawai'i. I, therefore, do not support the bills listed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Troy K. Stupplebeen
County of Maui

**Hawaii State Workers and HGEA Members
Same Written Testimony in Opposition to: HB1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725**

(See Attached Letter)

	First Name	Last Name
1	Nalani	Fijimoto
2	Linda	Tamane
3	Dionie	Dela Cruz
4	Aaron	Teruya
5	Charles	Santiago, Jr.
6	Kaiulani	Lambert
7	Rick	Lau
8	Lillian	Haijima
9	Lolita	Perlawan
10	Leslie	Teruya
11	Elaine	Tokimasa
12	Alfonsa	Remoket
13	Jolynn	Kapeliela
14	Dawn	Nagahara
15	Nan	Suzuka
16	Kinau	Alka
17	Lelei	Aborda
18	Cynthia	Shimada
19	Ian	Rand
20	Linda	Gomes
21	Faith	Hope
22	Kathleen	Dela Cruz
23	Karla	Achiu
24	Lori-Ann	Lee
25	Cecilia	Gamil
26	Kerian	Onishi
27	Susan	Cummings
28	Tammie	Whitford
29	Imelda	Libao
30	Shirlene	Miyashiro
31	Michelle	Pang
32	Virginia	Tacto
33	Brenda	Viernes
34	Maile	Kakua-Haliniali
35	Rexford	Davis
36	Hannah	Domingo
37	Sharon	Togashi
38	Ernest	Hong
39	Theodore	Wong
40	Valerie	Germano
41	Jane	Nagai
42	Annabelle	Rambaud
43	Randy	Lum
44	Ofelia	Cueua
45	Susan	De Jesus
46	Jarriet	Enrique

HOUSE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE

Karl Rhoads, Chair

Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

My name is Naleni Dujin and I work for the state and am a member of HGEA.

I am also a taxpayer and support local businesses to buy food, clothing and everyday necessities for myself and my family.

I don't believe that it's fair for the **HOUSE** to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but decided that my retirement and health benefits for myself and my family were more important than the pay.

I OPPOSE:

HB 1106

HB 1718

HB 1719

HB 1725

HB 1723

HB1715

HB 1726 & HB 1727 and I am asking you for your support in opposing these bills too.

Thank you,

Fax Form

TO: REP. KYLE YAMASHITA fax number: 586-6331
FR: ANGIE HASHIMOTO fax number: 247-1852 (manual fax #)
RE: REQUESTING YOUR HELP, Please Date: Feb. 11, 2009

Hawaii State Capital
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 11, 2009

Dear Sir or Madam:

Aloha! We are Public Workers who are employed at King Intermediate School in Kaneohe. We take pride in our jobs and have made serving the community our career. We also pay taxes and contribute to the economy buying food, clothing, and other needs.

We don't believe that it is fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. Many of us have been employed in the DOE for numerous years and know that private sector employees have higher wages. Our health benefits and retirement was something we could rely on for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from us. We hope you will vote "NO" on the following bills, that will hurt us as public employees and our families.
<HB 1106, HB 1715, HB 1719, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, and HB 1727>

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Thank you,

Please see the signed attached list of employees at King Intermediate School who oppose the specified bills.

Vote "NO" on the following bills:
 HB1106, HB1715, HB1719, HB1723, HB 1725,

King Intermediate School
 HGEA / AFSCME Local 152 AFL - CIO

HB1726, HB1727	Print Name	Signature	email address or phone contact	Position	UNIT
1	Janice Yoshizu	<i>Janice Yoshizu</i>	JanYoshizu@gmail.com	clerk	03
2	ANGIE K. HASHIMOTO	<i>Angie K. Hashimoto</i>	ahash94@gmail.com	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT III	03
3	Fay Lee	<i>Fay Lee</i>	ceip@hawaii,rr.com	Healthcare	03
4	Carol Rita	<i>Carol Rita</i>	carolr@hawaii,rr.com	Library Clerk	03
5	Anna M Norris	<i>Anna M Norris</i>	annenorris@gmail.com	EA III	03
6	MIRIAM KOKI	<i>Miriam K. Koki</i>	808-798-6381	E.A.	03
7	ANTOINETTE FARMER	<i>Antoinette Farmer</i>	JoieFarmer58@aol.com	clerk, SSC	03
8	Stanley Dickson	<i>Stanley Dickson</i>		Security	06
9	Diana Jones	<i>Diana Jones</i>	247-1468	Security	03
10	Julie A. Lockyer	<i>Julie A. Lockyer</i>	499-4716	Educational Asst.	03
11	Charmaine Hopkinson	<i>Charmaine Hopkinson</i>	eharm-2the3rdpower@yahoo.com	EA III	03
12	Amy Tamashiro	<i>Amy Tamashiro</i>	239-6491	Clerk Typist	03
13	Joni Kaneshiro	<i>Joni Kaneshiro</i>	jkaneshiro001@hawaii,rr.com	SASA	04
14	Jeff Camara	<i>Jeff Camara</i>	235-7514	PFM III	02
15	James S. Gabayan	<i>James S. Gabayan</i>	236-3729	EA III	03
16	Teresa Mae	<i>Teresa Mae</i>	235-2974	EA III	03
17	Amarian L. Linares	<i>Amarian L. Linares</i>	230-5394	Account clerk	03
18	Sharon Tom	<i>Sharon Tom</i>	sharontom@yahoo.com	EA III	03
19	Teresa Salmon	<i>Teresa Salmon</i>	255-3577	EA III	03
20	Carma Alvarez	<i>Carma Alvarez</i>	954-0082	Principal	06
21	Robert H Lockyer	<i>Robert H Lockyer</i>	233 5747	Vice principal	06
22	Danette Collins	<i>Danette Collins</i>	233 5747 ext 294	EA III	03
23	Aileen Yamashiro	<i>Aileen Yamashiro</i>	233-5727 ext.	EA III	03
24	Marilyn Deguchi	<i>Marilyn Deguchi</i>	206-4024	EA	03
25					

FEB-11-2009 12:26 PM ANGIE'S.BES1 000 471 1004

Date: February 13, 2009

To: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

We are taxpayers and active State employees. We spend our hard earned money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to help keep the economy in our state. By approving and implementing these Bills you will be forcing us to use whatever monies we had extra, to pay for the increases and deletions of various medical bills and retirement. So that would mean even LESS monies going into the state economy. Which in turn would cause more companies to close which would lead to even more people being unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits.

We don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget with only public employees. We are long, loyal and hard working employees who have done our best to service the public of the State of Hawaii. We have made a career in public service knowing that our pay may not be as good as in the private sector but we would rely on retirement and health benefits for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to not only cut and reduce proposed benefits but to also cut and delete benefits that we have worked long and hard for.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget such as raising the excise tax, some form of gambling, ie lottery, would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
 Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1.	<i>Nancie J. Voyce</i>	26.
2.	<i>Mauri Higgins</i>	27.
3.	<i>Benjamin</i>	28.
4.	<i>Maryk. Indone</i>	29.
5.	<i>M</i>	30.
6.	<i>Lilia C Martinez</i>	31.
7.	<i>Joyce N. Nishimura</i>	32.
8.	<i>Mary Jane F. Cooper</i>	33.
9.	<i>Murphy</i>	34.
10.	<i>Jan G</i>	35.
11.	<i>Pat C. O'Connell</i>	36.
12.	<i>Lynn K. Kuchala</i>	37.
13.	<i>Heidi</i>	38.
14.	<i>Joanne Michael</i>	39.
15.	<i>Blair Finley</i>	40.
16.	<i>Ferry M. Duroda</i>	41.
17.	<i>Julia Paragan</i>	42.
18.	<i>Debrah Yon Dararjo</i>	43.
19.	<i>Caroline Auman</i>	44.
20.	<i>Bridget Kiroshyte</i>	45.
21.	<i>Valerie Brown</i>	46.
22.	<i>Roland J. Hume</i>	47.
23.	<i>Tom Paele</i>	48.
24.	<i>Jamie Tekaleska</i>	49.
25.		50.

Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Ken Nunn</i>	26.
2. <i>Imjo Kabunghana</i>	27.
3. <i>Wendell Shi</i>	28.
4. <i>Virginia Schitani</i>	29.
5. <i>Chandra Senya</i>	30.
6.	31.
7.	32.
8.	33.
9.	34.
10.	35.
11.	36.
12.	37.
13.	38.
14.	39.
15.	40.
16.	41.
17.	42.
18.	43.
19.	44.
20.	45.
21.	46.
22.	47.
23.	48.
24.	49.
25.	50.

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
 Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Rodolfo Hermosillo</i>	26.
2. <i>Allyson Lynn Shaw</i>	27.
3. <i>Rhonda A. Pina</i>	28.
4. <i>Chris Omalin</i>	29.
5. <i>Christina</i>	30.
6. <i>Mona C. Elson</i>	31.
7. <i>Lesly Part</i>	32.
8. <i>Kate Leaj</i>	33.
9. <i>Anna</i>	34.
10. <i>Angela Anguita</i>	35.
11. <i>Michelle</i>	36.
12. <i>Elizabeth</i>	37.
13. <i>Janet</i>	38.
14. <i>Randy</i>	39.
15. <i>Allyson</i>	40.
16. <i>Natasha Puchalski</i>	41.
17.	42.
18.	43.
19.	44.
20.	45.
21.	46.
22.	47.
23.	48.
24.	49.
25.	50.

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. Merle G. Shore	26. Pamela Rosa
2. Audrey G. Gilo	27. Letitia Jankov
3. Jim D. Soggy	28. Paula A. Moran-Tolson
4. Myra M. Gaun	29. Louella Burke
5. Elynor dela Vega	30. Kelly
6. Kenneth J. David	31. Melendrina Corcino
7. Norma S. Shinn	32. Wanda Osner
8. Kelly Swans	33. Patricia H. Deters
9. Mary Helen Cathcart	34. Joyce
10. Kathleen Kama	35. W. Chee
11. Mike Odom	36. Janie M. Ehlke
12. C. Santa Monica-Young	37. Allen Z
13. Gamona Haynes	38. Mary H. Muff
14. Rebecca J. Kalle	39. Ann Swate
15. Miriam Reese	40. Clinton H. Wang
16. Vroni P. Punsler	41. Kathleen Baker
17. Emily Young	42. Tina J. Lu
18. Debbie High-Jones	43.
19. Gene M. Kukunier	44.
20. Georgiana Portana	45.
21. Len C. F. Fike	46.
22. Anne K. Thastayosh	47.
23. Kathleen March	48.
24. J. Nevada	49.
25. Frank S. S. S.	50.

Date FEB 12 2009

To: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

We are taxpayers and active State employees. We spend our hard earned money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to help keep the economy in our state. By approving and implementing these Bills, you will be forcing us to use whatever monies we had extra to pay for the increases and deletions of various medical bills and retirement benefits. So that would mean even LESS monies going into the state economy, which in turn would cause more companies to close which would lead to even more people being unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits.

We don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget with only public employees. We are long, loyal and hard working employees who have done our best to service the public of the State of Hawaii. We have made a career in public service knowing that our pay may not be as good as in the private sector but we would rely on retirement and health benefits for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to not only cut and reduce proposed benefits but to also cut and delete benefits that we have worked long and hard for.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget such as raising the excise tax, some form of gambling, ie lottery, would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem.. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009

Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Yori E. Abacungan</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Egie Sakamoto</i>	27. <i>Sam Freedman</i>
3. <i>Bryneth Chen</i>	28. <i>Kelra Cashman</i>
4. <i>Lin Trinh</i>	29. <i>John Wang</i>
5. <i>M. Umaka</i>	30. <i>Jim Messina</i>
6. <i>M. Yankovic</i>	31. <i>[Signature]</i>
7. <i>[Signature]</i>	32. <i>Corles Zukuda</i>
8. <i>Mafeliaso</i>	33. <i>Andrew N. Kelly</i>
9. <i>[Signature]</i>	34. <i>Nancy R. Johnson</i>
10. <i>Minda Yabeta</i>	35. <i>Jerry D. Beebe</i>
11. <i>Annie Liu</i>	36. <i>Shun K. Okamura</i>
12. <i>Luan Lee</i>	37. <i>Chunye J. Jengai</i>
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38.
14. <i>Tamara Chang</i>	39.
15. <i>[Signature]</i>	40.
16. <i>[Signature]</i>	41.
17. <i>Karma Nestida</i>	42.
18. <i>Charlotia Rego</i>	43.
19. <i>[Signature]</i>	44.
20. <i>[Signature]</i>	45.
21. <i>Met Arane</i>	46.
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47.
23. <i>Hilari Lee</i>	48.
24. <i>Donna Tanigawa</i>	49.
25. <i>Valerie Lee</i>	50.

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Andri Wil. Tse</i>	26.
2. <i>Nalini Ali</i>	27.
3. <i>Jen An</i>	28.
4. <i>Pritya Kelopodes</i>	29.
5. <i>Pauline T. Davis</i>	30.
6.	31.
7.	32.
8.	33.
9.	34.
10.	35.
11.	36.
12.	37.
13.	38.
14.	39.
15.	40.
16.	41.
17.	42.
18.	43.
19.	44.
20.	45.
21.	46.
22.	47.
23.	48.
24.	49.
25.	50.

Date: February 12, 2009

To: Karl Rhoads
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

We are taxpayers and active State employees. We spend our hard earned money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to help keep the economy in our state. By approving and implementing these Bills, you will be forcing us to use whatever monies we had extra to pay for the increases and deletions of various medical bills. So that would mean even LESS monies going into the state economy. Which in turn would cause more companies to close which would lead to even more people being unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits.

We don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget with only public employees. We are long, loyal and hard working employees who have done our best to service the public of the State of Hawaii. We have made a career in public service knowing that our pay may not be as good as in the private sector but we would rely on retirement and health benefits for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to not only cut and reduce proposed benefits but to also cut and delete benefits that we have worked long and hard for.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget such as raising the excise tax, some form of gambling, ie lottery, would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

If you have any questions, you may call me at 221-0840 or via email at suzy.okino@gmail.com.


Suzanne Okino

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Angie Kookman</i>	26. <i>Eleanor Gustafson</i>
2. <i>Sam So</i>	27. <i>[Signature]</i>
3. <i>Joy Lynn</i>	28.
4. <i>Wendy Li</i>	29.
5. <i>Caroline J Okazaki</i>	30.
6. <i>Judy Dacanay</i>	31.
7. <i>[Signature]</i>	32.
8. <i>Susana C. Quintana</i>	33.
9. <i>Alan E. Shodai</i>	34.
10. <i>[Signature]</i>	35.
11. <i>Jennifer K. Mauer</i>	36.
12. <i>[Signature]</i>	37.
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38.
14. <i>[Signature]</i>	39.
15. <i>[Signature]</i>	40.
16. <i>Kathryn Shodai</i>	41.
17. <i>Kathleen Jung</i>	42.
18. <i>Joyce Berr</i>	43.
19. <i>Collen B Nakamura</i>	44.
20. <i>Charmaine Mack</i>	45.
21. <i>Lini Yee</i>	46.
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47.
23. <i>Mikaela Hays</i>	48.
24. <i>[Signature]</i>	49.
25. <i>[Signature]</i>	50.

Date:

To: *KARL RHOADS, CHAIR*
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

We are taxpayers and active State employees. We spend our hard earned money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to help keep the economy in our state. By approving and implementing these Bills, you will be forcing us to use whatever monies we had extra to pay for the increases and deletions of various medical bills. So that would mean even LESS monies going into the state economy. Which in turn would cause more companies to close which would lead to even more people being unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits.

We don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget with only public employees. We are long, loyal and hard working employees who have done our best to service the public of the State of Hawaii. We have made a career in public service knowing that our pay may not be as good as in the private sector but we would rely on retirement and health benefits for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to not only cut and reduce proposed benefits but to also cut and delete benefits that we have worked long and hard for.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget such as raising the excise tax, some form of gambling, ie lottery, would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem.. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

(See attached - list of bills with signatures) *Any questions, please call me*

at 375 7135

Audrey Akai

AUDREY AKAI

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009

Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Diane L. Hanna</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Mudrey Ah</i>	27. <i>[Signature]</i>
3. <i>Sau Tin Hui</i>	28. <i>[Signature]</i>
4. <i>[Signature]</i>	29. <i>[Signature]</i>
5. <i>Kristine Frydette</i>	30. <i>[Signature]</i>
6. <i>[Signature]</i>	31. <i>[Signature]</i>
7. <i>[Signature]</i>	32. <i>[Signature]</i>
8. <i>Farley N. Lomax</i>	33. <i>[Signature]</i>
9. <i>[Signature]</i>	34. <i>[Signature]</i>
10. <i>[Signature]</i>	35. <i>[Signature]</i>
11. <i>Amy Okami</i>	36. <i>[Signature]</i>
12. <i>[Signature]</i>	37. <i>[Signature]</i>
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38. <i>[Signature]</i>
14. <i>[Signature]</i>	39. <i>[Signature]</i>
15. <i>Zandra Hightower</i>	40. <i>[Signature]</i>
16. <i>[Signature]</i>	41. <i>[Signature]</i>
17. <i>[Signature]</i>	42. <i>[Signature]</i>
18. <i>[Signature]</i>	43. <i>[Signature]</i>
19. <i>Matthew Davis</i>	44. <i>[Signature]</i>
20. <i>Racem Blonigan</i>	45. <i>[Signature]</i>
21. <i>[Signature]</i>	46. <i>[Signature]</i>
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47. <i>[Signature]</i>
23. <i>[Signature]</i>	48. <i>[Signature]</i>
24. <i>Ann Watanabe Pms</i>	49. <i>[Signature]</i>
25. <i>Celia A. Seligson</i>	50. <i>[Signature]</i>