



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

Testimony of
Linda L. Smith
Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor

Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
Friday, February 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
Room 309, State Capitol

H.B. 1723 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

H.B. 1723 proposes to reduce the State's projected expenditures by specifying that employer contributions to the Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund for health benefits plans are non-negotiable under collective bargaining. It also establishes the employer contributions for health benefits at 55 percent of monthly costs.

The Administration is appreciative of this committee's initiative in hearing this cost containment measure, and recommends that it be passed out of this committee for further discussion and consideration. Due to the latest Council on Revenues projections, the State is estimated to face a \$1.76 billion budget shortfall by the end of fiscal year 2010-2011 if nothing is done to address the situation.

Given that this measure is intended to reduce state expenditures, the Administration believes H.B. 1723 should be considered alongside any and all measures aimed at reducing the cost of government. Although the Administration recognizes that this measure may be unpopular, it is our responsibility to consider all available options that will lead to a balanced budget.

The Administration defers to the Department of the Attorney General on the legality of this measure.

The Department of Budget and Finance estimates that this measure will generate a savings of \$11 million in fiscal year 2009-2010 and \$12 million in fiscal year 2010-2011.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



MARIE C. LADERTA
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

HAROLD DeCOSTA
DEPUTY CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 13, 2009

TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
For Hearing on Tuesday, February 17, 2009
8:30 a.m., Conference Room 309

By

MARIE LADERTA
Chief Negotiator

House Bill No. 1723
Relating to Public Employees

TO CHAIRPERSON RHOADS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT:

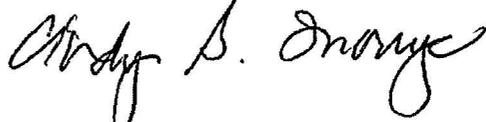
The purpose of H. B. No. 1723 is to make employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining and establish employer contributions for active public employees at 55 percent of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

The Office of Collective Bargaining supports this measure as one of many options available for consideration in addressing the current budget shortfall.

The present and immediately foreseeable condition of our State's economy has been well-documented in recent months. If no action is taken, the State faces a substantial budget shortfall. To address this shortfall it is imperative that we consider any and all options, even if not popular, that can contain costs and help balance the State's budget. This bill is such a cost containment measure and we strongly recommend that it be kept alive for further discussion and consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy B. Dornye". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

for MARIE LADERTA
Chief Negotiator



TESTIMONY OF THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE, 2009

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1723, RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2009 **TIME:** 8:30 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309
Deliver to: Committee Clerk, Room 422, 3 copies

TESTIFIER(S): Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General,
or James E. Halvorson, Deputy Attorney General
or Maria Cook, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides these comments regarding a legal problem in this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to make employer contributions to the Employer-Union Health Benefit Trust Fund (EUTF) non-negotiable under chapter 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and to establish the percentage of the health benefit plan cost that employers shall contribute to the EUTF for active employees.

Although the intent of the bill is understandable in today's economic environment, we believe the bill may be rendered unconstitutional if the measure is challenged, in light of the Hawaii Supreme Court decision in United Pub. Workers, AFSCME, Local 646 v. Yogi, 101 Haw. 46, 62 P.3d 189 (2002).

In Yogi the Supreme Court held that the public employees' constitutional right to collectively bargain over core subjects such as wages, hours, amounts of contributions by the State and counties to the Hawaii Public Employees Health Fund, and other conditions of employment under article XIII, section 2 [formerly part of article XII], required

invalidating a statute disallowing collective bargaining over cost items.

In 2006, the Hawaii Supreme Court in Malahoff v. Saito, 111 Haw. 168, 150 P.2d 401 (2006), affirmed the Yogi decision. The Yogi decision "stands for the proposition that the legislature has broad discretion in setting the parameters for collective bargaining as long as it does not impinge upon the constitutional rights of public employees to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining and to negotiate core subjects of collective bargaining, that is wages, hours, and other conditions of employment." Malahoff v. Saito, 111 Haw. 168, 187, 150 P.2d 401, 420 (2006).

The issue is whether employer contribution to the EUTF is a core subject of collective bargaining.

In Yogi and Malahoff, the Supreme Court held that the framers, in formulating and adopting article XII, section 2, acknowledged that the term "collective bargaining" had a well-recognized meaning: "Collective bargaining" means the performance of mutual obligations of the public employer and the exclusive representative to meet at reasonable times, to confer and negotiate in good faith, and to execute a written agreement with respect to wages, hours, amounts of contributions by the State and counties to the Hawaii public employees health fund, and other terms and conditions of employment" Malahoff at 187, 140 P.2d at 420, citing HRS § 89-2 (Supp. 2001). See also 101 Haw. at 56, 62 P.3d at 199 (concurring opinion of Nakayama, J.) ("It is undisputed that wages and cost items are among the core subjects of collective bargaining."). See also City of Cambridge v. Attorney General, 410 Mass. 165, 571 N.E.2d 386 (1991) ("health insurance benefits are within the category of 'conditions of employment' subject to collective bargaining").

On the one hand it could be argued that contributions to the EUTF only became the subject of negotiation when the Legislature decided to include it as a negotiable item in 1984 by amending section 89-9(a), HRS. Thus, the framers of the constitution could not have intended

employers' contributions to the EUTF to be a subject of collective bargaining.

However, in light of the strong weight the Hawaii Supreme Court has given to public employees' constitutional right to collectively bargain over "core subjects" such as "terms and conditions of employment" or "cost items," we believe that the Supreme Court may find that making the employer contributions to the EUTF non-negotiable would effectively undermine the ability of the public employees to collectively bargain over a core subject.

We also note that the bill is ambiguous as to how much the State and counties are required to pay in monthly contributions to the EUTF. The bill provides that the State and counties are to pay a monthly contribution of fifty-five percent of the "cost of the health benefits plan" for each of their employee-beneficiaries and employee-beneficiaries with dependent-beneficiaries. The EUTF has several different health benefits plans (two self-funded medical plans, two Kaiser plans, a self-funded prescription drug plan, a dental plan, a vision services plan, and other health benefits plans) and all of them have different premium rates. The bill does not make it clear as to how the fifty-five percent will be calculated. Will the fifty-five percent be applied to the premium cost of each health benefits plan that the employee-beneficiary or employee-beneficiary with dependent-beneficiaries is actually enrolled in, or will the fifty-five percent be applied to the premium cost of the health benefits plan that has the highest enrollment in each category (medical, dental, vision, and prescription drug) as is done under the current collective bargaining agreements? The bill should be clarified to address this ambiguity.

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1723

February 17, 2009

RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Bill No. 1723 makes temporary changes to the Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund by making employer contributions to Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2015; and establishing the percentage of the health benefits plan cost that employers are to contribute for active employees at 55 percent. The Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association statutes are amended to maintain the monthly contribution for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 at the amount that was in effect on June 30, 2009.

We support moving this bill forward to foster continued discussions. During these difficult times and considering the grave fiscal condition we are facing, all options must be kept open. While it is recognized that this bill may be unpopular, we will need to make difficult decisions to address our budget shortfall and ensure the fiscal health of our State.

It is estimated that this bill will generate savings of \$11,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2010 and \$12,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2011.

HAWAII COUNCIL OF MAYORS



Testimony of

Hawaii Council of Mayors
 Bernard Carvalho, Jr., Mayor of Kauai
 Mufi Hannemann, Mayor of Honolulu
 Billy Kenoi, Mayor of Hawaii
 Charmaine Tavares, Mayor of Maui

Before the
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

February 17, 2009

House Bill 1723: Relating to Public Employees

The Hawaii Council of Mayors is very grateful to the House of Representatives, particularly the members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employment, for having the courage to confront the formidable economic and fiscal challenges facing our people. You have the difficult and unenviable task of crafting a budget during a time of great uncertainty, as do we, and we share your desire to balance frugality and prudence with fairness and compassion.

House Bill 1723 makes employer contributions to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund non-negotiable in collective bargaining and establishes by statute the employers' monthly contributions for health benefits plans at 55 percent.

The Hawaii Council of Mayors recommends that this bill be approved for further examination by the Legislature. The measure provides an option for employers and may be worthy of consideration as a fiscal tool.

The mayors note that by making employer contributions non-negotiable, the role of the EUTF Board of Trustees is expanded as the trustees will ultimately determine the financial obligations of the state and county governments. This makes our request for county representation on the EUTF board, which is a key element of our 2009 legislative package, even more urgent. We are grateful to this committee for its understanding and support of our efforts to secure representation on the EUTF and Employees' Retirement System boards.

The Hawaii Council of Mayors respectfully requests your approval of this proposal.

Mahalo.



Mayor Billy Kenoi
 County of Hawaii
 25 Aupuni Street
 Hilo, Hawaii 96720



Mayor Mufi Hannemann
 City and County of Honolulu
 530 South King Street
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr.
 County of Kauai
 444 Rice Street
 Lihue, Hawaii 96766



Mayor Charmaine Tavares
 County of Maui
 200 South High Street, 9th Floor
 Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Council Chair
Danny A. Mateo

Vice-Chair
Michael J. Molina

Council Members
Gladys C. Baisa
Jo Anne Johnson
Sol P. Kaho'ohalahala
Bill Kauakea Medeiros
Wayne K. Nishiki
Joseph Pontanilla
Michael P. Victorino

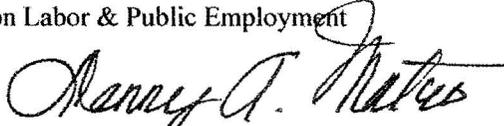


Director of Council Services
Ken Fukuoka

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov/council

February 14, 2009

TO: Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

FROM: Danny A. Mateo
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 17, 2009; TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1723,
RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to make employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. The measure also establishes employer contributions for active public employees at 55 percent of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

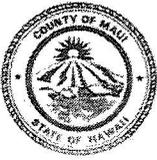
The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I oppose this measure for the following reasons:

1. Requiring County employees to pay a higher share of their health, dental, and vision insurance will place a great burden on the employees and their families who are already dealing with difficult economic conditions.
2. The proposal could force some public employees to forego medical insurance, thereby creating a greater demand for government-subsidized medical services.
3. Reducing medical or retirement benefits could result in the County losing employees and hinder the County's ability to recruit new employees who are well qualified.

For the foregoing reasons, I oppose this measure.

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CHARMAINE TAVARES
MAYOR

OUR REFERENCE
YOUR REFERENCE

POLICE DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OF MAUI

55 MAHALANI STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
(808) 244-6400
FAX (808) 244-6411

February 10, 2009



THOMAS M. PHILLIPS
CHIEF OF POLICE

GARY A. YABUTA
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

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. 1723, Relating to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715, Relating to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726, Relating to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727, Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union
Health Benefits Trust Fund**

The testimonies regarding the above-referenced house bills are being addressed below, which have been scheduled for hearing on February 17, 2009, as follows:

House Bill No. 1723 Makes the employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. Establishes employer contributions for active public employees at 55 percent of monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

You are removing the employee's right to collective bargaining while also reducing their health benefits and increasing their burden. This is a total lack of good faith by the State.

House Bill No. 1715 Increases, for new public employees, the minimum age and length of service for an unreduced service retirement.

This legislation will raise the minimum years of service retirement for police officers to 30 years, in comparison to 25 years; and the minimum age to 65 years, in comparison to 55 years, eliminating the most positive recruitment tools the police department have used.

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
February 10, 2009
Page 2

House Bill no. 1726 Prohibits the Hawaii employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing group life insurance benefits if any of the premiums are paid by the State or a county. Allows the trust fund to contract with a group life insurer to make available group life insurance benefits to employee-beneficiaries provided that none of the premiums are paid by the State or any county and the insurer pays a fee to the board of trustees.

Police, Fire and other State and county employees who risk their lives every day will be denied life insurance protection promised at their time of hire.

House Bill No. 1727 Prohibits the health benefits plan of the employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing dental and vision coverage from 07/01/2009 until 06/30/2015. Allows the board of trustees to make dental and vision benefits available to employee-beneficiaries at no cost to the employers.

You are again removing benefits established under collective bargaining and renegeing on promises made to employees at their time of hire.

The above-referenced legislation and others being submitted are, in effect, stripping all benefits afforded to public employees. This legislation deliberately targets a specific group of working class. You must remember that when you remove benefits from your employees such as health, prescription medication, dental, vision, and life insurance - everyone suffers. Imagine how it would feel if you couldn't provide basic health care for your children, or had to drop dental in order to afford drug coverage. And, telling your child you can't afford college because you need to pay all the additional costs of these stripped benefits.

The Maui Police Department does not support these bills. We ask that you look beyond just trying to save money, but to the overall impact legislation such as these, and what it will do to our public employees and their families, who elected you to the position you now hold, and put their faith in you to take care of them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


THOMAS M. PHILLIPS
Chief of Police



House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

February 17, 2009

8:30 a.m.

H.B. 1723 Relating to Public Employees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly opposes this legislation that removes bargaining over the employer contribution for health care benefits. Health care benefits are fundamental to the employment compact with the employer and as such constitute a part of an employee's compensation. The employers contribution should remain a subject of bargaining.

Capping the employers contribution to 55% of premium constitutes a transfer of cost to the employee and undermines the balance created in negotiating a total compensation package.

UHPA requests the bill be filed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman
Associate Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

1017 Palm Drive · Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 · Facsimile: (808) 593-2160
Web Page: <http://www.uhpa.org>





Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

320 Ward Avenue, Suite 209 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Telephone: (808) 597-1441

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
February 17, 2009

H.B. 1723 - RELATING TO PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES

H.B. 1715 - RELATING TO
RETIREMENT

H.B. 1726 - RELATING TO THE HEALTH
FUND

H.B. 1727 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII
EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH
BENEFITS TRUST FUND

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO **STRONGLY OPPOSES** H.B. 1723, H.B. 1715, H.B. 1726, and H.B. 1727.

The current economic conditions are downright terrifying. Everyday, Americans are waking up to discouraging news and wondering when it will be their turn to lose their jobs. Nationwide, unemployment is at 7.6 percent, however, that number is likely to be much higher today. In addition, those that are employed have had their working hours reduced, resulting in very difficult financial situations. Many are being foreclosed on, or are already living on the streets. Many are having a very difficult time taking care of their children or their parents and see no relief in sight. With the economy the way it is, Hawaii must do all it can to improve the situation.

Therefore, Hawaii must protect as many benefits as possible, especially when people are struggling to make ends meet. Furthermore, many have worked for the state or county for decades, relying on many of these benefits when they retire, or while working. They have earned these benefits, and now is not the time to take them away. We must ensure during these difficult times that people have the proper health care and can sleep soundly at night knowing their benefits are safe. Let's not add additional stress, to an already stressful time.

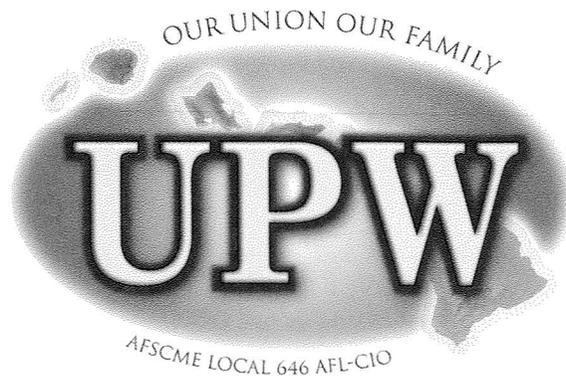
I ask that you think about the livelihood of those facing difficult times and oppose these horrible bills.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Bradshaw", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jason Bradshaw
Political Director



The House of Representatives
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature
Regular Session of 2009

Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
TIME: 8:30 a.m.
PLACE: House Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY OF THE UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS, AFSCME, LOCAL
646, AFL-CIO ON H.B. 1723 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua, and I am the state director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). The UPW currently represents approximately 8,700 blue collar, non-supervisory employees and 2,800 institutional, health, and correctional workers in the State of Hawaii and the various counties. We also represent approximately 3,000 retired members who currently receive health benefits. We oppose House Bill 1723 which eliminates as a negotiable matter contributions to health benefit plans for all public sector employees and retirees and reduces employer contributions to 55% of the monthly cost for a family plan.

When chapter 89 was adopted in 1970 the legislature defined the scope of collective bargaining as follows:

"Collective bargaining" means the performance of the mutual obligations of the public employer and the

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KAUAI - 4211 Rice Street ♦ Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1325 ♦ Phone: (808) 245-2412
MAUI - 841 Kolu Street ♦ Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436 ♦ Phone: (808) 244-0815
1-866-454-4166 (Toll Free, Molokai/Lanai only)

exclusive representative to meet at reasonable times, to confer and negotiate in good faith, and to execute a written agreement with respect to wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, except that by any such obligation neither party shall be compelled to agree to a proposal, or be required to make a concession. (Emphasis added).

1970 Haw. Sess. L. Act 171, "Sec.-2" at 308. In section 3 of the Act, lawmakers included as part of the rights of employees the right to organize for the purpose of engaging in bargaining over "wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment."

1970 Haw. Sess. L. Act 171, "Sec.-3" at 310.

Group health insurance has long been recognized to be a mandatory subject of collective bargaining because it pertains to "wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment." As explained in W.W. Cross & Co. v. N.L.R.B. 174 F.2d 875, 878 (1st Cir. 1949):

[T]he word "wages" in . . . the Act embraces within its meaning direct and immediate economic benefits flowing from the employment relationship. And this is as far as we need to go, for so construed the word covers a group insurance program for the reason that such a program provides a financial cushion in the event of illness or injury arising outside the scope of employment at less cost than such a cushion could be obtained through contracts of insurance negotiated individually. (Emphasis added).

See N.L.R.B. v. Transport Service Company, 973 F.2d 562 (7th Cir. 1992) (Employer has duty to continue health and pension payment where there was a failure to bargain in good faith over the subject). Since at least 1985 collective bargaining agreements negotiated under chapter 89 have uniformly contained provisions specifying the amount of employer and employee contributions for health benefit plans and other employee benefit programs.

The elimination of this right which public employees have enjoyed for many decades would violate Article XIII,

Section 2 of the State Constitution. In United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO v. Yogi, 101 Hawai'i 46, 62 P.3d 189 (2002), the Supreme Court held that a statute which precludes bargaining over the subjects covered within the meaning of "collective bargaining" constitutes an infringement of the right of public employees to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining. As the court explained the framers of our constitution (which included such distinguished lawmakers like former Senator Nadao Yoshinaga) did not intend to grant to legislators absolute discretion to determine the scope of what is negotiable.

Based upon our careful review of the proceedings of the constitutional convention, we find that the framers of article XII, section 2 did not intend to grant our legislators complete and absolute discretion to determine the scope of "collective bargaining." There are evidence in the 1968 proceedings indicating that the framers were not in favor of granting the legislature the ultimate power to deny the right to organize for the purpose of collectively bargaining. For instance, the framers defeated an amendment in the committee of the whole to limit public employee rights to "procedures as established by law in the areas therein prescribed" by a vote of 62 to 13. 1 Proceedings 1968 at 495.

* * *

1 Proceedings 1968 at 497 (emphasis added). Based upon Delegate Yoshinaga's remarks, it is clear that the intent and object of the framers was to extend to public employees similar rights to collective bargaining previously adopted in 1950 for "persons in private employment" under article XII, section 1 of the Constitution. 1 Proceedings 1968 at 497. A construction of article XII, section 2 that would allow the legislature to have absolute power to deny public employees the right to negotiate on core issues of collective bargaining is simply inconsistent with the framers' objectives in adopting this provision. (Emphasis added).

101 Hawai`i at 52, 53, 62 P.3d at 195, 196. Health benefit plans are a core subject of collective bargaining. Accordingly, we request that you respect the constitutional right of public employees, and not pass a measure which will inevitably trigger another court challenge to legislative action.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 17, 2009

H.B. 1723 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association opposes H.B. 1723. This bill would make employer contributions to the EUTF non-negotiable and caps the percentage of health benefits plan costs that employers would contribute for active employees at 55% beginning July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2015. The current contribution rate for active employees is 60% employer and 40% employee.

Eliminating employer contributions to the EUTF from negotiations is a regressive step that will negatively affect employees who have sacrificed wage increases for negotiated health benefits. Moreover, establishing a cap of 55% for employer contributions will mean that health care costs continue to eat away at employee salaries, and result in a pay cut. Public employees who have dedicated their careers to serving and improving their communities deserve the health care benefits they have earned through collective bargaining.

If enacted, H.B. 1723 will make recruiting and retaining employees much harder. Benefits that attract and retain highly skilled employees to the public sector help build good government and good public policy. In comparison, many private sector employers provide free or substantially subsidized health care for their employees, making the public sector less attractive for prospective employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 13, 2009

H.B. 1725 – RELATING TO THE
HAWAII EMPLOYER – UNION
HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST
FUND

Good morning Chair Rhoads and Members. My name is Frances Kagawa, HGEA Retirees Unit President. We represent over 9,000 retiree members statewide who strongly oppose passage of H.B. 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

Before retiring, I was a public employee at UH and the Department of Parks & Recreation. Like most other retiree and active employees, I took a government job because of health and retirement benefits. I knew I wouldn't get rich working for the public sector but stayed knowing that when I retired in 1987 I wouldn't worry about medical, drug, dental and vision plans.

I take five different medications daily to stay well. I live alone on a fixed income and with rising costs in the utility and gas prices, if these bills pass it will become a choice of paying for food or medications. There are 3,167 statewide retirees 80 years of age and over in the Retirees Unit who will be in the same or more serious predicament than I am since their pensions are much smaller.

Retirees also support current and perspective employees who will negatively be affected by these bills. These active employees decided to work in government to have the same benefits that I have during their retirement. Please oppose these bills that affect all public servants and retirees.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Frances Kagawa

February 15, 2009

TO: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Members of the House Labor and Public Employment Committee

FROM: Sharon Otagaki, LSW
National Association of Social Workers

RE: HB 1723; HB 1715; HB 1726; HB 1727 – **STRONGLY OPPOSE**

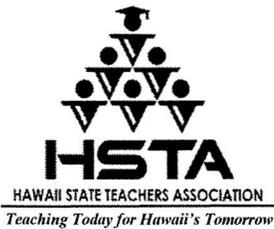
Chairman Rhoads and members of the House Labor & Public Employment Committee, I am Sharon Otagaki, Chair of the Legislative Committee of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Hawaii Chapter. NASW is the largest professional organization for social workers in Hawaii, many of our members are currently employed by or retired from State Government. Social workers provide a myriad of services to the community through the Departments of Human Services, Health, Justice, and Public Safety. We are testifying before you today in **STRONG OPPOSITION of HB 1723; HB 1715; HB 1726; HB 1727** authorizing the State to curtail the current level of employer-union health and life insurance benefits for employees, and raises the minimum age and years of service for retirement from 55 years with 25 years of service to 65 years with 30 years of service for those employed after June 30, 2009.

Social Workers do not enter public service to gain financial rewards. It is a calling that we have answered to provide services to the most vulnerable and needy in our community. Many of us forego opportunities that would reap a higher standard of living for ourselves and our families because we are committed to those we serve. Yet at this time, these bills will, if passed, put us in danger of losing benefits we trusted which would help us maintain our health, our homes, and our children's well-being.

Along with Social Workers there are other public service workers including social service aids, public health nurses, mental health providers, and human service professionals whose lives will also be negatively impacted by these provisions. Can the State afford to lose many of these workers if they left employment prior to June 30, 2009? Will the State really save money or leave it in a dire situation having to replace so many experienced workers in Child Protective Services, health and mental health clinics, etc.? How will the State continue to recruit and retain service providers? What will the impact be on Hawaii's safety net? Will the most vulnerable among us be served even less because the State is unable to fill the service gaps?

These bills leave more unanswered than answered, will be more costly in the future, cause hardship for State employees, retirees and their families, and create less services for those needing them. For all these reasons, NASW urges you to vote in opposition to these bills.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street λ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 λ Fax: (808) 839-7106 λ Web: www.hsta.org

Roger K. Takabayashi
President

Wil Okabe
Vice President

Karolyn Mossman
Secretary-Treasurer

Mike McCartney
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: SB 1723 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

February 18, 2009

ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association opposes HB 1723, which makes employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. Establishes employer contributions for active public employees at 55 per cent of monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

Health benefits are second only to pay in the compensation package a teacher receives. HSTA cannot bargain for better coverage or a different prescription drug formulary. The cost of the plan is only thing that can currently be negotiated between the teachers' representative and the employer. Changing this would have severe adverse impact on teachers, forcing them to pay more than currently do.

While we understand the need to balance the budget in these dire economic times, this bill will negatively impact the state's ability to attract teachers who fulfill the requirements set forth in federal law.

Making the teacher's portion of health care coverage more expensive will provide a strong disincentive for existing and prospective teachers and will make it much more difficult for the Department of Education to recruit the requisite number of new teachers each year. If this bill were enacted, we will likely to see the existing shortage of teachers not only continue but grow worse.

We therefore strongly urge the committee not to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



SHOPO
STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS
"A Police Organization for Police Officers Only"

February 15, 2009

House of Representative
State of Hawaii
Committee on Labor
Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 am
Place: Room 309 State Capitol

Re: Testimony on House Bill 1723 Relating to Public Employees.

My name is Tenari Ma'afala and I am the President of The State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers ("SHOPO"). We represent over 2700 police officers in the State of Hawaii. SHOPO opposes House Bill 1723 relating to Employer-Union Health Benefit Trust Fund; Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Trust; Employer Contributions. This measure makes the Employer contribution to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. This would establish the Employer contributions for active public employees at 55 per cent of monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

Under Section 89-9 (e), Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS"), the amount of contributions which state and counties are required to make under Sections 87a-32, HRS, toward the payment of costs for health benefit plans is a mandatory subject of collective bargaining is protected under Article XIII, Section 2 of the State Constitution. This measure violates the employee's right to engage in collective bargaining.

We understand that the State is undergoing a significant and possible protracted economic downturn in tandem with the national and global economic financial crises. Numerous jobs have been lost, a number of large and small companies have declared bankruptcy or left the State, and many families have suffered foreclosure on their homes.

This is a social environment where property crime, domestic violence, and the overall crime rate tends to increase dramatically. In extreme economic hardship, crime can prolong the economic recovery process. Police officers are an essential part of public service and are the front line against many of these added stresses on our communities,

families, and businesses. In times like these, we need to sustain and maintain our department's ability to work with our communities to cope with these extreme economic realities.

This measure seeks to reduce the medical benefit we current have in place and mandate a collective bargaining right.

SHOPO strongly opposes HB 1723.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: thirr33@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Arvid Tadao Youngquist
Organization: The Mestizo Association (since 1982)
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: thirr33@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:
House Labor and Public Employment (LAB)
Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita
Right Honorable Members of the House
LAB Committee

This is a testimony in opposition to:

HB 1723
HB 1715
HB 1726
HB 1727

This is purported as some "modest" efforts to help meet the fiscal crisis of the State of Hawaii.

However, all these bills are going to be perceived as yet another "King Ben Bill" after 9/11 and with the crisis visited upon the Nation mid-2008 (bail outs & economic stimulus packages), all measures appears to be on the table.

Unless the administration and the Capitol is willing to sacrifice not only their own pay-raises together with high-end "legathy" CIP and other spending in their respective district (i.e. Turtle Bay Resort, Molokai Ranch Resort, even Highways and Railways, the public sector workforce new hires, retirees, their beneficiaries and dependents should not be responsible for shouldering the heaviest fiscal burden. If one does not fight for one's own very own employees, who would one truly fight for?

Some of the proposals here at the Capitol have already led to my colleagues putting in their retirement applications before the maximum age for retirement is changed to 65, and the contributions, and coverage for prescriptions, dental and vision in the EUTF is nullified by fiat. A mass retirement payment for these new retirees will actually further drive south the Hawaii State Government budget.

Many of yourselves have taken care of elders on a fixed income, or are already a Kupuna. Do you think that these 4 bills are pono in regards to the Keiki and the Kupuna, not to mention all public sector employees?

Please consider defeating these four bills. Failing that, please consider affixing a defective effective date so that in 2013, or when the economy levels off, provisions can be repealed. Once a Union or any entity gives up any of the benefits of its membership, it hardly ever gets to recoup them in later years, even in times of plenty. Witness what happened to the Detroit automobile workforce that sacrificed benefits & pay, only to be exposed to CEO and management reward themselves with a bonus and a Golden Parachute.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to these four bills on your agenda.

"Peace be with you."
(1 of 16,588 local voices)

Date: February 17, 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 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. Merle M. Thon	26. Pamela Roth
2. Sledz G. Pilo	27. Leatrice Zebota
3. John B. Sygg	28. Pamela A. Moran - Tolusan
4. Myra M. Gaum	29. Loretta Burke
5. Elynor de la Vega.	30. Helen Yu
6. Kenneth H. David	31. Adendrina Corcino
7. Norm J. Shinn	32. Wendy O'Brien
8. Kellyheavens	33. Patricia H. Jordon
9. Mary Helen L. Cathcart	34. M. Chu
10. Kumpake Kai	35. Jung Kim
11. Xume Fakum	36. Jani M. Eubank
12. C. Santa Monica-Gorong	37. Cella G. O'Z
13. Gammara Gammara	38. H. H. H. H.
14. Rebecca F. Kishi	39. Crandall
15. Miriana Rose	40. Clinton A. D. D.
16. Yvonne B. Power	41. Jackson D. D.
17. Sledz Young	42. Victoria J. Lee
18. Bobbie Higney Jones	43.
19. Alan M. Kumamura	44.
20. Georgiana Sartana	45.
21. Lin T. Kishi	46.
22. Donna K. Katsuyoshi	47.
23. Kathleen Mendi.	48.
24. Irena Oza	49.
25. Huang Jiajun	50.

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Nancie J. Voyce</i>	26.
2. <i>Juanita Higgins</i>	27.
3. <i>John H. Burgon MD</i>	28.
4. <i>Mary K. Antone</i>	29.
5. <i>JA</i>	30.
6. <i>Lillian C. Marting</i>	31.
7. <i>Ernie N. Kishimura</i>	32.
8. <i>Mary Jane F. Compuz</i>	33.
9. <i>[Signature]</i>	34.
10. <i>[Signature]</i>	35.
11. <i>Lisa C. Ostrick</i>	36.
12. <i>Glenn H. [Signature]</i>	37.
13. <i>Joanne Mah</i>	38.
14. <i>Blair Fujider</i>	39.
15. <i>Perry M. Trosda</i>	40.
16. <i>Felen Paragas</i>	41.
17. <i>Alvah Yon Daranjo</i>	42.
18. <i>Carroll [Signature]</i>	43.
19. <i>Budget-Kitoshita</i>	44.
20. <i>Valesia [Signature]</i>	45.
21. <i>Jan [Signature]</i>	46.
22. <i>James Takelucci</i>	47.
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Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Jan Nam</i>	26.
2. <i>Suzanne Redfern</i>	27.
3. <i>Quincy P. King</i>	28.
4. <i>Virginia Ishitani</i>	29.
5. <i>Chandra Perera</i>	30.
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**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
 Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1.	<i>Rosalia A. Jaraman</i>	26.
2.	<i>William L. ...</i>	27.
3.	<i>James A. ...</i>	28.
4.	<i>Chris ...</i>	29.
5.	<i>Kate ...</i>	30.
6.	<i>...</i>	31.
7.	<i>...</i>	32.
8.	<i>...</i>	33.
9.	<i>...</i>	34.
10.	<i>...</i>	35.
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13.	<i>...</i>	38.
14.	<i>...</i>	39.
15.	<i>Nicholas K. Fuchalski</i>	40.
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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 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Xoni E. Cabacungan</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Jie Sakant</i>	27. <i>Kelra Ashman</i>
3. <i>Shiz Jung</i>	28. <i>[Signature]</i>
4. <i>Parish Chu</i>	29. <i>[Signature]</i>
5. <i>[Signature]</i>	30. <i>[Signature]</i>
6. <i>M. Lanaka</i>	31. <i>Cordes Fukuda</i>
7. <i>[Signature]</i>	32. <i>[Signature]</i>
8. <i>[Signature]</i>	33. <i>Marcia R. Johnson</i>
9. <i>Mafeliciano</i>	34. <i>[Signature]</i>
10. <i>Aurda Yabeu</i>	35. <i>[Signature]</i>
11. <i>Annie Lee</i>	36. <i>Cheryl J. Sogai</i>
12. <i>[Signature]</i>	37.
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38.
14. <i>[Signature]</i>	39.
15. <i>[Signature]</i>	40.
16. <i>[Signature]</i>	41.
17. <i>Karina Nishida</i>	42.
18. <i>Charlota Rego</i>	43.
19. <i>[Signature]</i>	44.
20. <i>[Signature]</i>	45.
21. <i>Met Casano</i>	46.
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47.
23. <i>[Signature]</i>	48.
24. <i>Valerie Aker</i>	49.
25. <i>[Signature]</i>	50.

Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Andrew Wil. Teem</i>	26.
2. <i>Nalani Aki</i>	27.
3. <i>[Signature]</i>	28.
4. <i>[Signature]</i>	29.
5. <i>Paulette Dami</i>	30.
6.	31.
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Date:

KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
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. 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.

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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 Aki

AUDREY AKI

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Alvane L. Janna</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Audrey Ah</i>	27. <i>Olaf U. [Signature]</i>
3. <i>Sau Lay Hai</i>	28.
4. <i>ura [Signature]</i>	29.
5. <i>Kristin Fredrick</i>	30.
6. <i>David [Signature]</i>	31.
7. <i>Carole Cervio</i>	32.
8. <i>Farley N. Lamorgo</i>	33.
9. <i>Kim Kuwom</i>	34.
10. <i>Owary Jembu</i>	35.
11. <i>Amy Okami</i>	36.
12. <i>[Signature]</i>	37.
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38.
14. <i>[Signature]</i>	39.
15. <i>J Hightower</i>	40.
16. <i>Shum Nishi</i>	41.
17. <i>Cla Kim-Sumda</i>	42.
18. <i>[Signature]</i>	43.
19. <i>Matti Dawn</i>	44.
20. <i>Keen Blougen</i>	45.
21. <i>[Signature]</i>	46.
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47.
23. <i>[Signature]</i>	48.
24. <i>Ann Watanabe [Signature]</i>	49.
25. <i>Allen A. Sekigawa</i>	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.

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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 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>(Signature)</i>	26. <i>(Signature)</i>
2. <i>(Signature)</i>	27. <i>(Signature)</i>
3. <i>(Signature)</i>	28.
4. <i>(Signature)</i>	29.
5. <i>Caroline J. Okazaki</i>	30.
6. <i>Judy Dacanay</i>	31.
7. <i>(Signature)</i>	32.
8. <i>Susana C. Quirana</i>	33.
9. <i>Jean 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>Katanya Shodai</i>	41.
17. <i>Kathleen Ferry</i>	42.
18. <i>Soye G...</i>	43.
19. <i>Colleen D. Nakamura</i>	44.
20. <i>Charmaine Mook</i>	45.
21. <i>Lori Yee</i>	46.
22. <i>(Signature)</i>	47.
23. <i>(Signature)</i>	48.
24. <i>(Signature)</i>	49.
25. <i>(Signature)</i>	50.

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

HB#	Print Name	Signature	email address or phone contact	Position	UNIT
1	Janice Yoshizu	<i>Janice Yoshizu</i>	janeyoshizu@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>	cojpo@hawaii.rr.com	Health Aide	03
4	Carol Rita	<i>Carol Rita</i>	carol.rita@hawaii.rr.com	Library Clerk	03
5	Anna M Norris	<i>Anna M Norris</i>	annchenorris@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>	toni.farmer58@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>	charm-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>	jkamashiro001@hawaii.rr.com	SA SA	04
14	Jeff Camara	<i>Jeff Camara</i>	235-7514	SFSM III	02
15	Jane Galayan	<i>Jane Galayan</i>	236-3729	EA III	03
16	Teresa Maea	<i>Teresa Maea</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	Sharon Adams	<i>Sharon Adams</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 5787 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					

Vote "NO" on the following bills:
 HB1106, HB1715, HB1719, HB1723, HB 1725,

King Intermediate School
 HGEA / AFSCME Local 152 AFL - CIO

HB#	726, HB1727	Print Name	Signature	email address or phone contact	Position	UNIT
1		Janice Yoshizu		jan.yoshizu@gmail.com	clerk	03
2		ANGIE K. HASHIMOTO		ahash94@gmail.com	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT III	03
3		Fay Lee		cojo@hawaii.rr.com	Health Aide	03
4		CAROL RITA		carolr@hawaii.rr.com	Library Clerk	03
5		Anna M Norris		annenorris@gmail.com	EAT III	03
6		MIRIAM KOKI		808-798-6381	E.A.	03
7		ANTOINETTE FARMER		JoniFarmer58@aol.com	clerk, SSC	03
8		Stanley Dickson			Security	03
9		Diana Jones		247-1468	Security	03
10		Julie A. Lockyer		499-4716	Educational Asst.	03
11		Charmaine Hopkinson		charm-2the3rdpower@yahoo.com	EA III	03
12		Amy Tamashiro		239-6491	Clerk Typist	03
13		Joni Kaneshiro		jkayashida001@hawaii.rr.com	SASA	04
14		JEFF CAMARA		235-7514	PFM III	02
15		James S. Galayan		236-3729	EA III	03
16		Feresa Maea		235-2974	EA III	03
17		Amorian L. Luinen		230-5394	Account Clerk	03
18		Sharon Tom		sharontom@yahoo.com	EA III	03
19		Teressa Salmon		255-3577	EA III	03
20		Carole Adams		954-0082	Principal	06
21		Robert H. Lockyer		233 5747	Vice principal	06
22		Danette Collins		233 5787 ext 294	EA III	03
23		Aileen Yamashiro		233-5727 ext.	EA III	03
24		Marilyn Deguchi		206-4024	EA	03
25						

Hawaii State Workers and HGEA Members
Same Written Testimony in Opposition to: HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727

(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

47	Brenda	Uiernes
48	Gina	Aguilar
49	Arsenia	Basa
50	Carol	Ching
51	Shirble	Marume
52	Janice	Miura
53	Estelle	Ogino
54	Sandra	Sugawa
55	Annette	Yoshida

HOUSE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE

Karl Rhoads, Chair

Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

My name is Nalani Fujimoto 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,

HGEA Local 152-Concerned Citizens
Same Written Testimony in Opposition to: HB1723, HB1715, 1726, 1727
(See Attached for Letter)

	First Name	Last Name	Years of Service as Public Employee
1	Dawn	Reppuhn	14-18
2	Diane	Matsushima	27
3	C.	Young	
4		Fujimoto	19
5	Weylin	Agpaoa	3
6	Benita	Manog	20
7	Darrick	Tokuda	22
8	James	Greubel	3
9	Bradford	Holt	1
10	Alejandra	Ralleca	3
11	Chad	Crosier	
12	Marivic	Cadelina	5
13	Bert	Horiyasu	22
14	Arlene	Tokuda	18.5
15	Cary	Belluomini	
16	Mildred	Welch	17
17	Neil	Matsuwa	24
18	Lori	Enos	3
19	Dana	Sugimoto	15
20	Leila	Akiona	
21	Shirlyn	Young	5
22	Lori	Kobayshi	21
23	Karen	Yamasaki	19
24	Jacqueline	Gauthier	6
25	Aileen	Ching	32
26	Don	Wna	Less than 1
27	Mencie	Tan	5
28	Gloria	Elaban	15
29	Gordon	Iakahali	12
30	Lupe	Puahi	3
31	Daphne	Griffin	10
32	Diane	Tengan	18
33	Gladys	Asuncion	1
34	Barbara	Yuen	
35	Rosa	Mormad	12
36	Ross	Murasaki	3.5
37	Betty	Tashibana	23
38	Lynn	Bell	33
39	Rissa	Miyasato	24
40	Nenita	Moralis	9
41	Joy Lynn	Uyeno	9
42	Shanna	Sakagawa	2
43	Shelley	Kohashikawa	3
44	Lemuel	Aweau	2
45	Shana	Takahashi	1

46	Reip	Kawahara	
47	Sanford	Loo	0.5
48	Marea	Weaver	1.75

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Dawn Reppuhn. As a public employee for 4-8 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically **HB: 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, and 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.

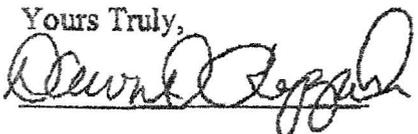
HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare 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 a comfortable retirement 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 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.

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.

I strongly encourage this committee to Vote "No" on these bills 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. Please do not take away these hard earned benefits from public employees!

Yours Truly,

 2/12/09

We the undersigned, oppose the following bills:

February 12, 2009

- 1) HB1106 - Furloughing employees
- 2) HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
- 3) HB1719 - Stop employer contributions for those retiring after 7/1/09
- 4) HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
- 5) HB1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable
- 6) HB1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits
- 7) HB1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage
- 8) HB1737 - Excludes certain forms of pay in computing compensation for retirement purposes

For the following reasons:

- 1) The majority of us came to work for the State of Hawaii for its benefits, not the pay.
- 2) It's unfair to cut our benefits by passing a law. It should be negotiated by our Union and agreed upon with our members.
- 3) If we are to be furloughed, it should include everyone that works for the State of Hawaii. This includes the governor down to the legislators.
- 4) Some of our members may not be able to meet their monthly obligations' (mortgage payments, bill, etc) if they are furloughed.
- 5) Basically, we were led to believe that we would receive the above benefits when we applied to work for the State of Hawaii. The health-care contributions was already changed in 1996 and now our legislators want to change it again.
- 6) We want to know what benefits our legislators and governor are giving up. It's very unfair that our legislators can retire after 10 years of service with full benefits. Is this going to change?

Please print your name and sign.

Name	Signature
Gwen Kostino	Gwen Kostino
Julia English	Julia English
Vera Yamasaki	Vera Yamasaki
Chanice Sufest	Chanice Sufest
Koren Wakatsuki	Koren Wakatsuki
Ray-Lynn Kawasaka	Ray-Lynn Kawasaka
Kristie Kwon	Kristie Kwon
Jodi Polendey	Jodi Polendey
Maile Horikawa	Maile Horikawa
Kim Fleming	Kim Fleming
Sheri-Lynn Tateyama	Sheri-Lynn Tateyama
Zee Higa	Zee Higa
Lana Kim	Lana Kim
Nancy Arakaki	Nancy Arakaki
Laureen Castro	Laureen Castro
Susan Hirokane	Susan Hirokane
Grace Takai	Grace Takai
Kenneth Ito	Kenneth Ito
Frances Kaneshiro	Frances Kaneshiro
Sandi Yamagata	Sandi Yamagata
Ten Sakamashi	Ten Sakamashi
Melanie Mousel	Melanie Mousel
Renee R. Yamada	Renee R. Yamada
Wade Okumura	Wade Okumura
Kristina Lum	Kristina M. Lum
Stanley Pan	Stanley Pan
SAMSON BELLISLE	Samson Bellisle
Joy Green	Joy Green
Glenn Kawifake	Glenn Kawifake

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.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Annelle C. Tamanaha [Annelle.Tamanaha@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB #1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

To The Committee on Labor & Public Employment,

Before I started working for the County, I was employed in the public sector. I was making more money; however, I knew that when I retired, I wouldn't have good medical coverage. My father was an employee of the County. I remember him constantly telling me to think of my future, to get a government job, think of the benefits. Finally, I decided to listen I started taking tests and got hired. Who would have thought that some 20 years later I would have to worry about my retirement and the benefits that come with being a government employee?

I am against the following:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

Please remember that those of us who voted to have you in office to watch out for our best interests will remember who looked out for us at this time come next election.

Sincerely,
Annelle Tamanaha

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: krisueoka@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

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:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Joyce M. Nakamoto [Joyce.Nakamoto@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:40 AM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki
Subject: HOUSE BILLS AFFECTING RETIREMENT AND BENEFITS

Dear Representative

My name is Joyce Nakamoto and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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,

Joyce Nakamoto

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Political suicide

From: Lawrence E. Anderson [mailto:Lawrence.Anderson@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:21 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Political suicide

Dear Representative,

My name is Lawrence Eric Anderson and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

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 Committee 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: Ernest Soares [Ernest.Soares@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

Dear Representative

My name is Ernest SOARES and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

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)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Nadine_Icari/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:49 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills That Affect HGEA/UPW Employees

RE: HB 1723
HB 1715
HB 1726
HB 1727
HB 1719
HB 1725

Dear Elected Officials,

Hi, my name is Nadine Icari and I live in your district and voted for you. I work for Kea'au High School/DOE and am a member of HGEA/UPW

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

My spouse is currently unemployed and this will make things even more difficult for my family's financial situation.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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,

Nadine Icari
198 S. Wilder Rd.
Hilo, HI. 96720
808-934-0126

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Brandon Respicio [ainolikeu@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:14 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 HB 1715 HB 1726 HB 1727 HB 1719

Hi, my name is Brandon Respicio and I live in your district and voted for you. I work for the DOE and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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.

Please vote appropriately against:

HB 1723

HB 1715

HB 1726

HB 1727

HB 1719

Thank you,
Brandon Respicio

Windows Live™: E-mail. Chat. Share. Get more ways to connect. [Check it out.](#)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Harry Palmer [CANEMAN808@HAWAII.RR.COM]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: HB 1723,HB 1715,HB 1726,HB 1727

To whom it concerns:

I'm writing in strong opposition to the bills(HB 1723,1715,1726,1727- Relating to Public Employees,Relating to Retirement, Relating to the Health Fund, Relating to HEUH Benefits Trust Fund).

I can hardly believe that Calvin Say has chosen this time of hardship to "back door" the removal of these health related benefits from collective bargaining.

I also find it odd that these bills once again call on the state employees to be the whipping "boys" whenever things get economically tight.

The salaries of state employees are low enough with the benefit package making them acceptable. To take away the hard fought gains from them is not only unfair,it is political suicide.

When Linda Lingle (who is this guy Obama?; W is one of our greatest American Presidents) praises you, watch out.

Please Chairman Say return to your constituents and your exemplary past and join me in opposing these insulting and unfair acts.

Thank you for your attention.

Harry Palmer
5365365
60 N. Beretania St., Apt. 808
Hon HI 96817

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mmorita@hsta.org
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1719, HB1723, HB 1725, HB 1727
Attachments: pic15309.gif; pic20106.gif

From: Catherine_Ayabe/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
[mailto:Catherine_Ayabe/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:47 AM
To: All Senators; EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov
Cc: KMS_All@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: HB 1719, HB1723, HB 1725, HB 1727

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

My name is Catherine Ayabe and I am a teacher at Kawananaoia Middle School 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, as well as HB 1723, HB 1725, and HB1727, should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. Hence, increase the shortage of qualified teachers in Hawaii. It would be prudent to suspend this bill, at least until our Federal Government can offer us alternative Health Care. This bill strips us of the trust we have for our state leaders. Also, many teachers who have recently enrolled in the Hybrid Retirement System would be unfairly discriminated against if this bill is passed.

I, and many fellow educators, as well as community members, are appalled that this bill has even reached the senate. Educators should be the last group from whom anything is taken away as our future society relies so heavily on them. I trust you will vote no and look for other creative ways to help the State of Hawaii. I believe your education would tell you so.

Aloha,

Catherine Ayabe

26 years of service, State of Hawaii

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yamashita1- Kathy

From: Jason Takayama [Jason.Takayama@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:09 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILLS AFFECTING RETIREMENT AND BENEFITS

Dear Chair Rhoads & Members-

I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The elimination of benefits, will cause a great majority of State & County employees to seek retirement and those who do remain to 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. The resulting exodus of qualified employees from State & County positions would have a significant negative impact on government services and public safety.

Eliminating the benefits would in turn remove one of the most effective recruitment incentives for pulling qualified personnel in from the private sector. This would further compound the situation by making it harder to get skilled individuals to fill the vacancies within the State & County government. I can speak to this issue personally, in this regard. I left a more lucrative position in the private sector to work for the County of Maui, in large part, due to the benefits that were offered. I also know of several other individuals who have done the same.

There is also the morale issues and hardships that will be placed on employees and their families if these bills are passed.

For these reasons, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect of passage of these bills would be to create larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

I thank you for your review of my testimony, and the careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Jason S. Takayama

Radio Tech II
Maui Police Department

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Helaine Borge [Helaine.Borge@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Joe Bertram III; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Angus McKelvey; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Kyle Yamashita
Subject: HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727

To whom it may concern,

As a new county employee, I would like to voice my disappointment in your bills proposed to reduce the benefits of Public workers. While job hunting last year, I was offered positions in the private sector with substantially better wages, but choose the civil service position because the benefits, both while employed and in retirement balance out the lower wages offered. I feel it is unfair to target our wage/benefit package while giving raises to legislative branch and believe you need to look at the comparable wages offered in private sector jobs.

I will certainly be paying attention to these bills and will vote and campaign accordingly when the next election arrives. Please remember that we work hard for a lower pay scale in public service and do not balance the budget on our backs. I also feel it is very unfair to those who have worked for years and now face having their retirement benefits changed just as they approach the retirement years.

Sincerely,
Helaine Borge
Maui, Hawaii

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: Kito Masusako [Kito.Masusako@co.mauhi.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.mauhi.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 grandstanding 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.

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County of Maui.

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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: berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:17 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

From: Joanne_Shibuya/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
[mailto:Joanne_Shibuya/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:55 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject:

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov
FROM: Joanne Shibuya

SUBJECT: HB 1715,1718-23,1725,1727 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

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

My name is Joanne Shibuya and I am a teacher at Kawanakoa Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1715, 1718-23,1725,1727 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 and increases the amount employee pays while decreasing the employer's contribution while employed.

If these bills should pass, they would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

In the schools, the state of Hawaii will experience a mass exodus of teachers similar to the year the early retirement package was offered which resulted in many unqualified teachers being hired and many retirees being rehired to fill the vacancies. In the schools, we saw and felt the negative effects of the last exodus. The major impact was having unqualified teachers filling vacant positions. How are we to continue striving for NCLB with unqualified and non-certificated teachers in the classroom?

Teaching is an extremely exhausting career, both mentally and physically. That is why there are very few teachers who teach after 60 years old. They know their limitations and care too much for the welfare of their students to continue at a diminished pace in the classroom. There are always the remarkable exceptions, but at least they have options after 60. We do not all age at the same rate, but these bills would require that

we do.

Another ill effect of these bills would be the state of health for many Hawaii seniors who would not receive health care if they were unable to continue as public employees until 65 years old. These bills would deteriorate the health of our state employees and our seniors and consequently, we would lose the value of a healthy senior population in Hawaii. Ultimately, the public services would experience an increase in demand from seniors between the ages of 60 to 65 resulting in additional state spending.

I understand the need for budget cuts, so why not propose **if needed** that we retain the medical coverage for retirees, but cut the coverage for beneficiaries/spouses. State employees should not be penalized for retiring before 65 years of age and for working for the state government.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Joanne K. Shibuya

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Suzette Esmeralda [Suzette.Esmeralda@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723

I am against this bill. I am a single mother of a son who is in college. It has taken me just about 15 years to reach the salary I am currently being paid. I am grateful that I am a public employee and saddened that many others are without jobs, however, the salary for public employees, especially those such as clerks, secretaries, etcetera, are very low as it is but many have been loyal to their jobs because of the benefits. Making me pay another 5 percent for medical will hurt me, and it will hurt me even more should furloughs follow.

I think furloughs of one day a month for public employees should be considered if that will prevent layoffs and keeping our benefits as is.

thank you,
SE

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:29 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: zzc56@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kathleen Enos
Organization: Individual
Address: 47-340 Pulama road Kaneohe, Hawaii
Phone: 239-2109
E-mail: zzc56@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

I've only been working for Public Safety Dept. for 1 1/2 years and I dont understand why they are going after the Employees of the State that you need to do the jobs that we have to keep the State going.

The economy is hurting everyone and taking away the States payments to our Medical,Dental and prescription coverage is wrong way to save funds. Especially thoughts of us that have family members.

Everything here in Hawaii's cost of living is just unbearable at times and we all just barely make it paycheck to paycheck.

To do this will make it worse for us and its just not righth to go after the workers that keep the STATE ALIVE AND RUNNING.

A 1 or 2 day forlough would save the STATE more funds and I maysself would not mind this as an alternative to causing us more heartache concerning our HEALTH. This is also one of the problems our new President is worried about the health coverage for us the UNITED STATES citizens and you want to make us suffer.

I hope all of yu really consider what you are doing to our families if you pass any of these bills. Don't make us your easy why to get funds!!!!!!!

I wish I could come the the hearing but my job duties at OCCC have to come first Sincerely,
Kathleen Enos

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:11 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: muratal@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: Sample Letter.doc

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Lynn Murata
Organization:
Address: Honolulu, HI
Phone: 734-9226
E-mail: muratal@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:

Hi, my name is Lynn Murata, and I live in your district and voted for you.

I work for KCC Library and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. Did you know the popular lament of state workers is, "Overworked and Underpaid, Last to have a voice, first to go!"

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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,

Lynn Murata

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: James.Pu@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

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 11:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: flash_rascal@hawaiiintel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

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 believe that HB 1723 relating to PUBLIC EMPLOYEES should be applied to future employees hired after a certain date. Current employees should not be affected. In times of a booming economy, government employees do not see the raises they deserve. Private sector will see a raise that parallels the economy. A booming economy, a high raise; a soft or struggling economy, a freeze or 1%-2% raise. The most a government employee may get is only 4%-5% and no more. The remaining surplus usually goes to funding governmental programs. Decreasing employer contribution's to 55% for health benefits is wrong. This is a breach of contract to current employees. Does this mean that in a booming economy, employer contribution's will return to 60%?

Personally, increasing employee contributions by 5% will definitely hurt me as a single parent and my children.

Annually, I must always figure a way to find the funds to pay the increasing medical premiums that increase by 20% or more. In addition I must come up with the out of pocket costs when my family seeks medical, vision, or dental visits. With health care costs rising on an annual basic, the annual out of pocket cost increase by the hundreds.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Sue Dowsett [sdowsett@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723; oppose

Hearing date: 02-17-09/0830
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 was promised benefits; reductions in those benefits is not right. I have willingly performed this job because I believe in it and felt that long term it would help support my family.

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 8:51 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Nalani.Kaauamo@co.maui.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

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

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Per email testimony is in regards to

HB 1106 HB 1726

HB 1718 HB 1727

HB 1719

HB 1723

HB 1725

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!

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!

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Robert McCleary [mcclearyr001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Dear Representative,

My name is Robert McCleary and I am writing to express my opposition to the following House Bills:

HB 1723--Related to Public Employees

HB 1715--Related to Retirement

HB 1726--Related to the Health Fund

HB 1727--Related to the Hawaii Employer Union Benefits Trust Fund

Each of these bills , in some fashion, takes benefits away from State and county employees. Eliminating benefits and shifting costs will cause morale problems for those currently working and make recruiting of new employees more difficult in the future.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Donna McCleary [dimccleary@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:39 PM
To: LABtestimony; Reprhoads@Capital.hawaii.gov; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Repsouki@Capital.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Representative,

My name is Donna McCleary,MD and I am writing to express my opposition to the following House Bills:

HB 1723--Related to Public Employees

HB 1715--Related to Retirement

HB 1726--Related to the Health Fund

HB 1727--Related to the Hawaii Employer Union Benefits Trust Fund

Each of these bills , in some fashion, takes benefits away from State and county employees. Eliminating benefits and shifting costs will cause morale problems for those currently working and make recruiting of new employees more difficult in the future.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Melia K. Johnson [Melia.Johnson@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills Affecting Retirement and Benefits

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative,

Representative Karl Rhoads (Chair)

Representative Kyle Yamashita

Representative Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran

Representative Joseph Souki

My name is Melia K. Johnson and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew myself and many others to become civil service employees. I work with so many dedicated people who have worked for many years with the county and state. The majority of these workers have been loyal to government work and been with their respective agencies for a good amount of years.

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.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melia K. Johnson

(MPD RTO1 Communication)

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: ANTONIE WURSTER [AVWALOHA4321@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 1723, Relating to Public Employees

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To make employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining is a narrow and misguided approach to the State's budget problems.

Surely positive actions that affect the bigger issues of rising medical costs and a scarcity of doctors in Hawaii would be a crucial part of a wiser and more comprehensive approach. Have you considered how tort reform could reduce the cost of providing medical benefits? If not, please do, as this bill unfairly targets public employees to make them pay for rising costs.

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

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Joe Farias [joeboyiii@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:59 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Personal Testimony opposing HB 1723, 1715, 1726 & 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom it may concern:

I am a Fire Captain with the Hawaii Fire Department. I have been in government service since 1987 and oppose the passing of these bills.

I currently have a wife and two young children who rely on my medical, dental, vision and drug benefits. I have contributed to the employees retirement system for over 20 years and feel this would be a terrible blow to now have to pay for these services out of pocket. While it is understandable that government is attempting to streamline it's spending, it seems extremely unfair that lifelong government employees should have to bear this burden. I have dedicated my life to serving the public. A large part of my decision to remain in the County system was the benefits package offered. I have witnessed portions of the package "lost" or reduced over the years. It saddens me that the government cannot continue to offer these benefits. As is the case, employees will be forced to consider their options.

Opting for retirement hurts many of the agencies as they will lose valuable experience. In the Fire Service you would want that experience if your house were on fire or your family member had a critical medical emergency.

The other option is for employees to look for similar type jobs elsewhere the offer a better benefits package. Again, the expertise, time and money spent training your employees will now be lost. You have spent a lot of resources to train your employees and they will take the knowledge with them. It will be picked up else where because the training is that good. Hawaii County continues to lose Fire and Police personnel to mainland Counties because the pay and benefits are better.

This is not a threat or a letter of anger. If you keep taking away benefits from employees, don't be surprised if what you're left with are young inexperienced personnel who have to relearn or reinvent solutions. If the rest have moved on via retirement or relocation, what quality of service can you provide to the public?

I urge you to reconsider passing these bill as they may do more harm than good in the long run.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,
Joseph Farias III
Fire Captain
Hawaii Fire Department

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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

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Maggie Daub [MDaub@hhsc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:44 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HR1723, HR1715, HR1726, HR1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am dissapointed and disgusted with the legislature and the introduction of these bills. As an RN, I became employed at Lanai Community Hospital mainly because of the retirement plan, because I had my choice of many job opportunities.. For decades, we were paid much less than private sector RN's, but stayed in our jobs because we assumed, and were promised by contract it would all work out in the end with retirement. RPN positions are chronically short staffed, with vacancies at every hospital. How do you think you are going to fill them without a good benefit package?, not to mention disgruntled staff who have put in 20 and 30 years and had plans for retirement that you are trying to pull out from under them Shame on you all M Daub Box 630991 Lanai, Hi 96763

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From: Kenneth Fields [khfields@camhmis.health.state.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony
Attachments: mfgcsignature2.jpg

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

My name is Ken Fields. and I am a Human Service Professional at the Department of Health, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division, Maui Family Guidance Center. I am a member of Hawaii Government Employees Association. I want it known that I

strongly oppose HB 1723
strogly oppose HB 1725
strongly oppose HB 1726
strogly oppose HB 1727

I am in favor of HB 1106
I am in favor of HB 1536

The economy of Hawaii is built on the workforce. When you start taking away things from the workforce, you weaken it, which does nothing but penalize and harm the fundamentals of the economy. It is understood that in these difficult times, nothing may be added. But, there is no call to take things away. It is up to the elected officials to find fair ways of dealing with budget shortfalls that do not penalize, harm and dishearten some families and workers who are not responsible for the economic catastrophe brought on by short-sighted and narrow-minded capitalists and politicians. Do the right thing. Spread the burden across the field equally, such as a small increase in the GET tax, and/or a small increase in the sales tax which includes visitors and short term residents. I implore you to maintain the benefits of dedicated state and county government workers as they have been.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ken Fields



Kenneth Fields, MA, LMHC
Mental Health Care Coordinator
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division
Maui Family Guidance Center

270 Waiehu Beach Road, Suite 213
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
Tel: (808) 243-1263 Fax (808) 243-1254
Email: khfields@camhmis.health.state.hi.us

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**Testimony for the House of Representatives Committee on Labor & Public
Employment Notice of Hearing Friday February 17, 2009 8:30 am Conference room
309 State Capital. Fax#586-6331**

From:

**Caron M. Wilberts
Department of Education Clerk Typist**

Please accept testimony on the following Bills:

HB1727: Not in favor of this Bill. Please protect the rights of your public workers. Referring to SB 372 that refers to state workers as, "whose base salaries often are already quite low". Please do not take away the dental and vision coverage for the state workers. I know that if I did not have dental care there is no way I could afford to go to the dentist. I have seen first hand in previous jobs where dental care was not provided, how the quality of life for the workers suffered. The gums deteriorate, teeth are lost, gum disease, etc., all of these things are a result of not having dental care. I have seen these things. Vision care is also just as important. Because Hawaii is situated where we are, residents here have higher numbers of cataracts than the mainland, because we are exposed to the sun. By having the routine vision exams this can be caught early so that these workers will not lose their vision. This is just basic care. As we are not paid a living wage, we will not be able to afford the state's "Carrier" of choice to pay the full premiums. That's just the reality. Please do the moral and just thing by not taking away the dental and vision coverage of your hard working state employees.

HB1726: Not in favor of this Bill. Yes you can argue that this benefit is not necessary to life and limb, but I truly believe that it gives your hard working state employees some sort of peace of mind knowing that if something happens to them, the family can get a little bit of help. It's something that most of us don't even think about, but if something should happen then we know that our families will get a little bit of help. Please keep this as a benefit for your state workers.

HB 1715: Not in favor of this Bill. The present length of service is more than fair. Think about it, if you work 25 years you are possibly giving one third of your life of service to the state. Everyone I have known that retired at 25 years or more was more than ready to retire. They had worked so hard for so long and they wanted to enjoy what was left of their lives. I have also known several people who didn't make it to retirement. They literally worked so hard that they didn't get to enjoy their retirement years. Please do not raise the years of service age.

HB1723: Not in favor of this Bill. If I am understanding this bill presently the state pays 60% and we the workers pay 40%. Now the Bill would like to change that to the state pays 45% and we the workers pay 55%. I honestly cannot afford any more deductions. If we were paid a living wage then maybe that would be an option, but when we are being nickled and dimed to death for every little thing, a 5% increase in what we pay would be a hardship for most people. What do I leave off the grocery bill, do I really need to take that pill today, I'll split this meal and make it last for two days. These will be the type of questions that state workers will have to ask themselves if our health benefits plan goes up. These are questions that no one should have to ask themselves.

I again ask this committee to look towards the future and envision how as lawmakers how you can not only benefit the state workers but all the residents of Hawaii. We the people who elected you into office expect this from you. All these Bills that have been proposed to take, take, take from your state work force is not the answer. We serve the people who expect all these services, and we do it faithfully. As I mentioned in Fridays (2-13-09) testimony Hawaii needs to join the 21st Century and most of the other states in this great country and establish a state lottery. I can't imagine the amount of money that would generate. The state also needs to look into non-Hawaii residents who come straight from the airport and apply for every service they can lay their hands on. They can get everything while Hawaii residents who at a time of need can't qualify for anything. That has to stop.

State workers and not the ones saying, I want, I want, I want, we are only asking for what is fair. I thank you for your time.



Caron M. Wilberts
State of Hawaii Clerk Typist

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: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:25 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: sugarshidaki@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

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 oppose this bill because I am already living from paycheck to payckeck struggling to make ends meet. My kids had to move back home because they cannot even afford the rent to have a decent place to live. The middle class is getting hit again. Go and take from the rich to help with the shortfalls or else you're going to have only the rich and the poor. Those for this bill do want the rich to just get richer. Please kill this bill for I've been in the state for 24 years and on the verge of retirement in december. But I can't afford to retire because of our economy. Please vote no on this bill. Mahalo

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: 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.

yamashita3-Chelsea

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

From: Jan E. Pontanilla [Jan.Pontanilla@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:18 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative

My name is Jan Pontanilla and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

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: Debbie Bissen-Melton [debbiem@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:25 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723,1715,1726,1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

These House Bills are totally unfair to the dedicated police officers and their families who have worked very hard to protect and serve the people of Hawaii!

For you to arbitrarily cut off the very benefits that was offered in order to retain and find quality men and women for this very difficult job really does not make any sense at all, even in this poor economy. What do you plan to do if there is a mass exodus of police and other essential personnel?

Please find another way to cut the budget, NOT at the expense of our police officers who put their LIVES on the line every single day!! I know because I am married to one of Hawaii's finest and believe me, families make sacrifices every day in this job. Thank you for considering these comments.

The above captioned House Bills are scheduled to be heard on Friday, February 13, 2009 at 8:30am

Sincerely,
Debra Bissen Melton

From: HENRY SCHNITZER [hnrcaining@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:55 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HOUSE BILLS

Dear Representative

My name is Henry SCHNITZER and I am writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

Thus, through no fault of the employees should these benefits be taken away from them. For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all

islands.

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 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

Thank you,
Ronald Steben

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Carl Bolding [cbolding@k12.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Submitting Testimony on the House Bills Listed Below

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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.

Hi, my name is Carl Bolding. I work for the Department of Education and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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.

Mahalo for you time and assistance.

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:10 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW:
Attachments: image001.gif

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: Leighton K. Kanae [mailto:Leighton.Kanae@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:26 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject:

Dear Representative,

I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

I am a county employee with our department for the last 22 ½ years. One of the main reasons for joining was the sense of well being this position offered back during my application period in 1986. It offered a sense of job security that, if my best efforts were given throughout my tenure within my employment then I would be rewarded on the back end with a secured pension and other health benefits for me and my family for our future. These bills in its entirety threatens the livelihood of all of my hard worked years and future for me and my family as I come closer and closer to my eligible years of retirement.

The mere mention of these bills have stirred up a "hornets nest" sort to speak of unsettling times amongst the many employees, both civilian and sworn, in our department. Those who are beyond there retirement time or are close to it by the end of the upcoming months ahead, are now planning for the inevitable (should these bills get passed). This is sad because a lot of these vested employees have brought, and will bring and are instilling to bring, a lot of senior leadership, experience and quality to our department and county as a whole. These bills threaten the likelihood of the invaluable senior leadership our particular county government agency strives on. Not to say that our department could not and would not be able to continue on, but it would

be adversely weakened with the threat of a mass exodus of senior leaders leaving just to save their future pensions, health funds and etc.

We all are not blind to the fact that our nation faces a very large economical crisis in this age and time. But the likelihood of these bills passing and the mere mention that it is being thought of is not the answer to our crisis. I know that our Chief has diligently sought the advice of all of his command staff and personnel in this time of crisis to cut back on spending and funding for all sorts of extra programs and working conditions we have all come accustomed to before, but now know all too well that we need to adjust too. We all have been continuing on like a well oiled machine, adjusting to our working environments and just getting the job done. However, should these bills pass, a majority of us will now have the feeling of insecurity which will cause not only a mass exodus of those already passed their retirement time as well as those close to their retirement time, but even others within our department to leave and look for other employment elsewhere.

We all know that our hour, monthly and even annual incomes are nowhere comparable to those of our counterparts in the continental USA. But we chose to stay on again, due to our (what we thought to be good at our application time) future pension and other health benefit packages that were promised to us. If this is taken away or even a portion of it, what is the sense of staying on in this employment field for some of us? 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.

As a taxpaying registered voting employee for this county I humbly thank you for lending an ear to my strong opposition to these bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Sgt. Leighton Kanaele

Leighton Kanaele

Sergeant

Maui County Police Department

55 Mahalani Street, Wailuku, HI 96793

Plans and Training Section

Ph: (808) 244-6372

Fax: (808) 244-6374

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Terry T. Young [Terry.Young@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:09 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: House Bills No. 1723; 1715; 1726 and 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

February 12, 2009

Dear Representatives:

I am writing to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723-Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715-Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727-Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health benefits Trust Fund

You have thousands of County and State employees who have been faithful and loyal, staying with an employer for years, giving up larger salaries that are available in private sectors, however, knowing in the long run they will be rewarded when they retire with good benefits that included health coverage as was promised to them. Now with these Bills you are introducing, you are creating an untenable situation for the County and State Government. If these Bills are passed, you will have a mass exodus of employees who will be seeking to retire before July 1st and this will cause enormous chaotic confusion within Hawaii's State and County Government.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands. Please don't let this happen!

Sincerely,

Terry

Terry T. Young
C.I.D. - Lahaina
Office - (808)661-0559
Fax - (808)661-8579

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Karen M. Mawae-Spence [Karen.Mawae-Spence@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Against House Bills 1715, 1726, 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Dear Representative

My name is Karen Mawae-Spence and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

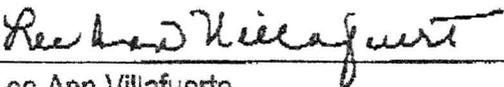
Sincerely,
Karen Mawae-Spence

Friday, 13 February 2009

Re: HB 1723

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

My name is Lee Ann Villafuerte, I am an employee at Koko Head Elementary School, and I **strongly oppose** HB 1723, which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.



Lee Ann Villafuerte

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 writing to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Litricia U. Castro
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:30 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: House Bills #1723, #1715, #1726 and #1727

From: Davlynn L. Racadio [mailto:Davlynn.Racadio@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:09 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: House Bills #1723, #1715, #1726 and #1727

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

*Davlynn Racadio
Maui Police Department
Communications
(808) 244-6338*

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Respectfully submitted,

Darrell Ramos, Sergeant
021009/2315 hrs.

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 writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Scott Perry
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Leighton K. Kanaele [Leighton.Kanaele@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO CURRENT RETIREMENT BILLS

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Sgt. Leighton Kanaele

Leighton Kanaele

Sergeant

Maui County Police Department

55 Mahalani Street, Wailuku, HI 96793

Plans and Training Section

Ph: (808) 244-6372

Fax: (808) 244-6374

February 11, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
and members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96713

Dear Chair Rhoads and members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1723, Related to Public Employees.
House Bill No. 1715, Related to Retirement.
House Bill No. 1726, Related to the Health Fund.
House Bill No. 1727, Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union
Health Benefits Trust Fund.

House Bill No. 1723: If passed, you will be removing my right to collective bargaining and reduce health benefits. This will increase the burden for me and fellow Police Officers. I have four children ages 9-15. As parents we try to plan out their future with regards to post high-school education. Surviving in Hawaii is hard enough. I beg that it will not be made harder.

House Bill No. 1715: This will raise the minimum years of service for Police Officers from 25 to 30 years. With the minimum retirement age of 65. **Note:** Throughout our Nation the average years of service a Law Enforcement Officer needs for retirement is between 20 and 25 years. The reason being this is a career that deals with stressors the average human being does not have to deal with. We make every effort to maintain an environment that allows the general public to live in peace. In doing so we deal with those individuals or groups of individuals who have no regard for others or their property. The vast majority of calls for service are for problems within our society that others either don't want to deal with or don't have the training/capacity to deal with. The public turns to us to deal with and solve these problems.

HOUSE BILL No. 1726: If this is passed it will deny life insurance protection promised at the time of hire. As a young man (age 19) I thought I was making the responsible decision by taking on a career that dealt with the aforementioned stressors and enormous responsibility. I remember my father telling me that this sacrifice will provide for you and your future family when the time comes. It is now almost 20 years later, my father has passed on, and all that myself and others have worked for is being threatened.

HOUSE BILL No. 1727: Again removing benefits essential to not just me but other families. All of which were established under collective bargaining. As mentioned above, I thought I was making the right decision. With all due respect, may I remind you that I have four children?

I like most in Hawaii were raised to not make waves, be respectful, make do with what we have, and go with the flow. I cannot sit quiet in this situation. It is not just me I have to provide for and worry about. I need to insure my family gets what I have worked for and earned throughout this 19+ years of service.

I am fulfilling my obligation to the general public with the oath I have taken. I can honestly say I am not sure I would have dealt with all I have in the past if I knew this would happen. Maybe, I or my family would not have dealt with me bringing home (un-intentionally) the stress of this career had we known this would happen. Frankly speaking I am very upset that these bills were even introduced. The wealthy, well to do, and those who take their safety for granted will not be effected by these bills. How do they think they are kept safe?

I am speaking for myself and surely others when I say this will make a great impact on morale and force our senior leaders to leave. In turn this will create major problems for the organizations and possibly reduce services the citizen have grown accustomed to and sometimes taken for granted.

Like us, you have been given the responsibility and trust of the people. Please be mindful of the potential consequences of such legislation being passed. Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

DONALD K. KANEMITSU

POLICE LIEUTENANT

MAUI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dear Representatives

My name is Eugene Santiago, I'm a member of the Maui Police Department. My wife is employed at a public elementary school as a part-time tutor with no benefits. I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

If these bills are passed, it will have a tremendous impact on many of our government employees who have not only committed and dedicated their lives to providing quality service to our communities, but have made countless sacrifices to ensure the deliverance of such services. A mass exodus from public service could be anticipated, forcing many to leave the jobs they cherish. I look forward in continuing my years of service with enthusiasm and motivation, and would be saddened if compelled to retire before the projected time.

By eliminating benefits, it will cause morale problems and will affect the welfare of both county and state tremendously. It will cause many to question the integrity of our public officials and their motivations for entertaining such bills. These devastations will be remembered at future elections. The benefits is what kept many employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees, especially their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills and plea to everyone involved in this process to consider other viable options in maintaining a healthy economic environment for our Aloha State.

With much sincerity,

Eugene Santiago

yamashita1- Kathy

From: RECEIVSGT1 [RECEIVSGT1@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:05 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

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

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing out of concern for the action of HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, and HB 1727. My concern is the effect on public employees losing health benefits, as that was part of the reason for our employment with the State or County. Being employed with the Maui Police Department for nearly 17 years, I have seen some employees leave employment with the County to seek higher paying jobs. The people who remained stayed because of reasons that included the health benefits of being an employee or retiree.

Now when times are hard for everyone largely due to poor decisions in the private sector (failed big business) we public employees who remained loyal, are being threatened with the possibility of losing the benefits that were being counted on.

These bills will put further strain on our employees during these economic times. This will only add to the down turn in the economy in limiting the spending potential of our employees. At the very least, our essential employees such as Police Officers and Fire Fighters should be exempt from this law. We have a 25year retirement system, as very few 50+ year old persons are able to go around chasing criminals or running into building fires. As a result, we lose a lot more in terms of benefits for the type of service we provide, and the amount of dedication that is required. Ideally though, a grandfather clause should be included to exempt those hired under the current benefits.

This bill was a bad idea to begin with. Quality applicants will be more apt to go out onto other opportunities, putting public services in a major bind when the economy recovers. Please kill this bill. It is unfair to our employees in so many ways. Thank you for your time.

Ericlee K. CORREA
Sergeant
Maui Police Department
55 Mahalani St.
Wailuku, Hawaii

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:

I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Charles M. Hirata
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

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 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 writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sgt. Ricky Uedoi
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Charles J. Davis [CDavis@mpd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:59 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1727, 1723, 1715 & 1726

February 10, 2009

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

Dear Chair Rhodes and Members:

**Subject: House Bill No. 1727, Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union
Health Benefits Trust Fund
House Bill No. 1723, Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715, Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726 Related to the Health Fund**

House Bill No. 1727 Prohibits the health benefits plan of the employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing dental and vision coverage from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015. Allows the board of trustees to make dental and vision benefits available to employee-beneficiaries at no cost to the employers.

This bill affects me the most as a civilian worker at the police department. I am the primary wage earner in a family of four. Everyone in the family must wear eye glasses and one child needs braces on her teeth. I already pay \$340 for medical insurance and will not be able to afford that to double or triple to provide for my family. This will cause a great hardship on me and would force me back to a private employer that provides better wages and covers my medical insurance premiums.

House Bill No. 1723 makes the contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. It also establishes employer contributions for active public employees at 55 percent of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan.

This bill is bad for public employees by taking away bargaining rights and is even worse by requiring the employee to pay higher cost at a time when they can afford it least. Most employees have already lost 30 to 40 percent of their 401K making it the worst time to have increased costs for benefits.

House Bill No 1726 Increases, for new public employees, the minimum age and length of service for an unreduced service retirement.

It is unfair to increase the length of service to 30 years and minimum age to 65 for full retirement. This is out of reach for all but a very few employees. Public employees should be encouraged to be the best they can be, not just the oldest with the most years of service.

House Bill No. 1726 Prohibits the Hawaii employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing group life insurance if any of the premiums are being paid by the State or a County. Allows the trust fund to contract with a group life insurer to make available group life insurance benefits to employee-beneficiaries, provided that none of the premiums are paid by the State or any County and the insurer pays a fee to the board of trustees.

This bill takes away life insurance or makes it unaffordable when it is the most needed because public worker are being forced to work at an older age when life insurance is more likely to be used.

I made the choice two years ago to bring my 15 years of experience to the Maui Police Department. I feel I can really help the department use technology as an investigative tool to keep the police officers safe and make them more efficient at a time that there aren't enough officers to fill all of the needed vacancies. I fell that taking away benefits will keep the most qualified workers away from the public sector and may force me to reconsider my choice of bringing my skills to the public sector.

Please reconsider these bills. None of them are supported by me. These attempts to save money in my opinion will cause a much bigger problem which the State and County may not be able to recover from.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

CHARLES DAVIS
Systems Analyst
Maui Police Department

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Carl A. Eguia [Carl.Eguia@mpd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:02 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testing

Dear Representative,

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Respectfully Submitted

P.O. II Carl EGUIA
02/11/09

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jonathan E. Acosta [Jonathan.Acosta@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:35 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

My name is Jonathan Acosta, and I'm a Sergeant with the Maui Police Department with 12 years of service. I am vehemently opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families. As Officers we sacrifice our family lives to work on nights, weekends, and holidays to keep our streets safe. Sometimes, Officers even make the ultimate sacrifice for the public by giving up their lives performing their duties. These bills send a strong message to all police officers: that our sacrifices are meaningless to lawmakers and we are nothing more than another public servant. These bills also contradict the arrangements that were in place when we were hired. Any lawmakers who support this bill does not support or cares one bit for police officers. I will not vote for anyone who supports this bill, and I will make it a point to tell my friends, family and any member of the public who will listen to not vote for or support anyone that thinks that these bills are a good idea.

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. By creating such a situation, public safety would be a major concern. As jobs would not be immediately filled or certain jobs would have to be eliminated. Recruiting and retaining officers will be extremely difficult. Most mainland Police Departments allow their officers to retire with 20 years of service. Increasing the amount of service time before officers can retire will do nothing good for retainment of newly hired officers, some of whom have no local ties here in Hawaii and will give them a reason to work for a Mainland department for higher pay, lower cost of living, and BETTER BENEFITS.

I for one will seriously consider finding another career if these new bills are passed. What will be the point of staying on? I have over 12 years of police experience in patrol, Field Training Officer, marijuana eradication, SWAT operations, fugitive apprehension, firearms instruction and jail operations that will be lost to the Police Department if I choose to leave. There are other police officers whose resume is more varied and extensive than mine and feel the same way. You can't just take a guy off of the street and replace a seasoned cop at the drop of a hat. If

having experienced and effective police officers working the streets matters in the tiniest bit to you, these bills should not be passed. Many, many dedicated and experienced officers will retire or resign if the bills pass. My name will most likely be on that list.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Karen K. Wong [Karen.Wong@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:21 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki; LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to House Bills 1723, 1715, 1726, and 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

February 11, 2009

Dear Representative,

I'm a twenty year member of the Maui Police Department. I am due to retire in four years and two months. I am also a single mother of three adopted children. What you are proposing will greatly affect my career and family life. The latter is why I work so hard and why I do not support the following:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

I joined the Maui Police Department because I had hoped to bring my dying grandmother back to the land she grew up on in Lahaina. I chose police work because my father was an officer with the Honolulu Police Department. He retired after 42 years of service because the EUTF planned to cut down on paper by paying retirees once a month instead of twice as they had been.

When I joined the department I was handed a brochure about the County of Maui "Building a Better Community"- Why come and work for the County?" I asked myself why I should work for the County. In 1988 my starting pay was \$10.34 an hour. By no means could I measure the pay to what my life was worth. So I convinced myself the long term range of building a career and having the BENEFITS that were written in black and white in plain English, the BENEFITS that were advertised as a PROMISE and USED AS AN INCENTIVE to join, was the best reason to be a part of "building a better community" and at the end of my career it would be worth it!

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.** 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.

The majority of all State and County workers have been loyal to government work and been with their respective agencies for a good amount of years. Thus, through no fault of the employees should these benefits be taken away from us. Therefore, I wish to voice my opinion that I strongly oppose these proposed bills, which would eliminate benefits to State and County employees.

Karen K. Wong, Police Officer III
Maui Police Department - Community Relations Section
55 Mahalani Street, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: RECEIVSGT1 [RECEIVSGT1@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:49 PM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

February 11, 2009

Carl RHOADS, Chair, Committee on Labor and Public Employment
And members
House of Representatives

Dear Chair and Members,

My name is Leif ADACHI. I am writing regarding House Bills #1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

I do not support any of these bills.

I wanted to share a little about myself, just one of the small people that would be gravely hurt by the passing of these bills.

I am a police officer on Maui and have been for over 15 years. I have a little under 10 years until I am eligible for retirement with 25 years of service. I started with the police department at age 20, this would make me 45 years old at retirement. As I understand the proposed bills, I would need to work another **30** years to retire with benefits at age 65. You're asking me to work 45 years to keep what was promised when I was hired? The retirement benefits were one of the main reasons I chose the police department and stayed to make police work my career, my life. I have three young sons that are now 11/7/3 years old. I am dependant on my health benefits now and when I retire to care for my sons.

Now that you know a little about me, how could you possibly expect someone in my position to support these bills? What am I to do IF these bills are passed? What about my family?

This will hurt me, my family and all members of the county/state employees and their families. Think about who will this really hurts and not as just a way to save money.

Find another way.

Thank you for hearing me.

SINCERELY,

LEIF ADACHI
SERGEANT, MAUI POLICE
DEPARTMENT

February 11, 2008

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. 1723, Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715, Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726, Related to Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727, Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union
Health Benefits Trust Fund.

I am opposed to the above legislation that will remove the retirement benefits for Public employees. I humbly ask that you consider the negative impact these bills will have on me, my brother and sister officers, and our families.

Throughout our nation police officers are able to retire at a younger age than the public at large because the work we do is stressful, dangerous and very necessary. Today, very few people want to be police officers because the nature of the work is generally unattractive. We work shifts, respond to dangerous calls and death cases, handle unruly people, face public scrutiny and at times are stationed away from our families. We, as police officers, and other public servants, were promised these benefits because we face a lot of issues that the normal citizen do not. Society depends on us for a reasonable degree of law and order, and we deliver, each and every day we report to work. It seems unfair that when things go bad, you look to take from the very people who protect our communities.

A lot of us became police officers for the security a civil service job provides and to remove these benefits and rights, most of which were earned through the collective bargaining process, seems so unethical and immoral. I've worked in this profession for 21 years, and feel like you are trying to change the rules in the last inning of the game. The fair thing to do is to propose these changes to the officers entering police service today, that way they'll know what the retirement benefits are before they decide to invest in a career in civil service, and not toward the end of their career.

If passed, this legislation will force over 30 officers from the Maui Police Department into retirement. All of our top executive officers will leave, along with most of our command staff, which will create a huge impact on public safety on Maui. Morale in our department will suffer, and the mass exodus will create a huge staffing shortage that will create even more problems for an organization that is already short staffed.

Please respect what we do. Under the new legislation, I will have to endure many more years of service. Police work are for men who are much younger than I, and continuing in this line of work to age 65 will definitely increase the risk for injury for all who serve. Administrative positions are also limited and very competitive, and there is no guarantee for advancement because of age. Most of us have almost earned the retirement we were promised when we were hired, and are depending on you to protect our benefits from being taken away.

Thank you and I appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

CLARENCE S. KENUI JR.
MAUI POLICE DEPT.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jamie P. Wright [Jamie.Wright@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:52 PM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative

My name is Jamie Wright and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

I have been employed with the Maui Police department for 8 years after serving in the US Army. I joined the department primarily because of the benefits and my love of the community. I am currently Field Training Officer and SWAT officer and go to work every day knowing I may be putting my life in danger. I believe it is unbelievable that the government I have served would even consider backing out of my employment agreement by taking away the benefits I have worked for.

I sincerely hope that all of you do the right thing.

Aloha

Jamie P. Wright

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. 1715- Related to Retirement**
- House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees**
- House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund**
- House Bill No. 1727- 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

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Kathy L. Paz [Kathy.Paz@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:41 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill No. 1723, 1715, 1726, & 1727

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

February 11, 2009

Dear Representative

I work at the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept me and a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Sincerely,
Kathy L. Paz

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Wade M. Maeda [Wade.Maeda@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:36 PM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

I have given my heart and soul to keep the community safe as a Narcotics Supervisor. I have worked countless hours and hundreds of cases to take drug dealers off the street. I have sacrificed a lot as a Police Officer serving Maui County and ultimately the State of Hawaii.

When I signed up to be a Police Officer, the retirement package and medical benefits were explained to me. At no time was I informed that my benefits would change or that my retirement would be in jeopardy. As you probably know, a Police Officer's base salary in the State of Hawaii is relatively low considering the cost of living in Hawaii. The proposal of these bills will almost certainly affect my decision to remain a County employee. I do not want to leave the islands, but I see no other alternative if these bills pass. How can I support my family on roughly 67% base pay salary (when I retire)? Inflation and cost of living alone will render my retirement mute.

Thank you for your consideration,

Wade M Maeda

Wade M. Maeda
Maui County Police Department
Vice/Narcotics Division
K-9 Unit Supervisor
(808) 244-6462 (work)
(808) 870-9557 (cell)
wade.maeda@mpd.net

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Marlon R. Madariaga [Marlon.Madariaga@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:20 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HOUSE BILL

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

submitted by,
Madariaga

Sincerely

Marlon

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

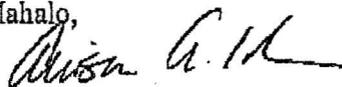
Hearing on February 17, 2009
House Bill No. 1723- Relating to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1727- Relating to Medical Benefits of Public Employees

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 renege 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

From: Emitterio Alvarez [Emitterio.Alvarez@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House bills

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

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 the following bills:

House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees
House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement
House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund
**House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health
Benefits Trust Fund.**

The benefits afforded in these programs are what encouraged a lot of employees, like me, to seek employment with the government. To take them away would be detrimental to all employees and their families. Aside from helping to make Hawaii a better place to live for my family one of the reasons I chose this job was the fact that I could look forward to the long term benefits after retiring.

To be honest, when I first read through HB 1723 I was surprised at the amount of language that was being stricken from the statute. After reading through and realizing the long term impact of this legislation, I was struck by its effects on me personally. This would cause my bottom line pay to be reduced by as much as you're increasing my share of the costs. Basically I'll be getting paid less if this legislation passes.

And this bill throws out our right to negotiate this matter in collective bargaining. So we'll never be able to address this issue in the future.

As for HB 1715, increasing the minimum age and length of service for retirement I think will prove a detriment to future recruiting of civil service employees.

People who seek employment with the government know that they're not getting in it for the money. So the trade off is the long term benefit of a relatively early retirement with stable benefits for themselves and their family. Increasing the minimum age and length of service requirements as this legislation does will in the long run prove detrimental to the overall operation of this State. Everyone realizes and accepts effect the recent downturn in the economy has had on services. However to commit such long reaching legislation to this problem I think will adversely affect future recruitment and possibly even current retention of employees.

With regards to HB 1726 prohibiting the employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing group life insurance. After taking away our retirement benefits what else can public employees look forward to? Group Life Insurance? Not if this bill passes. Public employees are being hammered at this session with bills such as this. Now I myself currently purchase Life Insurance through other means however I consider myself an exception to the norm. I'm a single male with no dependents so I can afford to take on the additional insurance coverage. But I cannot imagine what it would be like for a young family to take on these expenses.

Imagine a young family the wife, working as a teacher and the husband, as a firefighter. Both entered the system with the forethought of the benefits promised. The base salary for the wife being about \$48,000.00 and the husband's being about \$39,000.00. This young family with two young children living in a just purchased home on a combined salary of \$87,000.00 a year will now essentially have their income reduced by something close to 60%. That income will come from having to cover 100% of their medical insurance as well as 100% of any kind of life insurance they may want to provide should anything unfortunate happen to them. The family I'm describing is out there and I know from experience as that's the situation my own sister will face if this bill passes.

Which brings us to HB 1727. Prohibiting the health benefits plan of the employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing dental and vision coverage for six years. In addition to making civil service workers work for 30 years or into their 60's, taking away group life insurance and making them pay more for health benefits, all of which were promised in past legislation, HB 1727 takes away our dental and vision. I can foresee a lot of unhealthy blind and toothless civil servants trying to provide government services. It's either that or, of those civil servants who choose to stay in this system, very few will be able to afford to live here in Hawaii.

Everyone knows that you'll never be rich working for the government however I, like many others, chose to sacrifice short-term financial gains for a combination of service to the community and eventual long term benefits such as our retirement and health care benefits. I know I'm not asking to become a millionaire when I retire but after 25 years of service in this field of work I would hope that the citizenry for whom I've worked wouldn't think it unfair for civil service workers to be cared for in retirement.

Respectfully,

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

February 11, 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:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employment
 House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
 House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
 House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer/Inn Health Benefits Trust Fund

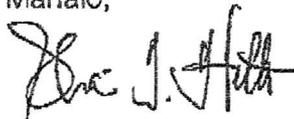
Born, raised and educated in Hawaii, my civil service career as a social worker began 17 years ago (15 more to go) with agencies like Hawaii Housing Authority, Child Welfare Services and at present the Maui Police Department. Like many others with difficult jobs, when I first decided to work for the state/county, it was not the pay that drew me to this 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 will definitely be a devastating blow to everyone already having difficulty in these economic times. Not only will it turn away many quality professional and non professional employees from a civil service position but many will retire or leave on non on they own. 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. 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 that we are already enduring.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,



Shari Hotta
 Wailuku, Maui resident

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Erik A. Losvar [Erik.Losvar@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723, 1715, 1726,

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative,

I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Sincerely,

Erik LOSVAR

Police Officer II, Lanai Patrol

Maui County Police Department

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.

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 writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Derrick Lopez
Maui Police Department
Lahaina District

yamashita1- Kathy

From: g muranaka [gmura8@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:37 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Say No to All HB !!!!!!!

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

I'm against the passing of the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say!

HB 1106

HB 1718

HB 1719

HB 1725

HB 1723

HB 1715

HB 1726

HB 1727

I'm 63 yrs. old, 22 yrs of service with the City & County.

I had plans to retire Dec. 2010, but the passing of these bills.

I may have to continue to work longer.

The lost of these benefits I know will be a hardship to me in terms of the financial burden.

I had planned & depended on these benefits in planning my retirement.

SAY No to all the bills mention above.

George MURANAKA
City & County Employee
02-12-09

yamashita1- Kathy

From: James_Peacock/KAHUKUHI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:56 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB1719 and HB1723

Representative Rhoades:

Never before have I called a politician or sent an e-mail about proposed legislation. Yet, upon reading about HB 1719 and HB1723, I'm very concerned that this is either a bad idea, or a political stunt.

I'm sure you will receive similar e-mail messages, so I'll attempt to keep my comments brief and to the point. I gave up a nice teaching job at a prestigious ILH high school almost 20 years ago to take a job in the DOE to be a school counselor. At that time, the DOE seemed to be begging for certified counselors. Not only could I fulfill a real need at Kahuku High School, but the retirement program was fairly attractive. As I saw it, I could give up real monthly wages, with the promise of getting the missing wages back thru the retirement system. Did I error in judgement? In many ways, this seems similar to our last president and his effort to tear apart our Social Security System. People who worked hard, were going to get the shaft! Fortunately, the president lost out on this idea. Hopefully, the politicians from Hawaii who are really promoting these bills will also change their minds.

Can you imagine all of the different labor unions for both the state and city and county, who will most likely take the state to court on these issues? How much money will the tax payers shell out to cover these court costs? I wonder if the state of Hawaii will win all of these suits in both state and federal courts, especially at the appellate level? I can only imagine that lawyers would find a number of issues that would be taken up in our courts.

Yet, as compelling as these arguments against these bills may seem, my largest concern, as it should be for all of Hawaii's citizens, is the effect your bill will have on those too old to work. Without a retirement or medical package, many seniors will eventually be forced out of their homes and will be without medical assistance. Can you imagine how our current ugly homeless situation will continue to manifest itself, and how our emergency rooms at every hospital will be filled with senior citizens who can not afford medical assistance at a doctor's office because of these proposed bills? The state of Hawaii can not avoid being a steward of our citizens. Additional homelessness will continue to drive perspective tourist away, further shrinking the state's tax base income. This would be similar to a dog chasing it's tail.

Can I also assume that these bills would also cut out the retirement plans and medical benefits for state judges, and politicians, such as yourself? Or is this only an attempt to upset state and C&C employees and all of their affected family members?

James C. Peacock, Kahuku High School Counselor

**James
Peacock/KAHUKUHI/HIDOE**

ToLABTesying@capitol.Hawaii.gov

02/12/2009 08:49 AM

cc

Subject: seeing if the e-mail address is accurate

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Baker, Kathleen K. [kathleen.baker@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Do Not Support These Bills
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.gif; image003.gif; image004.gif

HB 1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB 1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
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 strongly urge you NOT to support the above bills. While it is known the salaries for a state position are not comparable to the mainland, the benefits are good. I have stayed in a state position because of the benefits and not the salary. A comparable position on the mainland would have doubled my salary. By supporting any of the above bills you are punishing people where many have worked years to accumulate benefits for their retirement.

Thank you,

Kathleen K. Baker

Kathleen Kromer Baker, Ph.D.

Research Statistician

OHSM, Statistics and Surveys

Hawai'i Department of Health

808 586 8050

kathleen.baker@doh.hawaii.edu

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning.

My name is Myra Elliott.

As a public employee for 10 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB1719, HB1715, HB1725, HB1726, HB1727, HB1723, HB1718, and HB1106. I am a sole bread winner in my family and I would like to protect the benefits that I have now. I cannot afford to pay more for benefits or have them lost. This would cripple myself and others I work with, as most are in the same circumstance.

I have been employed by Kauai Veteran's Memorial Hospital as a registered nurse. Hawaii and the rest of the country are faced with a critical nurse shortage. We have already been faced with the fact that we are not able to attract nurses to the state hospital system due to lower wages (as much as 15 to 20 dollars lower an hour) and now Mr. Say would like to enact laws that greatly reduce the benefits that the state provides to attract employees, especially nurses. This is very concerning to myself and my fellow nurses. We have to work many times short staffed with the population now sicker than before. We have an older nurse population. Many people in Hawaii do not have medical benefits and come to the hospital many times too late. We are exposed to many diseases, infections and all sorts of nasty conditions, so our chances of contracting an illness are greater. We may not be able to enjoy a healthful retirement, and will therefore definitely need medical, prescription and dental coverage. We sacrifice everyday, as well as our families. These bills are not fair to us hard working nurses or other employees in the state systems.

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, a registered nurse, 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 , Myra Elliott (Unit 09 Kauai)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Jon D. [jdonios@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB regarding state employees

Aloha,

My name is Barbara Donios. I work for the University of Hawaii and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. 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.

I urge you not to support the following bills: HB 1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, HB 1723, HB1715, HB 1726, HB 1727.

SHould you need to contact me, you can call me at 671-0454, email me at jdonios@hawaii.rr.com or 94-690 Kehela St. Waipahu, HI 96797.

Thank you,

Barbara Donios

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Jack_Little/KEONEPOKO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:47 AM
To: Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Cc: LABtestimony
Subject: please vote NO on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727,HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB110

Aloha, my name is Jack Little and I live in your district and voted for you.

I work for Keonepoko Elementary School and am a member of HSTA. I have worked as a teacher on the Big Island for the last 18 years.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

I am urging you to vote "NO" on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727,HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1106.

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,
Jack Little

yamashita1- Kathy

From: 50 INOUYE [50inouye@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: public employee bills

Dear Labor Committee,

There are many government employees making 20 years or more of service who have been loyal to the government and who have been hit hard by the poor economy. Spouses have been laid off or have died and they have young dependents relying on them and their benefits. It's a travesty to take away these benefits from those who have served the government faithfully all these years and who have planned on these benefits when they retire. Please kokua and vote NO on all the bills that take away benefits from public employees. Bills include HB 1106,HB1718,HB1719,HB1725,HB1723,HB1726,HB1727.

Mahalo

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Lee, Robert [rlee3@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:37 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition Testimony; y FRI, 02/13/2009 & TUES, 2/17/2009

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

My name is Robert Lee and I am providing testimony in strong opposition to HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB1726, & HB 1727, all relating to employee benefits. Hearings related to those issues are taking place on Friday, February 13, 2009 at 08: 30 a.m. and Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 08:30 a.m.

I have worked in city government for many years after foregoing opportunities in the private sector for more money. I enjoy my job and am very good at what I do and have been recognized as an exceptional employee.

One of the attractions of working in the public sector for me are health benefits. Should those benefits had not existed I would have likely not become a public sector employee.

Those health benefits are the result of the collective bargaining process and any changes to those benefits should take place through that same process and not through legislation. Presently HGEA and state and city governments are engaged in negotiations related to coming to terms for a new contract. Should not that be a more appropriate approach to changing benefits? And why would legislators assume the risk of disappointing a large number of their own constituents needlessly when state and city governments are already engaged with public employees?

As a union member I can accept changes which occur through a collective bargaining process, however, I cannot accept legislative driven changes. Should those changes occur during this legislative session, I will be deeply disappointed and respond by registering my disappointment through my vote in the next election. I will encourage others to share in my disappointment and vote accordingly as well.

Bob

Robert K. W. Lee, Jr.
HGEA Unit 13 member

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kim Murphy [ollo1188@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:25 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Proposed Bills Affecting State Employees

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I have been a public employee for the State of Hawaii for 7 years and am upset about some of the bills being considered that target public employees. I understand the state is in a fiscal crisis and needs to take action. I believe all residents should share in shouldering the burden not just state employees.

It is my sincere hope that the following Bills Do Not pass:

- HB 1718
- HB 1719
- HB 1720
- HB 1721
- HB 1722
- HB 1723
- HB 1725
- HB 1727

I understand HB 1715 proposes to increase the minimum age and length of service requirement for retirement for new public employees. I understand HB 1719 proposes to suspend EUTF payments for retirees who retire prior to Medicare retirement age. One issue to consider with these bills would be the incentive provided to state employees to work longer, at a time when their salaries are highest, rather than encouraging them to leave state service. I can't help but wonder, and hope someone can assess, whether continuing to pay these high salaries would cost the state more than the retirement benefits.

I do not object to HB 1106 relating to furloughs. When I worked for the State of Massachusetts, in the early 90's, they had a fiscal crisis and state employees were furloughed, for a period of time. Furloughs seem like a better solution to what might be a temporary fiscal crisis. It can be implemented as long as necessary and changed as conditions change.

Making long term changes to the state employee benefit package, in response to what might be a temporary fiscal crisis, could result in losing valuable state employees. Finding qualified candidates, to work on the neighbor islands, which have problems with their health care and education systems, is very difficult. If it is necessary to remove some benefits then I suggest decreasing sick leave, which should assist in increasing productivity. Another idea that I have not heard being considered is moving to the 4 day work week, like many other states have done. This could result in significant savings.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts on these matters.

Kim Murphy

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: faye kawaoka [kawaokaf001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 6:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bills which directly impact State of Hawaii workers

RE: Bills HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1727, **HB1718, HB1719, HB1725**

I am totally opposed to the above bills. I am a 58 year old with 27 years of service with the Dept. of Human Services. I have dedicated my life as a public servant knowing that the only rewards to look forward to were the State retirement benefits which included medical benefits.

You are trying to take away everything that I have worked diligently for. The burden of the State should not be carried only by the employees of the State.

If you implement these bills, you will soon find that you will have no one willing to work for the State of Hawaii. The pay is already not up to par with the private sector and the only drawing power were the medical and retirement benefits.

While you want to give all the poor people access to medical benefits, you now want to take that away from the working class?

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Monica_DeCosta/AINAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:10 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony

Here is my testimony regarding the following bill:

#HB1536 - I think freezing salaries for Governor, Lt. Governor is not fair as far as the amount of work that it takes to run the State of Hawaii. I realize that it is a time consuming job and also never ending. Over worked and under paid.

#HB1106 - Furloughing employees - is out of the question - you could implement it for all new employees that start after a certain date. The ones that have been in the system for along time (let's say 1993 till 2000) should not be touch.

#HB1718 - I would need more clarification on this one.

#HB1719 - This bill should be dissolved

#HB1725 - We all need drug coverage as we get older money will be tighter let along when we all retire if they want to take everything away from us - we will have more sick people who can't afford to go to the doctor let along get medicine to help out. What is this State coming to?

#HB1723 - It need to be voted on. I bet Clayton Say will get everything that he is trying to stop he will benefit from it.

#HB1715 - That will never happen as long as the union will help out. It should be greatly consider.

#HB1726 - Is it the FREE one?

#HB1727 - We need to keep this coverage. If we can't see or our teeth go bad what will happen? We can't eat or we will be blind. Doctor visit are expensive.

The way it looks they are trying to take everything away from those of us who are hard working people. Take benefits away from those who come to work late and leave early. It happens at alot of our schools.

Or like in our SPED classes - There is 1 teacher and EA's and skill trainers in classrooms. Cut down the EA position. We need to see how many SPED children we at the school level and then make cuts from there. SPED children need all the help they can get but let's also think about the regular ED students. Someone needs to check all of the school see how many SPED children there are. Please investigate so that we don't have to cut benefits from the workers. After all we are over worked and under paid. People think that State/C & C worker are lazy (SOME ARE) not all.

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For more information please visit <http://www.messagelabs.com/email>

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Linda [miyahiraa006@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: repchang@capital.hawaii.gov; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Subject: FW: HB 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727, 1719, 1725

From: Linda [mailto:miyahiraa006@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:43 PM
To: 'Linda_Miyahira@notes.k12.hi.us'
Subject: FW: HB 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727, 1719, 1725

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

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

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kailana Flores [kailanaf@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:57 AM
To: LABtestimony

I am a member of the HGEA, working as a registered nurse on Maui. I have 3 young children and a husband insured through me. It is so, extremely unjust for you to take from our benefits to recuperate money lost by your mismanagement of government funds. It is as if you are punishing us for the wrongdoing of others. I firmly object to bills HB1719,1725,1723,1715,1726,1727. We will all be paying attention to who voted for what in the coming elections.

Sincerely,
Kailana Flores
Unit 9

From: Laura Gonzalez [lauaranng@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:00 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: lauaranng@yahoo.com
Subject: Take-away 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 have been a state employee for 12 years. The bills listed above directly relate to the main reasons most of us became state workers, the benefits. The pay is not good and the workload is ridiculous. People have traditionally become state workers for the benefits including and especially, the retirement and medical. To remove these benefits would cause many to leave the state workforce (as many have already begun contemplating since these bills were introduced) leaving those left behind with an even bigger shortage and impossible workload, not to mention an inability to fill positions. This is already very difficult. The office that I work in is short one social worker, and one social service assistant and has been for quite some time. Without the benefits that we are threatened with losing, where is the draw for people to work for the state? I sincerely believe that taking away these benefits will only bring the state down and further handicap our ability to serve the public.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kathleen Kim [gkim51@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony regarding State Employees

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. I and most of my colleagues have been employed by the State of Hawaii for about 30+ years. It is punitive and a travesty that your proposed solution is narrowly focusing on eliminating and/or reducing the health benefits for state workers. We all have worked long and hard and earned these benefits and to have them wiped away merely to balance the state budget is reprehensible. If there is another shortfall in the future, What would be next? Instead of penalizing the state employees by reducing and/or eliminating their dental, vision and drug coverage/benefits, you could and should be looking at ways to generate additional revenue(s) into the state economy. Although, at this critical juncture, it may not be a pleasant remedy, an increase of the excise/sales tax would generate millions of dollars and more than offset this anticipated deficit. This solution is 'shared' by everyone in the state of Hawaii including the tourists, not just state employees. Food items should be exempt from the increase which would lessen the pain of an increase in the tax. Hawaii has one of the lowest tax rates in the nation in comparison to other states. If you look long and hard, there are other revenue generating options available including user fees, registration fees, excise tax increases on alcohol, tobacco and also an increase in penalties for violations, etc. Additionally, programs that have outlived its usefulness should be evaluated and perhaps terminated. Taking this simplistic approach of taking away benefits from state employees is unjust, dishonorable and shameful.

Therefore, I urge you to vote NO on the following bills:

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.

Kathleen Kim

yamashita1- Kathy

From: alicam@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:09 AM
To: LABtestimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Alison Cameron and my husband is Greg Cameron. I have been a public employee with the DOE for 8 years and Greg in the Hawai'i County Fire Dept for 14 years. Greg has recently been diagnosed with Stage 4 Metastatic Colon Cancer and is fighting for his life. He is only 49 and we have 2 children. We are deeply upset about the bills introduced by Speaker Say as they would deeply impact our family's ability to survive. Specifically the bills related to our medical, drug, dental and vision coverage, bills HB 1723, 1727, 1725.

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, 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.

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 our 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. We 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 1723, which limits the employer contribution to medical coverage to 55 % is of great concern for us. As stated, my husband Greg is currently undergoing treatment for Stage 4 cancer. We talk every day about how blessed we are to have such good medical coverage that we can afford to get treatment for him. If we had to pay more, we wouldn't be able to afford the treatment that he is getting and he would die, leaving a widow with young children to bring up on her own. Then I would really be in trouble trying to pay for my children's medical coverage as a single mother on a State salary. Please think about how these bills not only impact the greater health of our state workers and state as a whole, but also how it will impact individual families. Please vote NO for this bill and all the bills introduced that take away rights and benefits from public workers.

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. If this bill is passed, our family is down the tubes as Greg's cancer treatment involves many medications to help him with nausea, blood clots etc. He will not make it without these drugs, we cannot afford them on our own and we have two children to raise up. Without drug coverage, we are sunk.

Also HB 1727, taking away coverage for vision and dental. While not a lot is covered under dental plans, cleanings are and those are a preventative measure which is important to families, especially those with children. Dental benefits are very important for us, as are

vision benefits. Why not continue to provide this coverage to help with prevention of problems through allowing us to get teeth cleanings and dental exams and thus cut down on the amount of expense and problems that in happen if we don't get these preventative measures?

We understand that the state is in trouble and that things must change to pull us through. But don't cut out the benefits of those that really help to keep the State running and provide essential services to those in need. I work in school as a Behavioral Health Specialist, helping children with behavioral and emotional problems, thus helping to care for the future of our state. My husband Greg saves lives as a paramedic and rescue specialist. We have lived and worked here our whole lives. We struggle. We can't afford to struggle anymore as our medical benefits are taken away and our salaries cut or capped.

I strongly feel that these bills will cause more problems and economic hardship in the State of Hawai'i, not less. More families will be in trouble. Then what?

I beg you to vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees. Please!

Sincerely,
Alison Cameron
Greg Cameron

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Fay Ann Chun. As a public employee for almost 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1725, 1723, 1727.

HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage

Among graduating from high school, college and graduate school – being hired as a state employee was one of the proudest moments to my family. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community in a meaningful way. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement and more importantly to me at this stage of my life - safe and reasonable health care coverage.

Below are the claims from the state's website:

From <http://hawaii.gov/hrd/main/EEBenefits/> [Employee Benefits]

The State of Hawai'i is one of Hawai'i's largest employers and offers a competitive compensation package. In addition to salary, which is an important part of the compensation package, an employee may be eligible for a broad range of valuable benefits, such as comprehensive health care insurance, life insurance, retirement programs, sick leave, vacation leave and paid holidays. The benefits information provided below is not a contract or binding agreement. It does not supersede laws, rules, collective bargaining agreements, policies and procedures, and benefit plan documents pertaining to the various subject matters covered. Benefits vary by type of employment appointment and applicable collective bargaining agreement, and are subject to change.

From <http://hawaii.gov/hrd/main/EEBenefits/HealthLifeInsurance/> [HEALTH INSURANCE]

The State offers eligible employees a choice of health insurance plans - medical, drug, chiropractic, dental, and vision - through the Hawai'i Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF). The EUTF is administratively attached to the Department of Budget and Finance and is under the direction of a Board of Trustees. For more information on the State's health care plans, please visit the EUTF website at...

These statements will become obsolete or "false advertisements" if Speaker Say's bills were allowed to become a reality.

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. This is similar for HB 1727 and the related HB 1723.

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

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Carol Llega [carol_llega@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:20 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: 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 Carol D. Llega. As a public employee for 7 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically:

- 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

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.

Aloha,
Carol D. Llego

-- Many Ways to Say I Love You --

From the very beginning of our lives, we've had a natural need to receive. Without it, we couldn't have grown. We wouldn't have wanted nourishment; we wouldn't have wanted care. And what we must realize is that we do not outgrow this need to receive. Receiving times are for everybody, and so are giving times.

-- Fred Rogers --

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Please vote NO

From: Hager [mailto:wlhager@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:14 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Please vote NO

Subject: Please vote NO on bills
HB1717,HB1718,HB1719,HB1720,HB1721,HB1722,HB1723,HB1724,HB1725,
and HB1106.

Aloha,

My Name is Walter Hager I work for the County of Maui and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food clothing and other needs.

I don't agree or believe that it is 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 have made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as high as in the private sector, but that I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family being there when it came time for me to retire.

I think that it is shameful for the House to even consider taking these benefits away from me and my family that I have been working a lifetime to earn.

Please look at other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the State's revenue short fall. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden equally during these difficult times.

Thank you and Aloha,

Walter L Hager.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: FWong2@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: I am opposed to these bills

I am opposed to the bills being proposed:

- 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 feel that these bills are prejudice and are a prelude to discrimination. These bills target only state and public employees who pay the same taxes and are subject to the same bills as the rest of the public. By limiting benefits the costs to pay for medical needs would become unbearable for many and lead to more individuals being placed on the strained welfare system.

Instead I believe that the State of Hawaii needs to look into innovative ways to generate revenues in order to improve our states economy. By taxing already strained households the problem will only get worse.

Due to Hawaii's centralized location, Hawaii should be the hub of incoming and outgoing technologies and trends. We should welcome business from foreign countries and maintain the money making events that help to boost Hawaii's economy and provide jobs for residence such as the Pro Bowl and Professional Surfing.

Another way to improve our economy in the long term would be to invest in our students that are in school now. Instead of eliminating programs, as has been the case, schools should be in the process of being repaired and improved and study materials updated to reflect current events and global conditions.

I do not think that it would have been possible for Brian Clay or Clay Stanley to win Olympic Gold Medals if, at the time that they attended school, sports activities were a program that was cut from their curriculum.

In summary it is my point of view that by implementing these bills that the state worker will be singled out and subject to unfair penalties that other employees (Tax payers) will not be subject to. Also the State Government needs to look into other means of generating income for the State. Lastly programs such as education should not be penalized for governments lack of foresight and inability to plan for the future.

Thank you,

Frederick M. Wong
Eligibility Worker
Kuakini Unit / 174
BESSD / DHS
(808)832-3809

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Shawn Fonseca [coachfonz@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:39 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Against HB's 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1726, 1727

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Shawn G. Fonseca. As a public employee for 28 years, I am deeply sadden and upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1726, 1723 and 1727.

My reasons for working as a public servant 28 years ago was to give back to the community and State that me and my generations of family have been apart of all our lives. I have forgone working in the private sector and making more salary because of the promise of benefits that could help me and my family in our later years of life. Now these promises are about to be broken and my commitment to public service could be a financial burden and disruptive to my family's future.

The HB Bills I mentioned above is an attempt to break promises made to public workers who have made sacrifices in their lives to serve their communities. To try to balance the budget on the backs of State workers will do more harm to the communities who depend on quality workers to continue the various services that are more needed in this time of an unstable economy.

Please protect the rights of public employees who have given their lives to the betterment of the State of Hawaii.

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

Mahalo, Shawn Fonseca

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yamashita1- Kathy

From: rkoa@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:40 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Please Vote "NO"

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

Thank you for the work that you do for our community and for our State. At times it may feel like a thankless job but I'm glad that you take on the challenges of making hard decisions for us especially during this harsh economic time.

As a State employee, I'm voicing my opposition to the proposed bills that are on the table concerning cuts to State employee benefits. As you know our stability come from our benefits package. Cutting any portion of it will negatively impact us and our families. We are already in service to the community and we rely on that stability to see through tough economic times such now. Please remain protective of our benefits and vote "NO" to the following bills:

- HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor
- 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

Once again mahalo for the work that you do and I hope that I am heard.

Aloha,

Roland Lee
Concerned Citizen and State Employee

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

yamashita1- Kathy

From: cnicolas@gmail.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for Bills

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

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Cory Nicolas, as a public employee of 4 years, I am deeply upset about the bills that are targeting public employees.

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

As a resident of our State (and a registered voter), I am upset at the legislature for attempting to solve our State Budget by punishing the people that execute the work for them. It is an insult that they are targeting our salaries and benefits after the legislature just received a 36% raise. \$48,708... that's more than I make a year and I work year round. \$10,200 expense account... I don't even have one of those. Our economy is in turmoil, yet the people who are suppose to protect our assets... Increase their own and attempt to balance it out by decreasing benefits and salaries from the people they are suppose to serve.

I have a family to support, we barely make it with my salaries and benefits. It's always a thought in our heads when we see the homeless that we, ourselves are always one paycheck away from being camped next to them.

The Legislature forgets that they are our Public Leaders and should LEAD by EXAMPLE. I would like to see them cut their salaries first, before they ask to cut ours.

Please serve the public the way you were meant to and vote no on these bills.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Labor & Public Employment Committee Hearing February 13, 2009 and February 17, 2009

From: Cheryl Rapoza [mailto:mango808@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:16 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Cc: Rep. Karen Awana; Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Marilyn Lee; Rep. Roy Takumi
Subject: Labor & Public Employment Committee Hearing February 13, 2009 and February 17, 2009

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
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: SRogers@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: bills to reduce my benefits/income

Aloha. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and how the following bills, HB 1727, HB 1723, and HB 1106 will directly and immediately affect my family.

I am a vocational rehabilitation counselor and have been working in this capacity for the past 5 years. This is a professional position that required me to get a Master's degree while working full time with the State. Although I obtained my Master's degree in May of 2008 while raising two young children, I did not get the reallocation promised to me for earning my degree. I was understanding of this due to the freezes in pay and the current economic climate.

However, I am hearing more and more that I am expected to reduce my earnings and contribute more to health care costs. As the sole bread winner for our family due to my husband staying home with our young children, I am feeling that I can no longer provide for my family. I am already not able to provide health insurance to my husband since that is an extra \$300.00 per month, so I am only insuring myself. My children are covered under the State medical which I am grateful for, however, I feel that as a professional, I should have been earning enough to provide medical benefits to my family. If I had been given the initial reallocation, I would have used the pay increase to pay for my share of the costs to cover my entire family.

It has been increasingly difficult this past year to support my family due to rising food costs and inflation. Already we are financially strapped and dip into very little savings we have left which is tax returns I have saved up from last year's tax filings. I feel disappointed that I am not able to provide but the bare bones basics for my family with a Master's degree. **If the following bills pass, HB 1727, HB 1723, and HB 1106, which puts further financial burden to the State employee, I will have to take myself off the medical coverage provided. I can not afford increased contribution requirements on my part.** This will leave the State with two uninsured adults.

I am ashamed and disappointed that I can not provide adequately for my family. My husband would like to work, but his very important duties calls for him to stay at home with our two young boys, ages 9 months and 3 years. I have pulled my son out of preschool due to not being able to pay for his tuition. I have been making many sacrifices during the past year and feel that I am in survival mode. Please say no to the bills proposed to take away the benefits for State workers. These benefits are why we as vocational rehabilitation counselors get paid less than rehabilitation counselors in the private sector.

I appreciate your time in listening to my testimony.

Sincerely,

Sandra Fitzgerald

Sandra Fitzgerald, M.S., C.R.C.
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Department of Human Services
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
75 Aupuni Street, Rm 110
Hilo, HI 96720
Phone: (808) 974-6444 V/T
Fax: (808) 974-6450
Email: srogers@dhs.hawaii.gov

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Jade M Lum [jadelum@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Testimony re: HB 1106, HB1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

Hi, my name is Jade Lum and I work for the State of Hawai'i Judiciary.

I am a tax payer who spends money at local businesses everyday to buy grocery, clothing and other needs.

It is not fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget by taking away the retirement and health benefits from public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now because vacancies have been frozen and there has been an increase in demands for services.

I have made a career in public service knowing that the pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on the retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

It is wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

Please look at alternative ways to balance the budget. For example, raising the excise tax would be a fairer method to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough economic times.

Thank you,

Jade Lum

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:44 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Opposition to House Bills

From: Ernest L. Grace, Jr. [mailto:Ernest.Grace@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:15 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Opposition to House Bills

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Officer Ernest Grace
Maui Police Department
Community Relations Section
Office: 270-8281
Fax: 270-6513
Email: ernest.grace@mpd.net

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:08 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Requesting your help

From: Kimberley Haines [mailto:kimberleyhaines12@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:00 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Requesting your help

Dear Mr. Rhoads,

My name is Kimberley Haines. I am a library technician at the University of Hawaii and am a member of HGEA. Though I do not live in your district, I am very concerned about a number of bills before your committee that seek to take away benefits from public workers like me. I love my job and the community I work with. My salary may not be as good as those in the private sector or equivalent to similar positions on the U.S mainland, but I can rely on important health and retirement benefits. I do not want these benefits to be taken away from me, therefore I urge you to vote "no" on the following bills:

HB 1106, HB 1715, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, HB 1727

Thank you,

Kimberley Haines

February 12, 2009

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Janelle Garcia. As a public employee for 15 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: **HB 1718, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726 & HB 1727**

Relating to HB 1718:

I am against halting reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09 because I look forward to receiving what I'm entitled to after the years of service as a public employee. By removing a benefit such as this, would greatly affect me as a future retiree. I don't know what the future will bring but by taking away benefits I work hard for does not make me feel good as a public employee.

Relating to HB 1723:

I am against limiting employer contribution to 55% and making it non-negotiable because times are definitely harder and by adding 5% to my contribution would affect me and my family in many ways such as buying food, putting gas to get to work, etc.

Relating to HB 1725:

I am against halting prescription drug coverage under EUTF for the following reasons:

- The cost of drugs are not affordable, oftentimes I have difficulty paying my co-pay.
- I am a one-income family since my husband's lay-off last October.
- I am afraid that I will not be able to pay for the necessary prescriptions for my family should this bill go through because I can't afford it.
- I chose to work for the County of Hawaii because of the benefits (medical, dental, drug, and vision) and by taking away even one of these benefits; it would hurt me as a public employee.

Relating to HB 1726:

I am against curtailing EUTF payment for life benefits because it's a benefit we should be entitled to. I can't afford my own life insurance so what little I have through being a public employee definitely benefits me.

Relating to HB 1727:

I am against prohibiting provision of dental and vision coverage for the following reasons:

- The cost of dental and vision is very expensive, even the co-pay is not affordable.
- I am a one-income family since my husband's lay-off last October.
- I am afraid I will not be able to pay for the dental work that may be needed later or vision problems that may come later for my family because I won't be able to afford it.
- I chose to work for the County of Hawaii because of the benefits (medical, dental, drug & vision) and by changing or removing even one of these benefits, would drastically affect my and my family's life.

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

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Conchita_Mendoza/MAUNAWILI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 9:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Fw: Health care benefits and retirement
Attachments: ecblank.gif

----- Forwarded by Conchita Mendoza/MAUNAWILI/HIDOE on 02/13/2009 09:13 AM -----

Conchita
Mendoza/MAUNAWILI/HIDOE To LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

02/13/2009 09:01 AM cc

Subject: Health care benefits and retirement

How can you take something away like that. I finally got a position working for the State and now your just goinig to take everything away that I was hoping to have when it is time for me to retire. It is not fair to punish the working people to fix your problems. We already took a big budget cut and I don't even have a high paying position to even afford your medical now. How are we as a people in this hard times supposed to deal with living on a small income and than get slammed that your taking more benefits away from us. You need to look somewhere else and not at us. These are for HB 1718,1719,1725,1723,1715,1726 and 1727

Mahalo for you time,
A struggling parent

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Bobette Aoyagi [baoyagi@hhsc.org]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 9:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House bills opposition

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

Thank You for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Bobette W. Aoyagi. As a public employee for 30 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB1719; HB1725; HB1723 and HB1727.

HB1719 is a concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community, less pay but compensation with certain benefits. On balance, I believed that I was able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which clearly 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. Was my 30 years of devotion to the public not compensated? I fell like I'm being tossed aside with no respect like an old rag. I only need one more year of service to make the current criteria for retirement. I have been looking forward to my retirement, only to be just within reach and then have it yanked away from me. This is not fair play at all. Am I being forced into taking a penalty of benefits to retire before this comes into law. Do I play roulette and ride it out hoping it doesn't pass and be able to collect my full benefits. I would gladly retire now if not for the penalty. This is exposing me to a big dilemma. Stress is what I get for 30 years of faithful service?

The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience by forcing early retirement, is putting our families in Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 HB1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the State of Hawaii.

HB1725 states that from July 01, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employs 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. Do you know how much chemotherapy drugs cost? The reality is now hitting home for me. If it wasn't for my drug coverage it would be highly probable that we would be one of the homeless statistics to. We would be just another burden on the State rather than a contributor to the public. I had faith that this system would take care of me after I put in my time as a public servant. Can your conscious pass this bill knowing you would be indirectly responsible for my family members life or death. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

HB1723 and HB1727 both will reduce health benefits to us the public employees. H1723 wants to reduce the employer, State of Hawaii, contribution to 55% from the current 60% of the monthly premiums, this is not too bad but if we give in now will this set the precedent for future cuts?

As for HB1727, what about our vision and dental health? What is the employer offering to it's servants for loyal service to them. Is it only a one-sided relationship? Working as a public servant has no rewards?

Please see this entire picture from all points of views. It sounds good for Speaker Say to propose cuts in these economic times. But don't forget this is affecting personal lives. Medical Insurance coverage is already a failing issue. There must be different ways to remedy this problem instead of curtailing the public servants rights. Don't penalize us because we're the easiest targets as we work for the government and gives the impression to the rest of the state that the government is doing something for the rest of the peoples benefits. Please considering the human factor. WE are humans with lives and families too, that will be greatly affected. These measures that cut our benefits will eventually trickle down and effect the rest of the public.

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

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Andy_Cole/WAIALUAH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1719 and HB1723

To whom it may concern,

I am opposed to HB1719 and HB1723.

HB1719 states:

"Suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after 7/1/09, 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."

HB1723 states:

"Makes employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund non-negotiable under collective bargaining. Establishes employer contributions for active public employees at 55% of monthly cost of the health benefits plan."

Thank You,
Andrew Cole
67-395 Farrington Highway
Waialua, Hi. 96791

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 9:34 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: steuer@lava.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Carolyn Steuer
Organization: Individual
Address: 122 Plum St. Wahiawa, HI 96786
Phone: 808-622-1062
E-mail: steuer@lava.net
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

Why should the State only pay 55% of the medical premium cost when other employers need to pay 98.5% of the cost? Why should the State be exempt from doing what they require of other employers?

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Pacheco, Kason [kpacheco@co.hawaii.hi.us]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:34 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Kason Pacheco. I am upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: All of the below

HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor
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.
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 would like the State not to make a decision on emotions of fear. I feel the state is reacting and not thoroughly thinking through all of the options the state has. Hawaii is a unique place to live and we should keep it that way and not follow other states on what has already been implemented in those states. I strongly feel the State has not exhausted all of these options and is jumping to a conclusion on emotion and finding the easiest way out of the problem which will result in causing more problems for the economy.

I would like to propose some options that I feel the state should do some changes in:

- 1) Increasing fines for illegal buildings with out building permits and increasing fines to homeowners and contractors for not having a building permit when constructing. With the increase in the housing market value these fines should have been increased as the economy increased.
- 2) ENFORCING the building permit on construction sites. I have worked in other states and I am totally shocked on how this state is really relaxed in issuing building permits and enforcing home owners and the fines associated. It is amazing to me, how easily people get away with not have the right permit and not having a permit; ex. Illegal structure in Kalihi. The state should increase all fee's and fines, they are too inexpensive and only a slap on the wrist to individuals who do not follow the law. Mainland builders that relocated to Hawaii are laughing on the way to the bank on how easy they can get away with things in Hawai'i.
- 3) Installing red light traffic cameras at intersections in Hawaii Kai and downtown Honolulu. Fines should be minimum \$200 per incident, not these Mickey Mouse fines.
- 4) As tourism increased the State should have increased the hotel tax charged. However since this was not completed we now do not have that extra money from an increase therefore we now have to take money from other places for not paying attention on what could have been capitalized on during the rise in tourism.

I appreciate your time in reading my testimony.

Chairman Representative Rhoads:

I am not in support to the following bills.

HB1718

HB1719

HB1723

HB1725

HB1727

I am a widow, a retiree (6/2008) and have a medical condition (diabetes) which requires doctor visits and drugs. The skyrocketing cost of drugs and medical care will always be a consistent burden for me without the medical benefits provided.

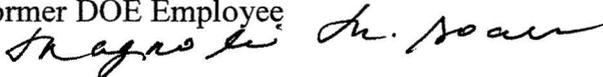
There are other widows like me both retired and currently employed who are facing this crisis with anger that our legislature /administration would do this to dedicated employees and fear of the unknown.

Please reconsider your decision to support these bills.

Respectfully submitted:

Magnolia Soares

Former DOE Employee

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Magnolia Soares".

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:54 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Bills affecting state workers

From: Dzung Thai [mailto:dtthai@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:27 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Bills affecting state workers

Dear Representative Rhoads:

I am writing to express my outrage and disappointment in regards to the following House bills that would affect state worker salaries, benefits and retirement: HB 1106, HB1108, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1720, HB1721, HB1722, HB1723, HB1725, and HB1727.

These bills would place an unfair burden on the backs of state workers. There are many of us state workers, and we provide invaluable experience and service to the public. For all the important work that we do, we depend on the state's benefits because we are not compensated at the rate of those working in the private sector. By decreasing our already low salaries through furloughs, limiting employer contributions to health care benefits, and expecting us to pay for our own prescription drug coverage, dental and vision plan, many of us will not be able to make ends meet and to support our families.

Many of my coworkers close to retirement are planning on retiring early after hearing about these proposed changes to their benefits. This will place more of a burden on the staff who are left behind, who are already stretched to the limit due to the current hiring freeze. I work at the Health Department - Tuberculosis Branch. Contrary to popular opinion, in general my co-workers are dedicated, hardworking and do care about the clients we serve. Our branch provides an important public health service to the community, preventing and controlling the spread of tuberculosis. There could be disastrous consequences to the health of the public if we are expected to do more with even less staff and resources.

I am extremely disappointed in the state legislators who proposed and support these bills; I thought that they were supposed to keep the health and welfare of their constituents in mind. They need to remember that the people of Hawaii gave them this important job -- to serve them well by keeping them in mind when making important decisions such as this.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Dzung Thai

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Sydney S. [sydnature@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:43 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: I Opposed!

To the Labor and Public Employment Committee:

I am emailing my opposition to the following bills:

- *HB1106 – 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
- *HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
- *HB1715 – Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
- *HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
- *HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

I am an exempt state worker at the Adult Mental Health Dept. As a state worker, I do not agree with the proposed bills. Think of the people who has been working for the state for so long and given their life long service just to find out it will not assist them when they are old and grey. It is like a stab in the back. Of course people want to be compensated and not left in the dark. If you pass these bills, imagine what image you are putting the state into. Before I thought, "Wow! I'm sure it is great to work for the state because they take care of their workers. They have good benefits and you know you are helping many people." Now, with these proposed bills, what will the state workers look forward to in the future? Nothing. It is like workers would be working to pay off their own medical bills? Working for the state sounds like they are working for the worst "employer" ever and it is looking like a slave driver. What happened to providing quality care and benefits? You are just eliminating it because you think it is not worth it to provide them the workers share after all the hard work they did for the state? Don't treat the workers like pawns. The state should reconsider about proposing these bills that could end the connection between the workers and the state in servicing the community.

I am definitely against the bills mentioned above. Why is it that the state is targeting the people supporting the state? How about the people that earn so much are not getting punished? Why are we getting these punishment? Yes, it is a punishment! Why work hard now when in the end there is nothing for the state workers? Do you see what I mean? This is over the top so unfair for the people who work for the state. You would think the state will take care of you...you would think! Then the state just pulls the rug right off of you leaving you helpless.

How about the lawmakers that is supposed to be helping us? Some want to bail out our economy by getting rid of the hard earned benefits from the public employees. What is wrong with this picture? They think by doing that that it will solve all the economic crisis? A portion? I do not think so. They are quick to thinking that taking away benefits from the little people that they are just going to take it? They got us all wrong. Why don't we start with their salaries? Just because these lawmakers who approved these idiotic of an idea does not mean they will solve the Hawaii economic problem. Have they thought of the consequences that this could bring to the public workers? No. You know why? Because it shows that these bill makers who come up with these stupid ideas does not bother them nor even care. It is simple...it is NOT happening to them! It is easy for them to do this because they are not going to experience this devastating benefit crisis. They are living the life!

To the Labor and Public Employment Committee, I hope that you can assist us in stopping these heinous disregard for the state workers. We are here to work, to help, and if all is loss esp. the state who I work for, The Dept. of Health, AMHD, cannot even save my co-workers and co-public workers from receiving health insurance then why do we even bother having Dept. of Health? Isn't it not ironic that I work for the Dept. of

Health but my own health benefit cannot be re-assured or be taken cared of? I am totally appalled by these bills. Shame on them, tsk, tsk, tsk! I hope they realize that what goes around...comes around!

Sincerely,
Sydney Solano
DOH, AMHD
UM Specialist

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Joy_Hohnstine/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:23 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: I Oppose Bills HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

To whom it may concern,
I strongly oppose bills HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727. I am a current DOE employee. As part of my education prior to entering the education field I obtained two master's degrees, which have proved immensely helpful in my current work serving the students of Hawai'i. However, those degrees came at a cost, despite paid internship positions at my university I needed to take out student loans to pay for my education. Though I value the expertise given me through these educational experiences, I now find that I am just making ends meet and am living paycheck to paycheck to pay these and other bills. Having to provide for my own health care would cause an extreme financial hardship for me at this time.

I urge and ask you to oppose the passing of these bills.

Thank you for your time and support,
Joy Hohnstine

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Diane Galich [dgalich@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: I oppose!

I am writing in opposition of the following proposed bills: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727.

As a state employee, I am in opposition of the proposed bills that will significantly decrease employee salaries and leave many employees without medication, vision and dental coverage. I am appalled that the legislation would also propose that employees retiring after 12/31/09 would lose their hard-earned health benefits after retirement.

I have been employed with the state for 6 years. I have dedicated myself to serving the state mostly due to the benefits that comes with being a state employee. I believe that state employees work hard and deserve our existing financial, health, vacation and retirement benefits. If the above legislative bills are passed, we would be left with significantly less money to pay for our expensive full-priced prescription drugs; we would not be motivated to extend our employment, because there would be no rewards or medical benefits in our retirement years; we would not have the peace of mind that our work is valued, as more changes could come to shake us from our already unstable foundations.

As an employee with the Department of Health, I find it hypocritical that the state would cause the health of its own employees to drastically deteriorate because of all these changes. How many employees will have to go without medical care or medications when these bills are passed? The resulting health of the state employees and retirees could be drastic: sickness, depression, and even death.

How can the lawmakers expect us, state employees, to serve the people of Hawaii if we can't even help ourselves? DO NOT pass these bills! The state will lose valuable and hard-working employees; what's the point of having a state job when there are no benefits?

Diane Galich
State of Hawaii
Department of Health

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Calkins, Donna M. [Donna.Calkins@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony regarding bills pertaining to public employees

I would like to testify regarding the following bills, which I am opposed to:

HB1106
HB1718
HB1719
HB1725
HB1723
HB1727

I have been a state employee for nearly eight years. What is being proposed would cause extreme hardship for me as a 61 year old single female who trying to make ends meet and plan for my eventual retirement.

If temporarily furloughing employees is what is necessary to get us through these difficult times, then I would be willing to do my part and could manage one day per month, but the rest of what is being purposed for current employees would cause me to return employment in the public sector.

Please consider that there are many of us in similar situations and this would undoubtedly cause a mass exodus of public employees.

I could agree to the purposed changes for new employees such as HB 1715. In fact all the bills being purposed could be re-written to apply to new employees and I would support that.

I truly could not survive as a public employee if the above bills are passed.

Thank you for weighing the concerns of those who have served the public these many years. I ask only that our service be valued as we all face these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Donna Calkins

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jeraul Pladera [Jeraul.Pladera@mpd.net]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 8:14 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to Bill

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Detective Jeraul S. Pladera
Maui Police Department

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Aguilar, June [June.Aguilar@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 7:52 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1718,HB1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1714, HB 1726, HB 1726, HB 1727

I am a Registered Nurse who has worked for the Department of Health for almost 8 years. I had many employment opportunities in the community. The reason that I took a job with the state was due to the benefits, especially the retirement benefits. I would have been able to receive a higher salary in a position in the community. I urge you not to cut the employee benefits further. They have been ravaged enough in current years.

June Aguilar

Bobette Aoyagi

To: LABtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov.
Subject: House bills opposition

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

Thank You for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Bobette W. Aoyagi. As a public employee for 30 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB1719; HB1725; HB1723 and HB1727.

HB1719 is a concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community, less pay but compensation with certain benefits. On balance, I believed that I was able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which clearly 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. Was my 30 years of devotion to the public not compensated? I felt like I'm being tossed aside with no respect like an old rag. I only need one more year of service to make the current criteria for retirement. I have been looking forward to my retirement, only to be just within reach and then have it yanked away from me. This is not fair play at all. Am I being forced into taking a penalty of benefits to retire before this comes into law. Do I play roulette and ride it out hoping it doesn't pass and be able to collect my full benefits. I would gladly retire now if not for the penalty. This is exposing me to a big dilemma. Stress is what I get for 30 years of faithful service? The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience by forcing early retirement, is putting our families in Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 HB1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the State of Hawaii.

HB1725 states that from July 01, 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. Do you know how much chemotherapy drugs cost? The reality is now hitting home for me. If it wasn't for my drug coverage it would be highly probable that we would be one of the homeless statistics to We would be just another burden on the State rather than a contributor to the public. I had faith that this system would take care of me after I put in my time as a public servant. Can your conscious pass this bill knowing you would be indirectly responsible for my family members life or death. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

HB1723 and HB1727 both will reduce health benefits to us the public employees. H1723 wants to reduce the employer, State of Hawaii, contribution to 55% from the current 60% of the monthly premiums, this is not too bad but if we give in now will this set the precedent for future cuts? As for HB1727, what about our vision and dental health? What is the employer offering to it's servants for loyal service to them. Is it only a one-sided relationship? Working as a public servant has no rewards?

Please see this entire picture from all points of views. It sounds good for Speaker Say to propose cuts in these economic times. But don't forget this is affecting personal lives. Medical Insurance coverage is already a failing issue. There must be different ways to remedy this problem instead of curtailing the public servants rights. Don't penalize us because we're the easiest targets as we work for the government and gives the impression to the rest of the state that the government is doing something for the rest of the peoples benefits. Please considering the human factor. WE are humans with lives and families too, that will be greatly affected. These measures that cut our benefits will eventually trickle down and effect the rest of the public.

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

February 13, 2009

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

Dear Representative Yamashita:

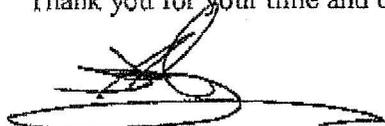
I am writing regarding the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

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

I have worked in civil service in State, County and Judiciary positions for over twenty years mostly due to the benefits promised to me at the time of hire. The medical benefits in particular are what retained many of us employees in our government jobs. Removing benefits established under collective bargaining and renegeing on promises made to employees is a serious mistake. The passing of these bills especially during these unsure economic times will hurt many.

Please look at other alternatives to address the state's revenue problems and remember that everyone should share the burden in these tough economic times.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Viki Roemmling
Pukalani, Maui Resident

February 13, 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,

My name is **Detective/Sergeant Jayson K. REGO**, I am a 21 year veteran of the Maui Police department and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

**House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund**

In 1988, I joined the Maui Police Department to gain a career, help my community, and secure a better life for my family and those I live among. I have worked long and hard during my career, risked my life several times in the course of my duties, tried to save lives and helped people not because of my job, but sometimes just to be kind and show Aloha to others less fortunate. I have seen a lot of death, destruction, and the evil side of those who do not care for anyone. I have done all of this not only because it is my job, but because it is the right thing to do. Now as I am close to my retirement, 4 years to relief and happiness, someone with no regard for others and the dire consequences of their actions threatens the livelihood of thousands of faithful employees such as myself, who have already paid for our retirement, medical, dental, and other benefits, through our work.

I am 47 years old, and I have looked forward to the day I can retire and leave the evil, and the numerous years of crimes and death behind me, knowing that my benefits would take care of me and my family. I felt assured that I would be repaid for my good work and deeds, not through a crappy "ATTA BOY" or "Thank You", but through my benefits that I was promised, have contributed to, and was secured in knowing that if I and/or my family members got ill during my retirement I would be taken cared of with no breaks in my benefits.

This Security blanket of benefits is all that I as a dedicated employee have had to look forward to. There is so much evil, not only in this world, but here in our paradise called Hawaii that no one sees more than us, the Police, Firemen, and Medics, who draw the line to fight back the unstoppable tide of crime. It is us, the Public servants who this State calls upon for help and we the Public Servants have all responded to those calls every day of our lives.

It is now you, who we call upon to stop this game called Politics with the lives of your workers and our benefits. To introduce this bill for no other reason, but to gain a bargaining chip to take away our benefits under the Holy Grail of "WE HAVE A BAD ECONOMY" is not only wrong, but unjust. We the people, the public servants, your constituents, and members of your community, ask you and to do the right thing and leave our benefits alone. Taking away our retirement benefits smacks at the very heart of deception that is just not acceptable. Our retirement benefits are our only reward for our years of Fulltime, dedicated, life saving service. If my brother saved your life or saved the life of your Mom or Dad, is taking away his Medical benefits at the time of his need(usually when you are older/retired) it that right? Is that called a reward? Is that Just? NO, IT IS NOT.

The ramifications of these bills place every public servant in jeopardy. I have never written anything bad nor have I written to any of our Government Representatives for help in the past, but I am now writing to you to dispose of this bill and be a hero for us, for once. We the Policemen, Firemen, Medics, and other dedicated public servants call upon you now to save us from harm. Save us from being hurt by these House bills. You will not only be saving us, but saving yourself and your own family members when it is your time to retire. We look up to you Chair Rhoads and ALL the members of the House of Representatives, do not let us down. Do not let us lose our future, for that will ensure that we the people who elected you, will forever be looking down upon you. Therefore, **I WISH TO LOUDLY VOICE MY OPINION THAT I OPPOSE THESE PROPOSED BILLS AND I WANT YOU AND ALL OF YOUR MEMBERS TO VOTE "NO" AND SHOW US THAT YOU NOW CARE FOR US!!**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify,

Sincerely,

**JAYSON K. REGO
Detective/Sergeant
Maui Police Department**

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Crockett, Judy G. [Judy.Crockett@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 7:39 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills on Health and Retirement Benefits

Labor and Public Employment Committee,

Since I received the notice on hearings of health and retirement benefits this morning, I was not able to time off from work to attend the hearings. However, I am taking time in my morning break to indicate my opposition to HBs (in order of priority), 1719 1727, 1725, 1723. Although I have had 25 plus years of service, my retirement plans were based on affordability and were targeted for December 30, 2010. Elimination of employer contributions for health plans, drug, dental and medical benefits would force me to retire prior to July 1, 2009.

Please consider employee furloughing or salary decreases up to 5% rather than elimination of health benefits.

Thank you for your consideration of employee needs.

Judith Crockett

Judith Crockett, M.A.
Planner, Adult Mental Health Division
State of Hawaii, Department of Health
2385 Waimano Home Road
Building Four, # 3
Pearl City, HI 96782

Telephone: (808) 453-6945

Fascimile: (808) 453-6995

e-mail: judy.crockett@doh.hawaii.gov

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Wayne Tsukazaki [wjt@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 6:42 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: re: opposition to proposed bills by calvin say

My name is Wayne Tsukazaki and I am a state employee at the University of Hawaii at Manoa Records Office. As much as I'd like to be attending this meeting, I am unable to do so, so here is my statement: I am nowhere near retirement, however I'd like to voice my opinion that I am strongly opposed to bills # HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, and HB 1727. I realize this email may not pack as much punch as a physical presence, but let it be known that I do care very much about the impact of this issue.

Sincerely,

Wayne Tsukazaki, Office Asst III

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Kim_Otani/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 7:10 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

I am writing to convey my disappointment and to reasons why the proposed House Bills regarding medical and health benefits should NOT be passed.

1 - Passage of these bills will increase the shortage of qualified workers, especially in the field of education.

A - Schools are already hard pressed to maintain staff. Staff who are eligible for retirement who would have continued

employment are now making plans to retire to retain the benefits of the current plan.

B - Schools currently rely heavily upon retired teachers to fill much needed positions.

C - If the bills are designed to cut costs to reduce the payroll, then please consider the difficulty that the education community is already dealing with to meet the mandates of NCLB and the Felix Consent Decree.

D - The cost of higher education has frequently made decision to major in education not economically feasible. The love of teaching and concern for the well-being of children is out weighed by the need for employment to support one's own family.

E - Educators are not only teachers, but include the support staff such as educational assistants, clerks, custodial and

cafeteria staff. The cost of the current health plans already takes a large chunk from our paychecks.

2 - There is insufficient notice and time for those affected by these bills to make alternative plans.

A - The passage of these bills may increase poor job performance. Those who would have considered retiring prior to 65 as their physical, emotional, and mental abilities decline, would feel bound to continue to work because they need the health benefits.

B - Is the State also prepared for a possible increase in workman's compensation claims?

C - Is the State making plans to increase alternative health care options such as QUEST?

a - It is already difficult for those on the neighbor islands to qualify for or receive services.

D - Those who have tried to plan for retirement have also been affected by the losses sustained by retirement programs.

3 - Trust in the State legislators and government has been breeched.

A - Schools have been criticized and penalized for holding onto monies for the "rainy" day.

Now that there is a shortfall, there appears to be no preparation for the situation and State employees feel victimized.

Please vote NO.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: douglas green [doug_sue2@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 6:20 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Re: Bills HB1723 HB1727 HB1725

I oppose any changes to health care coverage as it exist in the current contract. I am a 2 person family with one income and the payment of health benefits as they are now is hard enough to pay with the rent being so high.

I especially oppose these Bills:

HB1106 Furloughing employees - why: changes the in-service time accrued

HB1725 Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF - why prescriptions are very expensive.

HB1723 Limit employer contribution to 55% - why? if medical insurance increases even more then if possible some employees could choose to not have insurance at all or insurance coverage that is not very good and then would rely on hosital emergency rooms for service and not have the ability to pay.

HB1727 Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage - why? I would rather have dental and vision than I would have medical as I don't go to the doctor that much but use vision every year.

Mary S Green
County employee

From: Mary Beth [kunihirog001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 5:31 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kunihirog001@hawaii.rr.com

Mary Beth W. Kunihiro
98-1424 Onikiniki Way
Aiea, Hawai'i 96701

February 13, 2008

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Mary Beth W. Kunihiro. As a public employee and a taxpayer of the State of Hawai'i for 29 years and 9 months, I am upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB: 1106, HB 1718, HB1719, HB1725, HB 1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB 1727 and any other HB directed towards taking away or decreasing any of the benefits of State employees.

This would be a violation of many contracts negotiated over the past 30 years – changing our work conditions basically “breaching” our hard negotiated contracts.

The state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce.

I strongly urge the 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.

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

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Glenn Park [purple66line@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:52 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony HB 1719, HB 1737

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Glenn F. Park and I live in House District 23, Senate District 12. My employer is the State of Hawaii. I am a Social Worker, my position is located in the

Department of Human Services. I am a taxpayer, a homeowner, and a consumer of good and services.

I've made a career in public service knowing the pay is not as gainful as in private sector, but which affords decent retirement and health benefits.

Now those benefits are being chipped away.

As recent as the past week, I learned of bills which will have an adverse affect on the employee's and her/his family's health.

In a rush to make-up the projected budgetary shortfalls, if the HB 1719 passes, it will have an adverse effect her/his health and well-being. The employee,

although vested, will no longer have health insurance premium paid for the Employer (State of Hawaii). If, I and others like me, choose to retire prior to 06/30/2009, on

fixed income we will be faced with making-up the health premium out-of -pocket in order to continue health coverage 'til we are Medicare eligible.

In the rush to make-up the projected budgetary shortfall, if HB 1737 passes, it will adversely effect her/his ability to afford the health premium, by revising

method of determining the monthly retirement compensation resulting in fixed income of a lower amount.

I am not in support of HB 1719 which proposes to suspend EUTF payments for retirees who retire prior to Medicare retirement age, and HB 1737 which proposes to revise

the method for calculating retirement compensation.

Also, please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees: HB 1106, HB 1715, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, HB 1727.

Sincerely, Glenn F. Park
HGEA/BU13

2222 Aloha Drive
Apt. 901
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815-2807

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Lee Ann Taddei [ltaddei@hhsc.org]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: I NEED your support Bills HB 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727

I am e-mailing this testimony because I am not able to attend the hearings at the State Capitol. Today as well as 5 days a week I practice as a Registered Nurse Case Manager at Maui Memorial Medical Center. My role as Case Manager is to follow the ICU patients from admission to discharge. Monitoring their care, assuring the level of care is appropriate to control extensive costs to the State.

I am extremely concerned to read that the bills HB 1723, HB1715, HB 1726 and HB1727 are being considered.

I practice at Maui Memorial because this is the ONLY hospital we have on island. I work long and hard often working overtime to meet the needs of my patients. I sacrifice by not putting in for overtime hours to help with the high cost of operation. My loyalty is evident. My benefits are a necessity. I can not support myself alone without these benefits. How can you honestly think about removing or decreasing the benefits of the people who take care of your Loved ones???!! Imagine yourself or a Loved One in need of emergency medical care but the staff at the hospital is not adequate because the staff was forced to find work elsewhere because of lack of benefits. Where is your Loyalty???? How can you feel good about decreasing the employer contribution??? You will be forcing me to work well beyond my prime years of employment. Do you want to work for the rest of your life????? I will never be able to retire at a comfortable age if these bills are passed. Think about Quality of Life!!

You, as well as your counterparts are part of a tight Aloha Ohana. How could you do this to your family.

Please DO NOT PASS THESE BILLS!!

Lee Ann Taddei RN, CM
Case Management
Maui Memorial Medical Center

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: gmatsushima [gmatsushima@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Urgent Opposition To These Bills

Dear LABtestimony:

Please include by opposition to the following Bills.

There are many dedicated State and County employees working diligently like anyone else in Hawaii. It is inhumane to slash and cut at whim the very benefits that were promised to these workers who have dedicated themselves to decades of years of public service. Many employees do not earn enough to support their families as we are civil servants.

To pull the economic rug from under them is an inhumane, terribly cruel and destructive method to balance the State budget that is not caused by these people either individually or collectively. Many employees are willing to do their part to lessen the economic blow but these Bills are flawed and many employees are angry that we are being targeted as sacrificial lambs.

As shocked as i am that an elected representative would even consider these wide-across-the-board surgical cuts to working people is beyond comprehension.

Stop this madness, please do not approve these Bills that will ruin the lives of these employees and their families.

I do not support these bills and beg that you will not support these bills as well:

HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor

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.

Gregg Matsushima
HGEA member
Oahu, Hawaii

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Clara Iwata [clara@hcc.hawaii.edu]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:31 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB Bills

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Clara Iwata. As a public employee for about 38 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

HB106 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 of 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 Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 Hawaii.

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, the 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. STATE WORKERS WILL BE ABSENT FROM WORK MORE OFTEN BECAUSE THIS BILL WILL MAKE THEM GIVE UP TAKING THE FULL STRENGTH OF THE MEDICATION PRESCRIBED BY THEIR DOCTOR BECAUSE OF COST.

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

From: Alexis Sheldon [slp79akamai@msn.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:53 AM
To: LABtestimony

My name is Alexis Sheldon and I am a Speech-Language Pathologist with the Department of Education at Keone'ula Elementary and James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach. I am writing to you because I live in Kaneohe and you represent the district in which I reside.

I want you know and understand that I strongly oppose HB 1719, HB 1721, HB 1722, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, and HB 1727. There is no justification for what is being proposed here by Mr. Say other than to injure and impair the years of hard work we have put into our jobs. As it stands, we cannot even compete in the general market to lure competent people to our profession because our elected officials feel that teacher's and specialists are not a valued commodity. Now we find that the state legislature is convinced that the recovery of the budget deficit should be the "kuleana" of the hard working and struggling families of Hawaii. As of today, I've learned that a legislator is proposing the "offering" of \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00 to keep mainland teacher recruits here by supplementing their incomes so that they can afford housing. How sweet....yet again another slap in the faces to those of us who have been raised here and struggle to stay afloat financially as well.

Please reconsider your vote on these bills and look for better options to meet the current deficit needs.

I look forward to a response from your committee if at all possible. I am very interested in just how forthright and responsible you take your vote and actions when so many of Hawaii's families are being impacted by your decision.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Mercy Nakabayashi. As a public employee for 3 ½ years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB1719, HB 1725, HB1723, HB 1715, HB1726, and 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?

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 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 benefit 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 thinly veiled attempt to force people into early 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 Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii’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 Hawaii.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employee 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 disease 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. My husband currently has kidney failure and has other medical problems. With this he has to

take 13 medications and has to go to dialysis 3x's a week. This will deter me, 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 I beg of you to vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mercy Nakabayashi

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Pua Sanborn [p_sanborn1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Pua Sanborn
Subject: Vote No on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726. HB1727

As a registered voter and a state employee (public worker) I am appauled, that such bills as shown above have been submitted, with NO REGARD, as to the tremendous affect it will have on myself, other public employees, (like myself) and OUR FAMLIES).. IN EACH OF YOUR DISTRICTS, MANY OF US, HAVE VOTED FOR YOU AND HAVE DONE SO, BECAUSE WE, HAVE FELT THAT YOU, HAVE OUR "BEST INTEREST" AT HEART! PLEASE VOTE NO, TO THE ABOVE LISTED HOUSE BILLS!.....WE, WILL BE WATCHING, LISTENING, AND ATTENDING ALL THE SESSIONS SET FOR TESTIMONIES!....remember your constituents....they maybe public employees, who are wanting you, to vote NO!!!!!!!

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Bobette Aoyagi [baoyagi@hhsc.org]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:54 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bill Opposition

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

Thank You for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Bobette W. Aoyagi. As a public employee for 30 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB1719; HB1725; HB1723 and HB1727.

HB1719 is a concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. And less pay but for compensated with certain benefits also. On balance, I believed that I was able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which clearly 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. What was my 30 years of devotion to this public exactly for? To be tossed aside with no respect like an old rag. For me, especially I only need one more year of service to make the current criteria for retirement. I have been anticipating this time in the recent years, only to be just within reach and then have it yanked away from me. This is not fair play at all. Am I being forced into taking a penalty to retire before this comes into law. Do play roulette and ride it out hoping it doesn't pass and be able to collect my full benefits. I would gladly retire now if not for the penalty in benefits. This is exposing me to a big dilemma, stress is what I get for 30 years of faithful service?

The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience by forcing early retirement, is putting our families in Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 HB1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the State of Hawaii.

HB1725 states that from July 01, 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. Do you know how much chemotherapy drugs cost? The reality is now hitting home for me. If it wasn't for my drug coverage I would be one of the homeless now. I would be just another burden on the State rather than a contributor to the public. If I don't have this benefits which I feel I am entitled after 30 years of putting in my time to this institution that I had faith would take care of me, yes I would be one of the homeless statistic and yes this bill is deciding my family members life or death. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

HB1723 and HB 1727 both will reduce health benefits to us the public employees. HB1723 wants to reduce the employer, State of Hawaii, contribution to 55% from the current 60% of the monthly premiums, this is not too bad but if we give in now will this set the precedents for future cuts? As for HB1727, what about our vision and dental health? What is the employer offering to it's servants for loyal service to them. Is it only a one-sided relationship? Working as a public servant has no rewards?

Please see this entire picture from all points of views. It sounds good for Speaker Say to propose cuts in these economic times. But don't forget this is affecting personal lives. Please considering the human factor. WE are humans with lives and families that will be greatly affected. You must also consider in turn the domino affect that will reverberate down to the public if these bills pass.

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

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Corrine Largo [clargo1888@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 9:54 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bill:1725

Star Bulletin Article: "They're still talking" by Christine Donnelly Feb. 2, 1997

Got a question?
These answers could help you
By Christine Donnelly
Star-Bulletin

Q: Pay is a big issue. How much do Hawaii public schoolteachers earn now?

From about \$25,000 to \$51,000 for a 181-day day work year, depending on academic credentials and years of experience. The average is \$35,952.

Q: How does that compare to the rest of the nation?

In 1995-96, Hawaii's average teacher salary ranked 20th in the nation, but fell to 51st, last among all states and the District of Columbia, when adjusted for the cost of living, according to a study by the American Federation of Teachers.

Q: How does that compare to the rest of the nation?

When looking at both days and hours of instruction, Hawaii ranks lowest in the nation, with an average of 1,099 hours of instruction per year, according to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.

Q: Besides pay, what benefits will teachers lose while striking.

If the strike lasts into mid-March, they will lose service credits toward tenure and retirement. Although they'll receive no pay while striking, their health coverage will remain in place.

Posted on: Saturday, March 31, 2007

Teachers' salary ranks 15th

By Robbie Dingeman
Advertiser Staff Writer

A national survey ranks Hawai'i's average teacher salary at 15th in the country, but local officials say the high cost of living drags that down and isn't enough to prevent a huge turnover.

The American Federation of Teachers, a national teachers union, said the average Hawai'i public school teacher salary for the 2004-05 school year was \$47,833, an increase of 5.2 percent from the previous year.

That's slightly above the national average teacher pay of \$47,602. That is a 2.2 increase from the previous year, the union said, but not enough to cover the cost of inflation.

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association, which represents some 13,000 public school teachers, said Hawai'i needs to find ways to get and keep teachers and reverse a problem with turnover.

"Our new employees are leaving at the end of three years at an alarming rate – 60 percent of our new employees are leaving after the first three years," said HSTA executive director Joan Husted.

"No company can stay in business with that kind of turnover. We have to find a way to keep teachers in teaching," she said.

The Hawai'i ranking was better for beginning teachers – the state ranked eighth in the nation for starting teacher salary, with an average of \$35,816, a 5.5 percent increase over the previous year.

And officials say that increase in beginning teacher salary is important. "We worked at it," Husted said. "You've got to attract people in."

State Senate Education Chairman Norman Sakamoto said the national report shows progress but that more needs to be done to enhance pay, especially to lure beginning teachers.

"I believe it's worth paying our teachers more," Sakamoto said. "I think we'd have more professionals staying in the profession longer."

Sakamoto said state lawmakers are looking at other ways to attract and keep teachers. One proposal that has won support this year would be to give a monetary bonus in hard-to-serve areas. That could mean a \$5,000 bonus to teach at a school struggling with its yearly progress, or in Nanakuli, where a longer drive would eat into one's salary.

Lawmakers also are looking into allowing teachers to get a boost in pay for educational credits that fall short of a degree. For example, a teacher with 20 college credits from another state could be paid more. And that would go up more if the teacher proceeded to get additional credits here.

State Department of Education spokesman Greg Knudsen said he's encouraged to see the national ranking but knows that factoring in Hawai'i's high cost of living usually brings the salaries' buying power down toward the bottom of the list.

He said salary is a key issue when hiring teachers who move to Hawai'i and lack the support that a longer-term resident might have.

"We do feel that it's important to have a high salary for teachers in order to attract the best and the brightest," Knudsen said. "In terms of real spending power, it's still important for us to improve teacher salaries."

Early this month, HSTA president Roger Takabayashi said teachers were given the preliminary schedule of what is being negotiated for 2007-09. He said they were discussing increases that would push to \$45,000 the starting pay for teachers, \$60,000 as the average salary and \$100,000 for most senior teachers.

Husted said the cost of living, especially housing and gasoline, is daunting to beginning teachers.

"It's really an issue of what does your money get you," she said.

"You'll find that we rank in the top 10 in the amount of income we have to put to one side for things like rent or homeowners' cost."

And she said that complaint shows up often in polls taken among departing teachers: "I'm not going to stay here because I can't buy a house; I can't even rent a home."

Reach Robbie Dingeman at rdingeman@honoluluadvertiser.com.

• • •

Retirement benefits are the last viable keys to the stability of educational interest. Devalue the state's educational support in Hawaii, then will move to privatization. Private firms are able to sustain highly qualified teachers through competitive salary and benefits.

Is the state of Hawaii taking care of our highly qualified teachers? Are there any left in the state of Hawaii?

The only public confidence is in private schools.

Are we moving to a private school only state?

What happens to the survival of a state when education is not state supported?

Voting for bills 1723, 1719, 1725, & 1727.

Is this voting for privatization?

Eventually, every Hawaii's state sector will be privatized and we won't need public representation.

Housing is already out of reach for many. Tourism is at a low.

Home sales are at a low.

People will come, people will stay if they know that Hawaii HAS THE BEST EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE NATION.

Please do not vote for these bills.

Corrine Largo
808-487-6633

From: Miriam Kikukawa [wailani2906@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:34 AM
To: Sen. Shan Tsutsui; Sen. Roz Baker; Sen. J. Kalani English; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Angus McKelvey; repbetram@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Mele Carroll; LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony re: HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, HB1727, HB1737

Dear Maui County State Legislators, & Members of the House Labor & Public Employee Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Miriam Kikukawa. As a public employee for 17 years, I am deeply disturbed by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, HB1727, & HB1737

HB1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough.

I am a single parent with 3 children. I don't have much but the promise-contract I made along with thousands of others as a public servant. When I first applied for this public service job I had the opportunity to work elsewhere but I chose not to because of the medical benefits that I would have after I retire. You all know the wages of the state government employees are not desirable but all of us who are in these positions sacrificed for future benefits. This is our hope and dreams. Please don't take it away or make any changes.

I trust the state government, my employer to be true to your word, our contract. I still have faith in you, and believe that you will all make the right decision and vote "no" on all these bills that take away benefits from public employees who worked hard, made sacrifices and endured to reap it.

Thank you and may God bless you all.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:22 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kodamaj001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Judy Kodama
Organization: Individual
Address: 310 S. Alu Rd. Wailuku Hawaii
Phone: 8082836671
E-mail: kodamaj001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:20 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kodamam001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michael Kodama
Organization: Individual
Address: 310 S. Alu Rd. Wailuku Hawaii
Phone: 8082839752
E-mail: kodamam001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

From: ELLEN TAKAYAMA [eltaks@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** Testimony

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Ellen Takayama. As a public employee for 30 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1722, HB 1723, HB 1725 and HB 1727.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it is irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me 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. 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.

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Yvonne Wilson [yvnnwilson@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Fw: HB: 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, 1727

--- On **Wed, 2/11/09**, **Yvonne Wilson** <yvnnwilson@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Yvonne Wilson <yvnnwilson@yahoo.com>

Subject: HB: 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, 1727

To: reprhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov, repyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov, repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov, repawana@capitol.hawaii.gov, rephanohano@capitol.hawaii.gov, repkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov, replee@capitol.hawaii.gov, repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov, repsaiki@capitol.hawaii.gov, repsouki@capitol.hawaii.gov, reptakumi@capitol.hawaii.gov, reppine@capitol.hawaii.gov

Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 12:23 AM

Dear Labor Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and members:

Please do not allow the above mentioned House Bills to pass. I am currently working at Hawaii State Hospital and nearing retirement age after working in many different state positions. I chose to remain a state worker after returning to state employment in 1996 due to a couple of reasons (needs of my family while caring for my elderly parents on Maui), and the state's retirement benefits. You need to know that as a registered occupational therapist who has consistently sought training in my profession (usually at my own cost) I am paid approximately \$20,000.00 less per annum compared to the private sector. This disparity in pay makes me depend on the differential pay that I receive and occasional over-time pay to help make ends meet.

What Calvin Say is proposing is disastrous for my retirement planning, especially since I just gave up a chance for advancement thinking that the rules of retirement when I signed on are/will be in place. After 38 years of experience (e.g., training occupational therapy students, providing consultation to other professionals, agencies, and consumers, being a case manager, and a supervisor in the private sector, etc.), I am still stuck in the system's entry level position. The state is receiving a lot of expertise without paying a fair wage. If the Speaker of the House has his way, my years of retirement will be a struggle, and am too old to make a meaningful change in plans as I am 60 1/2 years-old.

Most state employees are underpaid. The extra holidays and retirement plan help make up for the disparity in pay between the private and public sectors. Yes, there are some workers who do not have enough work to do and something should be done about eliminating their positions. As a registered occupational therapist (OTR), I have never had that experience, but just the opposite-putting in many more hours than I am being paid for. As someone from the private sector observed, I am not the "typical" state worker (whatever their perception is). The state will also suffer; there will be fewer applicants for positions if they know the rules of employment may be changed capriciously.

Please support the state employees by voting "No" to HB: 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, and 1727.

Mahalo,

Yvonne Wilson, OTR
Occupational Therapy Dept.
Hawaii State Hospital

From: MICHELLE LAYOSA [mmlgb@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony on bills

02/12/2009

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Michelle Layosa-Bonilla and I am a public employee with 26 years of service. Bills HB1106, HB1719, HB1725, HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, and HB1727 introduced by Speaker Calvin Say moves me to speak out.

One of the fundamental things in life is meaningful work for proper compensation. Like others my job has afforded me to work at a job I enjoy and to live in a place I love. It has helped me to provide for my family including planning for a safe retirement. A retirement I thought I could depend on. I will be betrayed if any of these bills are passed.

As legislatures you have a duty to do your best job to uphold the law. These bills are a poor showing for the letter of the law and the spirit of law, but most of all it is just wrong. As representatives of the people, you are expected to perform with respect, dignity, and honor. Please do what is right and vote "NO" to these bills. Mahalo.

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From: Kurt Muraoka [kimuraoka@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting Your Support

As an employee of the State of Hawaii, I am asking for your support to oppose the following bills that will greatly reduce our wages, and health and retirement benefits:

- HB 1106 Relating to Public Employment
- HB 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
- HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees
- HB 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

- HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees
- HB 1715 - Relating to Retirement
- HB 1726 - Relating to Health Fund
- HB 1727 - Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

I understand the financial crisis that we are in. Our budgets have been cut and our staffing has been reduced, and we are working harder than ever to keep up with our responsibilities with the limited resources we have. Due to the low salaries and reduced benefits that are currently available to State employees, we have lost several employees to the private sector, where they were able to get higher salaries and free health benefits. The low salaries and reduced benefits have also made it difficult to attract the best qualified applicants to fill our vacancies.

Further reductions to our wages, and health and retirement benefits will cause many of our most experienced workers to retire earlier than they would want to. Thus, creating a greater knowledge and experience loss than we already have, making operations even more difficult.

I do not believe that we should be singled out to help reduce the budget. I sacrificed my private career to be a public servant knowing that I would no longer make as much as my private sector counterparts, but that I would be able to count on the health and retirement benefits that I was offered when I started with the State. In addition to the budget cuts that have already been proposed, the fairest way to balance the budget and address the State's revenue problem would be to raise the various taxes (income tax, excise tax, etc.) and increase user fees. This way everyone would be sharing the burden, not just the State and County employees.

Thank you,
Kurt Muraoka

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Patricia Kauhane [patkauhane@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:55 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726

I am opposed to HB 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726. Patricia Kauhane

Windows Live™: E-mail. Chat. Share. Get more ways to connect. [Check it out.](#)

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Ellen Koppenheffer [kekk2k@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:45 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 1723 - Hearing 2/17/09 at 8:30 a.m.

To Chairman Karl Rhoads and members of the House Labor & Public Employee Committee:

I oppose this bill to limit the State's contribution to health insurance premiums to 55% (it now is 60%) because it also removes the issue of the employer-paid percentage for health care premiums from negotiation and collective bargaining with arbitration and makes it an issue subject to employee strike. I feel that if this bill became law, State employees would surely strike at a huge loss to themselves and the State government.

Health care is such a sensitive and costly issue for State employees. The reason why it is so costly is that the State government is exempt from its own Prepaid Health Care Act of 1974 which caps the employee's contribution to medical insurance premiums at 1.5% of the employee's salary. Because of this exemption, State employees are now paying hundreds of dollars per month regardless of their income. So an entry-level State worker with a family might be paying 25% of his gross income just for health insurance premiums alone, and of course, more than that if they ever actually visited a doctor and paid co-payments.

Rather than forcing State employees to pay an even greater portion of their medical expenses, the State should look for new ways to decrease total health care costs and work with HGEA to come up with better health plans which address the real needs of employees. And the responsibility of the State Insurance Commissioner to regulate health care industry rates should never be allowed to lapse again.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ellen Koppenheffer, Administrative Officer BU08, Cancer Research Center, University of Hawaii

From: Julianne_Ostrosky/KEONEPOKO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:05 PM
To: Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima; Rep. Roy Takumi
Cc: LABtestimony
Subject: Please vote NO on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB110

Aloha Representative Hanohano, et.al.,

My name is Julianne Ostrosky and I live in your district and voted for you. I am currently employed as a 6th grade teacher at Keonepoko Elementary School in Hawaiian Beaches. Living and working in the district of Lower Puna on the Big Island since 1984, I have been employed as a teacher/instructor for the last 18 years and am a member of HSTA.

Being a taxpayer, I spend my hard-earned money every day, buying food, clothing and other needs for myself and my family at local businesses .

I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking for ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. All the teachers I know work hard at their jobs, and things have become even harder now that 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 I always depended on the fact that I could rely on fair retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's **WRONG** for representatives to take these benefits away from me by supporting the following bills:

I am urging you to vote "NO" on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1106.

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,

Julianne Ostrosky

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Dex N. [dexsi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1723, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1727

I am writing to express my opposition for these bills: HB1723, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1727.

Thank you,
Dexsilyn Navarro

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: estrella ua [leilani1239@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Your health and retirement benefits are at risk!!!!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I Estrella L. Ua deeply oppose to all of the following bills #HB1718, #HB1719, HB1725, #HB1723, #HB1715, #HB1726 and #HB1727. My reasons are that I have been employed by D.O.E. for many years and have contributed to the state of Hawaii. I feel that I am entitled to all of the above for the sake of taking care of myself and my family.

Sincerely,
Estrella L. Ua

From: Renee Purdy [r_purdygirl@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting for your help

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Renee Purdy. As a public employee for a year, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1108, 1715, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, 1726, and 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 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 mideical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that the 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 oru 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, taht 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 durg coverage. This is literally a bill taht 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 taht 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.

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: lyn_worley@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Earlyn Worley
Organization: Individual
Address: kahala avenue honolulu, HI
Phone: 8082266594
E-mail: lyn_worley@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

I am a public servant, employed with the State of Hawaii, (DOE) and am a single mother of 5.

I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen demands for services have increased, and budgets have been sliced. Personally, I make every effort to spend office budgeted funds, as if they were my own. Prioritizing needs and shopping for the best deal possible, in accordance to guidelines and procedures.

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 retirement and health benefits for myself, just as my grandparents, and father had.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. It seems like an extreme penalty.

Please seek other ways to balance the budget. Everyone should share the burden during these tough times.

Yours truly,
Lyn Worley

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Norman Fujioka [nmfujioka@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Vote no on measures penalizing government employees and their families

To the Labor and Public Employment Committee:

As a retired state employee after 36 years of service, I am dismayed and shocked that Speaker Say is forgetting the services provided by former and current public employees. It is wrong and an insult for him or other legislators to seriously consider the bills before your committee. We have provided good-faith services to people in this state in good and bad economic times. To now forget about us when times are bad is to treat us commodities to be handled without regard to the real impact that such actions will entail. Almost everyone in this state knows or is related in some way to government employees. They may be parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. Public employees also pay taxes and other fees to help our economy. The solution is not to penalize one group of people. The federal government is expected to provide some financial assistance to the state and the legislators should consider such aid which would reduce the financial impact to the state. We are all hurting financially. These bills unfairly target us as the "problem". Yet when elections roll around, politicians expect us to forget what is being considered. We will not forget. To be courageous is not to cruelly vote for these despicable bills but it is to vote a resounding "no" to these bills.

So I ask the committee members to kill these bills in committee and unanimously vote no to these bills:

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.

Mahalo for your action in turning back these cruel bills.

Norman M. Fujioka

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

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns. My name is Naomi Motoshige and a public employee for 32 years. I do not agree with Speaker Calvin Say and the bills he introduced against public employee.

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees.

HB 1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09

HB 1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09

HB 1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

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.

When I started as a public employee my salary was so small that my children qualified for reduced lunch. It was an understanding that when you worked for the City, you are not working for the money (salary) but for the benefit when you retire.

If you vote in favor of Speaker Say bills you are allowing him to take away everything that I have worked so hard for in the last 32 years.

PLEASE, PLEASE, vote "NO" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kevin Cochran [kcochran2u@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Benefit Bill Testimony

Pease find below testimony that I would like to introduce at the FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 & FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 House Labor & Public Employee Committee meetings.

**Mahalo,
Kevin Cochran**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Kevin Cochran. As a public employee for 8 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1723, 1725, 1727, 1719, 1726.

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? The possible impact of this bill to my family and our ability to maintain our household and probably our residence in this state would be devastating. With the current economy we barely make ends meet. As a mental health worker for the state I know that Hawaii can not afford to lose more providers. What is the cost on the other end when services have to be contracted because the State workers left?

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

Also for the above reasons I do not support HB1723, 1725 & 1727. As a young professional with a family part of my decision to work for the State is affordable health coverage; **complete** health coverage. The burden of losing prescription, dental and vision coverage mixed with the cost of having to provide it on my own in addition to any increases I would see as a result of HB1723 would not be an acceptable situation. Again, maybe it's the State's way of getting rid of good employees so they can pay out less not just in medical benefits but in positions? Again, can our state really afford a continued exodus of professionals?

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As professional counselor, 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.

Lastly regarding HB 1726 I am disturbed at this attempt to balance the budget on the backs of the beneficiaries of deceased state employees. It's just plain wrong. Again where is the loyalty and gratitude to the thousands of state workers who have chosen to work for the betterment of the State of Hawaii.

Thoughtfully,
Kevin Cochran

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kaluhiwa, Juelle [jkaluhiwa@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Regarding HB1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, HB1727

To the Labor & Public Employment Committee :

The above subject bills in the House Committee are causing grievous agitation among the rank and file of public employees.

With all due respect, those of us who are still engaged in government service and have accumulated extensive skills and intensive knowledge to apply to our job functions are currently dismayed at the audacity of the Legislature to introduce the entire gamut of Bills that would undermine the integrity of the loyal body of employees and discredit the Hawaii State government in their practice of hiring capable persons only to disregard the initial credibility in hiring practices. Furthermore, the majority of all government employees were enticed by the benefit package. Wherein they entrusted the government employer to maintain these benefits.

I solemnly believe that the introduction of these House Bills are rash and premature. To attain the proposed ends through legislative measures will create an atmosphere of distraught government employees heaping unnecessary stress and aggravation in the work place.

If the employer has foresight, they should choose to appreciation the masses of employees who have shown their dedication by increasing the desired and anticipated results in their daily service to the public.

In retrospect, the EUTF has already been strained due to the last change in medical benefits by altering the medical plans that were offered. The government withheld funding on their part and relied solely on employee contributions to create an administrative medical plan whereby the employees only had an administered medical plan not health insurance. **The government did not pay any premiums towards the employee medical fund.** As a result, a tremendous amount of monies was saved over the past two years by government.

How can government justify their actions and still hope to maintain a cohesive working environment for their employees when trust has been tampered with and promises broken? How has it come to pass that their mindset is focused on utter disregard for those employees who have shown their commitment towards their employers through their years of service and have gained public trust?

In closing, the committee must weigh all incoming testimonies as acts of faith that will culminate in restraining these Bills which would ultimately create chaos in the lives of their devoted employees.

Sincerely,
Juelle Kaluhiwa
City & County
Dept of Planning and Permitting, Building Division

yamashita1- Kathy

From: patchoy@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:51 PM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Marcus Oshiro
Subject: HB 1715, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727

I am opposed to the following bills:

HB1715, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1727.

I'm very much opposed to any bill that takes away from medical, dental, vision, and retirement benefits. You cannot change the rules in the middle of the game. If you want to decrease these benefits it should be for new hires, not those who have been working for many years. We work hard for the state, this is not how you treat your employees.

Patrick Choy
384-3029

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Godoy, Jocelyn [jgodoy@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Hearings

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jocelyn G. Godoy. As a public employee for 2 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1723, HB 1715, HB1726, HB 1727, HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, and 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 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 promised 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 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.

Aloha,

Jocelyn G. Godoy
City & County of Honolulu
Department of Planning and Permitting

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Barbara Watanabe [worm1959@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:20 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1536,HB1106,HB1718,HB1719,HB1725,HB1723,HB1715,HB1726,HB1727

Hi, my name is Barbara Watanabe and I live in on the island of Maui. I work for the County of Maui and my husband Richard is a local farmer for over 30 years. We have raised 3 children 2 of which are still in college.

I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. I have always done this to support the local families with businesses like my husband. If the local community doesn't help each who will.

I decided to work for the county, besides having children going to college, due to the fact the county had wonderful benefits. Even though the pay was less than the private sector, it was off set with the benefit package.

I know times are hard. I have watched the expenses to run our home as well as our farm continues to increase with no end in sight. There are many different areas for the House to look at to help with the expenses without touching the benefits of state and county employees I feel you are putting a very big burden on the public employees. We are the back bone of the government.

I know the the public employees will probably not yet raises. Yet to find out there are bills to either take away benefits or increase the cost of the benefits on to the employees is very disheartening. Money is tight for everyone. I for one know my family can not survive now or when I retire if these bills pass. It is a burden to great especially now.

There are many areas that can and should be cut first. Like the private sector, maybe the "executives" and their benefits should be cut first. Why does private and public sector always think of cutting the bottom of their employee before the top. The top is where most of the money is being spent. This has been shown to be true, examples being the car industry, the banking industries.

Please look into other areas and leave the benefits to the public employees alone.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Barbara Watanabe

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Linda_Rivera/LEIHOKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:40 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Broken Trust

Hi, my name is Linda Rivera and I live on the Island of Oahu. I work for Leihoku Elementary School as a clerk-typist/registrar and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

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 service 20 years ago, I understood that as a result of 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. I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. Now suddenly, rules of the game change. 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 think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. I oppose HB 1719, 1106, 1718, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727. I appeal to your sense of fairness, trust, respect, responsibility, and honor. Please do not support any of the House Bills as mention above, or any other legislation that undermines commitments and responsibilities made decades ago to public employees.

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 for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Linda Rivera
84-490 Makaha Vly. Rd.
Waianae, HI 96792

Ph: 497-2847

Chau Le

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Le, Chau [Chau.Le@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:29 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Proposed Bills

Dear House representatives on the Labor Committee:

I am writing to you today because I could not be present at the hearings being held on Friday, February 13th and Tuesday, February 17th, 2009, for proposed Hawaii bills:

HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor
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 understand that our economy is bad, and that we must all take cuts in order to help balance the budget. Honestly, though, I can't see how cutting our benefits will help us in the long run. I am a fairly recent employee with the state, and I am still young, and even though some of the bills will not affect me for a long time, it does not mean I am not concerned about them. Most public employees do not get paid very highly. Compared to the private sector, most of us get paid very minimally. On top of that, the cost of living in Hawaii is not cheap. Thus, one of the incentives for public employees to remain with the state is because of the benefits. HB 1725 and 1727 would affect me immediately. I have systemic lupus with symptoms of nephritis, rheumatoid arthritis, dermatitis, fibromyalgia, Reynaud's syndrome, and more. Although I am young and active, it's my prescription, medical, dental, and vision benefits that keep me that way. Every month, the cost of my prescriptions alone is over \$1000. If I did not have prescription coverage, I could not afford my medication. Without medication, I would not be able to function. If I can't work, then I will have to apply for disability. I am 28 years old; I would prefer it if I were not dependent on disability benefits. I have a lot to contribute, and I want to do it. I just can't without certain things, like medication and healthcare. Lupus is a debilitating disease that requires a lot of maintenance. Part of that maintenance includes having a great team of doctors like ophthalmologists and dentists to oversee my health.

Also, addressing HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1723, and 1726: I think it is unacceptable for the state to withdraw once-promised benefits to public employees. Some of these people have worked most of their lives for the State of HI, hoping that if they can hang in long enough, they will be able to retire and be taken care of. They signed contracts and were made to believe the state would keep its promise to them. For those benefits to be withdrawn now, especially for those who have no choice but to retire in a few years, due to age, would be unfair and intolerable.

How can lawmakers happily look forward to a 36% increase in their salaries this year, when a lot of people worse off are supposed to get their benefits cut? Please reconsider this. Everyone wants to make more money, but in light of the economy and budget cuts, can we afford to give a 36% raise to people that are probably living comfortably? I am pleading with you to not take away our health benefits; instead, please look elsewhere for extra funds. There are many highly qualified people that work for the public sector, and if you take away our benefits, we will have to find work elsewhere. I for one, cannot remain with the state if I no longer am able to sustain my health. At least the executives that are getting paid well can afford health care. Shouldn't we all at least get the insurance of our health?

Sincerely,

Chau Le

yamashita1- Kathy

From: carole carvalho [pakewoman@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:38 PM
To: Rep. Mark Nakashima; LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills proposed for Hearing

Respectfully submit testimony with regard to the above.

Chair Rhoads, vice chair Yamashita, Rep. Mark Nakashima and members of the committee:

It appears that government workers have been targeted to be a scapegoat and a primary target to solve the current fiscal woes that our state is experiencing. I have been a county employee for almost twelve years and cannot help but feel that Speaker Say's introductions of certain House Bills relegates my public service to a status of a person with no identity, a person of no consequence. These bills are in essence attacking my right to life; the "wholeness" of it is in question.

It is not only proposing to take away essential and critical benefits previously contractually agreed upon, it is pronouncing, without saying, that our state government can give and take away at whim; or, at least initiate legislation to. It gives the appearance and perpetuates a sense of hopelessness and loss of control within our State Government; visually, a cutting and slashing of the "legs and arms" of a body that in reality cannot function without its parts; something totally opposite to the idea of what our new President is promoting.

Ludicrously it proposes health care without providing vision, dental and prescription coverage for six years! Does it serve to hear a doctor diagnose you with cancer only to face a reality that you cannot afford the medication to combat the disease? It meanders into areas where literally lives will be affected and altered based on unsubstantiated prediction, overwhelming dependence on Medicare and conjecture. Even those employees in the private sector are offered better health care than that!

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees:
HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727.

Carole Carvalho
Police Operations Clerk, Hawaii Police Dept.
Hawaii County
HGEA member, BU 3

The United States Declaration of Independence, which was primarily written by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The text of the second section of the Declaration of Independence reads:

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kim Williamson [kwilliamson143@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Kim Williamson and I am a teacher on the Big Island. The current state of the economy is dire, but through careful management during these times of crisis, we will get through. To that end, each of you have been charged with the heavy duty of finding ways to cut spending and to find a solution to our state's budget shortfall. Inflicting these four bills on the public employees who help to maintain the state as a solution to a hopefully short term problem is a horrible idea.

I moved here two years ago knowing that it was expensive to live in paradise, but it was a sacrifice my wife and I were willing to make. Our salaries barely cover our needs now and we are OK with that. Both of us came to education knowing that we would not become wealthy in these careers, but we do expect that we will have a salary that we can live with and that we will eventually be able to retire with some assurance from our employer that we will have something for our old age. By taking away our dental, vision, and prescription benefits, we could not afford to pay for them ourselves.

I write to you today in hopes that you will not pass these bills from committee. Would cutting these items provide money to the state? Absolutely - this is almost irrefutable. However, the pain that would be inflicted on people who provide the most back to the state is also incalculable. As a teacher, I know it is hard to attract and keep people in this profession; taking away basic insurance will make it that much harder.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kim Williamson
PO Box 1416
Hilo, HI 96721
(mailing address)

11-1732 Akala Road
Mountain View, HI 96771
(Physical Address)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Laura_Walker/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:31 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: kill bills 1723, 1719, 1725, & 1727

To whom it Concerns,

I need you to know that I am a DOE employee (School Counselor) and I strongly oppose bills 1723, 1719, 1725, & 1727 which will cut our benefits for vision, dental, drug so that we will have to pay the FULL premium on our own, and pay for 50% of our health coverage. The bills also propose that NO coverage will be given to retirees no matter when you were hired or how long you have worked. If these bills pass, it will cost each employee a chunk of our paycheck to retain our current coverage. As a single parent I am barely making ends meet as it is.

Mahalo,
Laura Walker

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Liane_Takara/MAEMAE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bills 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727

Dear Karl Rhoades,

I am writing to voice my opposition to Bills 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727.

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for 30 years. These bills will have a negative impact on my retirement income after serving and dedicating myself to educating young children for so many years.

I hope that we will be able to retain our medical benefits.

Thank you,

Liane Takara

yamashita1- Kathy

From: medeirosc82@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 5:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** Testimony on take-away bills

Testimony by Lucinda Medeiros, 312 Molo Street, Kapaa, Kauai, HI 96746, 808-822-1181

HB 1723 - I am opposing making EUTF employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining. Wages and benefits have been hard won over decades of workers fighting to better working conditons for employees not just government employees, including the Legislature, but all over this nation of ours making it standard practice for business to offer health insurance and pickup some of the tab.

I want to see the EUTF use their bargaining power with the private insurance companies. Group health coverage numbers and money paid for by worker and government together should be large enough to be a bargaining chip. Is there evidence of bargaining with HMSA?

HB 1715 - I am opposing making retirement age older than what it is now, thirty years in the state service is long enough. New blood and talent is needed as with any other institution/organization to thrive.

HB 1536 - I support the freezing of wages for the Executive, Judiciary, and OHA, who just recently received pay raises. It is the lowly line workers who serve the public face to face, you are trying to balance the budget on their backs!

HB 1726 - I oppose the state stopping the life insurance benefit for the state workers, it is only a \$2000.00 death benefit. But it has encouraged most families to buy more life insurance on their own, thus benefiting the family and community when a worker dies and the family is able to pay off burial and medical costs, mortgages, etc. with that life insurance.

HB 1727 - I oppose taking dental and vision insurance riders out of state health insurance package. The "Health" state has been spending countless dollars for decades trying to educate the population to take care of their teeth, and eyes. Adults will forgo dental and vision care to pay for other expenses when there is no insurance incentive, this will create a domino effect on those professionals providing care. Less dentists and eye doctors will want to stay in Hawaii.

HB 1106 - I oppose the suspending of EUTF contributions for employees who retire after 7/01/09. They have worked all those years for the state with this benefit in mind as a retirement benefit. Especially if they are not Medicare age, they will have no health insurance coverage and their income will be fixed/limited to their pension.

HB 1725 - I oppose the suspending of EUTF contributions for prescription drug plans as it is necessary for many to take prescription drugs on a regular basis to stay healthy. We want our government worker to be healthy on the job. The state must lead by example, our community already has so many under insured that the state has to provide programs for, so do you want to add lower paid state employees to the assistance programs? Again where is the negotiating power of the EUTF with such a large group and large amount of money the EUTF should be able to bargain with the insurance companies.

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Leah Tau [ltau@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 3:48 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony against "take away" bills

Aloha,

My name is Leah Tau and I am a member of HGEA. I am writing to you today to ask for your help in putting a stop to the unfair bills that have been brought to the table by Representative Calvin Say. It is without a doubt one of the worst things our state government can do to it's working people.

I am a teacher and a tax payer. I am on the low end of the pay scale, but I love my job because it allows me to make a difference in the lives of Hawaii's youth. If these bills come to pass, I will be forced to quit my job and find work in the private sector. I simply will not be able to sustain a decent life for my family if my medical benefits are cut in half and other things like drug, dental and vision are being slashed. Both my husband and I work at jobs that give back to the community. My husband is a social worker for a non profit organization. We didn't pick these jobs for the money, but we've been able to live knowing our benefits will keep our family safe and healthy. We don't feel there is any justification for these cuts at this level of the work force.

Our family has followed President Obama's latest push to pass his economic plan very closely. We listen to his words and see his action and they provide us with hope that working Americans will finally get a hand up instead of a push down. Then, in our very own state, we see what we've always seen; the continuous cycle of abuse on the working class. It's amazing that at the highest levels of our government change is occurring, yet here in Hawaii it's as if nothing has changed.

Please support me and my fellow co-workers and do not allow these bills to pass. I understand that these economic times are critical. But cutting benefits from state and county employees does not equal "sharing the load."

Thank you,

Leah Tau

Bills:

- HB1725 – Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;
- HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
- HB1715 – Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
- HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
- HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Karen Magno [kmt808@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 4:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1725,1723,1715,1726

Aloha,

I'm a taxpayer, a member of the HGEA, and a supporter of local businesses. It is unfair that you are looking for ways to balance the budget by taking it out on the public employees. We work hard for what benefits we have as public servants. We know that we don't earn as much as the public sector, but the retirement and health benefits are some of the reasons why we keep going to work each and every day. Please don't take these benefits away from us! Many of us are already struggling to make ends meet. If our benefits are cut, we may be a burden to the government in other ways.

Maybe raising the excise tax might be a more fairer way to spread the burden of this major budget shortfall.

Respectfully,
Karen Magno

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: CAROL KRAMER [kramercr@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:33 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;

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.

As a married couple and both with HGEA, we are opposed to the above bills. I have been working in the system for 28 years and my husband for 12 years. Our monthly pay could be more in the private sector but we chose to stay in the system because of the health benefits after retirement. If any future changes need to be reviewed, it should be for the new employees, not the ones who have put in 10 years plus.

Carol J. Kramer
& Rorick J. Kramer
844 Leinaala Way
Makawao, Hawaii 96768
Ph. No. 572-6196

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: fccadizpal@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:31 PM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. K. Mark Takai; Lisa Vargas; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita;
Rep. Kymberly Pine; Rep. Joey Manahan; Sen. Will Espero
Subject: HB 1723

To: The Honorable Representatives and Senator Espero

Fr: Fred Cadiz
A State Employee

RE: HB 1723

I have had the privilege and honor to work during Legislative Sessions and have insider experience to know that my "voice" can be heard through my elected officials.

Unfortunately, my representative (Representative Takai) is on a greater mission serving with our own National Guard overseas and I am unable to express MY voice through him.

Therefore, I express to each and all of you directly and to all your colleagues, my EXTREME OPPOSITION to ANY and ALL House "takeaway" bills introduced to alter the present conditions and benefits of employment for all State employees.

State employees serves the public in a manner not greatly appreciated, and working for even less than what we now have, will be the "straw that will break the camel's back."

I urge you and all your colleagues to NOT SUPPORT HB 1723.

Respectfully,

Fred Cadiz
256-4111

Nothing says I love you like flowers! [Find a florist near you now.](#)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: makaneole@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: laurie makaneole
Organization: Individual
Address: p.O. BOX 438 Hanapepe HI
Phone: 808-241-3387
E-mail: makaneole@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Testimony against Bills before the House Committee on Labor and Public
Employment.

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

Respectfully;

I am John Bruce, writing to you to voice my concerns about the following
House Bills that I am that myself and many of my co-workers have
opposition to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health
Benefits Trust Fund

Benefits are frequently what attracts and keeps employees to become and
continue as civil service employees. The majority of these individuals have
been loyal to government employment and the missions of their respective
agencies for many years.

Eliminating benefits will cause morale problems and will affect not only our
County of Maui but the other counties and the State as a whole. Removal of
benefits and changing the agreements will be detrimental to all employees,
their families and the community at large.

In addition, eliminating benefits from employees will stimulate a large
number of mid-level and higher management personnel to seek retirement
immediately. Those who remain for the present may indeed seek other
employment when the economy improves. With these forced changes there
will cease to be any incentive for employees to remain with the State or
County divisions and agencies.

By creating such a situation the quality of public safety and services will become a major concern. The vacancies will be among the experienced individuals who have dedicated their employment careers to government service. Filling the positions will be difficult and will undoubtedly create problems of its own. The timetable presented doesn't create an orderly transfer or training scenario for personnel replacement.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

There are forces in our community who will applaud these changes if implemented. Their interests are at odds with the logic of government operations. Private contractors will never be the answer to the government's financial shortfalls and inevitably leads to corruption and influence of special interests. Jobs still must be done and your loyal government employees are there to serve the public in this capacity. Support them by not passing these bills on.

Sincerely;

John G. Bruce
1299 Kauhikoa Road.
Haiku, Hawaii 96708
808-344-2793

From: Keola Tom [Keola.Tom@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:43 PM
To: LABtestimony

February 12, 2009

Calvin Say
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Say,

My name Keola Tom and I am a proud Officer of the Maui Police Department. I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills listed below that I am strenuously opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

These bills were introduced with the intentions of uplifting these stressful economic times here in Hawaii. Although the intention was there, the passing of these bills will not only destroy many families in Hawaii, but it will also make the general economy worse. Hawaii will not be a pleasant place to live.

Being a Police Officer is one of the most dangerous and stressful jobs there are out there. Every day an Officer goes to work, they can never promise their loved ones that they will make it home for dinner. Many Officers gave their lives protecting and serving the community, as I cheated death myself in April of 2008. Health benefits are the last thing that an Officer thinks about when they are on the streets protecting and serving citizens like you. Making the Officer think twice about getting hurt because he can't pay for his medical insurance that month may not only be devastating for the Officer, but it might be dangerous for the citizens as they might get hurt and in turn sue the County and State of Hawaii.

Also, increasing the minimum age to sixty five or thirty years of service is unreasonable. There are many jobs that can be worked for thirty years, but law enforcement is not one of them. There are only a handful of people who can handle the stress of being employed for the State/County for thirty years.

If these bills are passed, many current State and County employees will be FORCED to retire to save their medical and retirement benefits. Imagine losing half of the current Police Officers of just one Police Department. How many Officers will be left to run the daily operations of the department? How many Officers will be able to still answer the public's call for service in time of need, or will the public suffer because there is a lack of Police Officers? How many people will want to be Police Officers after realizing how bad the benefits are or how many will quit just because it's not worth it? The quality of public service will definitely go down, as drugs and crime will increase almost instantly.

Also, imagine having thousands of State and County employees withdrawing their money at once from the current system. Think about the millions and millions of dollars that will be lost in the retirement fund.

Do not punish the loyal and hard working State and County workers because the economy is down. There are many other ways that the State of Hawaii can save money rather than reducing the already meager benefits that we already have. Public service is the last place that you would want to "short change" just to attempt to save money.

I would like to thank you for voicing my opinion and that I strongly oppose these proposed bills, which would eliminate benefits, morale, and overall worsen the current economic crisis that this State's is currently facing.

Keola Tom

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: cstark@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Chris Stark
Organization: Individual
Address: 1255 Nuuanu Ave #3204 Honolulu, HI
Phone: 808-545-1526
E-mail: cstark@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

I believe that the State is trying to renegotiate the terms of my employment without soliciting any feedback or agreement from me, the employee. Forcing me to shoulder more of the burden of my health insurance amounts to a pay reduction, and for many state employees, this would amount to the inability to afford health insurance altogether.

State jobs are already barely competitive in pay compared to private sector, so this legislation will only serve to further exacerbate the talent shortage within the state system. I oppose this bill, and encourage all of the lawmakers to consider the burden this puts on the very people that make the state run at all.

I am writing in opposition to the following 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 a constituent who has been employed by the Dept. of Health for 10 years. Prior to joining the state, I worked in the real estate industry. I returned to graduate school at 40 to re-train as a professional social worker because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of folks less fortunate than myself.

Starting in 1999 I worked as a social worker for the Dept. of Public Safety. I assisted adult offenders in gaining parole. Since 2002 I have been working at Hawaii State Hospital as a forensic social worker. I act as a liaison between the psychiatric staff at the hospital and the Courts. My role is to effectuate timely legal resolution and discharge for patients committed to the hospital. At a cost \$ 800.00 per day per patient at HI state hospital, I save state government much more than my \$50,000 salary and benefits by getting patients who no longer need hospitalization out and into less expensive placements.

These are tough jobs that require experience, skill and judgment and I earn my benefits and salary. I am in opposition to any reduction or adjustment to my compensation. I believe it is unfair to expect the Hawaii Labor Union members to rescue the entire state economy. The minority opinion that state workers are over compensated for simple jobs is a fraud.

Howard W. Smith, LSW, CSAC

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Colin_Maglasang/LIKELIKE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:23 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Calvin Say
Subject: Please vote NO on these bills

Hi There,

I want to express my opposition to the following 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;

HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;

HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

In 1991, I quit working as a cook at Prince Kuhio Hotel to enter the State as a cafeteria helper. I ended up losing \$6.25 (from \$14.75 to \$8.25) an hour just to do this. My reason for taking such a drastic cut in pay? for the benefits, when I finally can retire.

To change these benefits now would be like playing a game of football and in the middle of the game have the referees change the rules. not fair to the participants. I understand that the State needs to save money, but please look somewhere else. we (State Employees) already lost close to \$3 BILLION from the down turn in the economy in ERS funds, and now we gotta suck it up and lose some of our hard earned benefits too? not fair!

In my humble opinion, making changes to the new incoming State employees benefits would be OK as long as it is explained to them when hired. Please vote NO on the above House Bills. Thank You for taking the time to read my e-mail. please feel free to contact me.

Colin Maglasang
2234 Kauhana St.
Honolulu, HI 96816
Ph. (808)735-5461

PS - to Calvin Say: As a constituent from your district and a LOYAL Calvin Say supporter, I am shocked that you proposed such measures. I understand that we as a State, need to take drastic measures, but to take these things away from us?

If you truly believe that "everything should be on the table", why not propose selling the very valuable land under the Palolo Housing on Ahe street and New Jersey Ave. and moving the tenants to more affordable land (like the Leeward Coast). this would have a two fold effect,

1) profit from the sale and subsequent purchase of cheaper land, and
2) Palolo real estate value goes up and the property taxes goes up as well, generating more funds for the City AND State. remember "everything should be on the table". Think about it!

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kim_Amodo/LIKELIKE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

My name is Kim Yen Amodo. I am writing to oppose bills HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727. These bills will cause hardship on my family financially! We just bought a house, had a baby. Therefore money is really tight especially on a teacher's salary.

Having to pay more for med. needs will cause more financial hardship on use. Everything is already so expensive in Hawaii and now this!!!! Please do NOT pass this bill!

I never thought that getting a masters degree in education will put me in a predicament of being 1 paycheck away from being homeless. That is pretty sad!

NO to HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727!!!!!!!!

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: paul yonamine [ptyona@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:32 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 17818,1719,1725,1723,1715,and 1727

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Paul Yonamine____. As a public employee for _17__ years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1718 ,1719,1725,1723,1715,1727._____ 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 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.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Yvonne.N.Ching@courts.state.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Fw: Re: testimony opposing a variety of bills to be heard on 2/13/09 and 2/17/09

I will not be present at the hearing. Can you let me know if my testimony will still be read by someone? Or presented at the hearing?

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

-----Yvonne N Ching/Users/Judiciary wrote: -----

To: LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov
From: Yvonne N Ching/Users/Judiciary
Date: 02/12/2009 08:28AM
Subject: testimony opposing a variety of bills to be heard on 2/13/09 and 2/17/09

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:18 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: JuanitaLauti@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Juanita Lauti
Organization: Individual
Address: 1440 Ward Avenue Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone: 808-531-4364
E-mail: JuanitaLauti@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Lauren Farmer [lefarne@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:02 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: No to House Bills 1716-1727, 1736-1737

February 11, 2009

To: Members of the Labor and Public Employee Labor Committee
Representative Joseph M. Souki
Representative Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran Representative Kyle T. Yamashita

From: Lauren Farmer
Safety Specialist II
Department of Water supply County Of Maui
Subject: House Bills 1716-1727 and 1736-1737

Dear Members,

I would like to express my personal concern as well as concerns expressed by my colleagues regarding House Bills 1716-1727 and 1736-1737. We are all aware of the economic situation affecting all of us in Hawaii and throughout our country. However, targeting the Hawaii Public Employees by taking away benefits that were promised to them is not the panacea to the problem.

The major attraction to State and County jobs is the ability to serve the community. In my case I underscore that statement. It is a fact that public sector jobs are not monetarily competitive with the private sector. The compensation package, such as health benefits and retirement makes up for the uncompetitive wages and plays a major part in attracting highly educated professionals as well as very talented highly experienced workers.

With this in mind I urge you to be diligent in your decisions. Gutting these benefit packages will result in long term problems that will greatly affect the service to our community.

Have you even bothered to look into the pork barrel spending by the state, the free welfare for illegal aliens?

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Jeffrey Calibuso [jeffreycalibuso@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Retirement

Dear Representative,

I am writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

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.

By creating such a situation, most of the Officers in this department would leave early causing a public a major safety concern. As jobs would be vacant and not be immediately filled or certain jobs would have to be eliminated.

I have personally been with the Maui Police Department coming on two years. When I joined I was promised retirement benefits. Now after two years of serving my community, you wanna change the rules. How is this fair. If anything is to change, have it for the up and coming Police Officers who have yet to be hired, so that they know what they are getting into.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect

would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Sincerely,

Police Officer I

Jeffrey Calibuso

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: James Bush [luakaha@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:26 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Labor Bills Introduced by Speaker Calvin Say

February 12, 2009

Hawaii State House of Representatives, Labor & Public Employment Committee

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

My name is James Bush. I am a retired insurance executive. I am not a union member. I am a supporter of businesses and families in Hawaii.

I am concerned about the impact of the following bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.

HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor

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

While all of our citizens recognize our State is facing a sizable deficit in the next several years, I believe the proposals set forth in this proposed legislation may not produce the desired results of reducing the looming budget shortfalls.

Our State employees constitute a sizable portion of Hawaii's labor force. Their earnings and benefits, therefore, have a direct effect on our economy through a "Multiplier" effect.

Each dollar earned and spent by state employees in our communities and local businesses is multiplied many times. Reducing these dollars paid will have a serious long term multiplier effect on State revenues.

In the case of my Daughter and Son-in-Law (both Government employees), these bills would drastically affect their ability to survive and would certainly cause their spending in our community to be drastically reduced.

Both provide vital services (public safety and education). One is seriously ill.

The changes in benefits proposed would be catastrophic for their family and seriously detract from their ability to provide continuing service, now and in the future.

At a time when Hawaii is facing reduced tax revenues from businesses, these bills would further reduce the viability of our local business community thereby further reducing State tax revenues and casting serious doubt of the future survival of families and businesses.

One day, when this crises in the State budget has passed, Hawaii will need a solid business and family base to build upon once again.

We do and will need valued State employees to ensure services to support our industry and tourism. I ask you to consider the proposed bills carefully in a broad long term context rather than just a short term "Knee jerk" reaction.

Please do not over react to the State's current projections for a budget shortfall. Help for Hawaii in the form of two billion dollars from the Federal stimulus package (As reported in today's news) may go a long way towards alleviating many of our currently perceived problems.

Please, lets not burn of our bridges by crippling our government workers and their services. Let's invest in the long term viability of Hawaii.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

James B. Bush, Jr. P.O. BOX 278, VOLCANO, HAWAII 96785

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Rowena Estores [reestores@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:58 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: HB 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

My name is Rowena Estores and I am a speech/language pathologist in Leeward District 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. I also oppose HB 1718, 1723, 1725, & 1727 which would further cut benefits to state and county employees.

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

The State of Hawaii Department of Education has already had several lawsuits regarding the provision of special education and related services. The bills in the legislature would discourage possible hires from seeking employment as a state employee. This would further increase the shortage of speech/language pathologists which would affect the state's ability to provide federally mandated special education services to Hawaii's students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Rowena Estores
Speech/Language Pathologist
State of Hawaii
Department of Education
Leeward District

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Donabelle.B.Diego@hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:57 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony against bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say; RE: State Employees

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony this morning.

My name is Donabelle Diego.

As a public employee for 6 years, I am deeply distressed by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees

Can you imagine what's going to happen to me and my family if I get laid off from my job, or salary reduced in this very critical time? It is hugely disruptive at this 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? This is the only job I have. We have a mortgage to pay and we are living in the most modest way we can. My husband's and my salary is just enough to pay for mortgage and not even sufficient to buy the things we most need in our everyday life. **We have a 5-year old son. And my elderly parents live with me.** If I lose my job, we will not have enough money to pay for mortgage, buy food and other things we need to survive. We will end up homeless and hungry. Maybe, you can not feel the worry and fright, we ordinary people feel. My family does not have too much. We only have less than enough. What will happen to us if I get laid off, or salary is reduced? We will suffer and will become homeless. Can't you please think of another way to alleviate this crisis, instead of jolting us out of our jobs, or reducing our salaries? I am a public servant and I am doing all my best to be the best that I can be. Please, think about being in our situation. Don't you have families to worry about? Don't you have a child that you care about? Please, please think about it.

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

HB 1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF; &

HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage

This economic crisis shouldn't be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. These bills, coupled with talk of salary cuts, rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers and their families. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicines and healthcare that are essential to long and healthy lives. These are regressive bills when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage. This will be a huge burden to all of us, especially to the elderly and those who have kids like me.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Wendy_Beckett/KAUAIDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB's 1723, 1726, 1727

I am writing in regard to three House Bills pertaining to state employee benefits. I understand that we need to make budget cuts, but punishing state employees, or retirees as in my case, is not the way to do it.

I am writing to oppose HB1723, HB 1726 and HB1727. I am a registered voter on Kauai and am retiring from the DOE effective March 1st. I need to cut my expenses, not increase them, and I am also getting of the age when I really need vision and dental coverage, life insurance, etc. Passage of these bills would have a serious negative impact my health.

Thank you for your consideration . . . Aloha!

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 Committee Members,

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I am writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

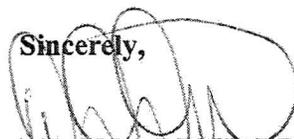
**House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund**

Eliminating these benefits will cause morale problems and will affect not only our County but the State as a whole. The benefits are what drew and kept a lot of workers to become civil service employees. A majority of these workers have been loyal to government work and have been with their respective agencies for a good amount of years.

By creating such a situation, public safety would be a major concern, as jobs would not be immediately filled, or certain jobs would have to be eliminated. It will also cause a great majority of employees to seek retirement, or for those who do remain, cause them to 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 these benefits.

For this reason, I wish to voice my opinion that I oppose these proposed bills, which would eliminate benefits to State and County employees. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

**DEAN M. RICKARD
Lieutenant**

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Lesley Ann S. Uemae [LesleyAnn.Uemae@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:27 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to House Bill 1723, 1715, 1726 & 1727

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Lesley Ann Uemae
Accountant I
Maui Police Department, Ad Svcs
Ph# (808) 270-8266
Fax# (808) 244-6317

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: kauaiboy4200@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:27 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills targeting public employees - VOTE NO

Aloha:

My name is Joseph Savino and I live on Kauai. I work for the Fifth Circuit Court as an Adult Probation Officer for the State of Hawaii and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other basic needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representative's to take these benefits away from me.

Therefore, I **STRONGLY** urge you to **VOTE NO** on HB1106, 1108, 1715, 1718, 1719, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, and 1727. These bills introduced by House Speaker Say are a travesty. I always believed that Democrats in particular represent the working people and support workers and unions. House Speaker Say is proving otherwise.

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. Also, consider a lottery as a form of legalized gambling or increase "sin" taxes (liquor and cigarettes).

Mahalo!
Joseph A. Savino

PO BOX 390
Kaunakani, HI 96747
808-652-6195

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Angela_Kila/LEIHOKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:20 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: benefils cuts

As a state employee, I OPPOSE all the bills against public employees: bills 1723, 1719, 1725 & 1727.

I don't know who would even consider doing this, why are you folks targeting the "public" employees, I should be for the entire statewide, public or private. I pay my medical now, I can't afford it, I just dont want to go on quest or any other type of walfare medical, I pinch here and there to make it. I can not see myself when it comes time for me to retire on my low income to pay for medical....."CRAZY" I know of many that will be retiring, and this will hit them hard, your suppose to enjoy retirement.

Don't do it!

Angela Kila
Leihoku Elementary School
Health Aide
Ph: 697-7106
Fax: 697-7142

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Juvy Abad [juvster70@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Juvy Abad. As a public employee for 19 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB1106 HB1719, HB1725, HB 1723, HB1715, 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 HB1106. 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 Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 Hawaii.

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 coverage. I myself is on medication to control my diabetes and cholesterol.

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Charlotte_Collord/KEONEPOKO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:19 PM
To: Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Cc: LABtestimony
Subject: please vote NO on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB110

Aloha, my name is Charlotte Collord and I live in your district and voted for you.

I work for Keonepoko Elementary School and am a member of HSTA. I have worked as a teacher on the Big Island for the last 18 years.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. I am urging you to vote "NO" on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1106.

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,
Charlotte Collord

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:43 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: gtatsuyama@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Grady Tatsuyama
Organization: Individual
Address: 565A Mananai Pl. Honolulu, HI
Phone: 529-3159
E-mail: gtatsuyama@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:
Concerning the following bills: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726
and HB 1727. Please vote "NO" on all these bills that take away benefits from public
employees.

Sincerely,

Grady Tatsuyama
Property and Inventory Clerk - HPD Finance Division

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Dzung Thai [dtthai@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:45 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: 2/17/09 hearing testimony

Testifier: Dzung Thai
Epidemiological Specialist III
Dept. of Health - Tuberculosis Branch
Committee: Labor & Public Employment
Hearing date and time: 2/17/09, 8:30 am
Measure numbers: HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727

Dear Representatives:

I am writing to express my outrage and disappointment in regards to the following House bills that would affect state worker benefits and retirement: HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727.

These bills would place an unfair burden on the backs of state workers. There are many of us state workers, and we provide invaluable experience and service to the public. For all the important work that we do, we depend on the state's benefits because we are not compensated at the rate of those working in the private sector. By limiting our health care benefits, and forcing us to pay for our own dental and vision coverage, many of us will not be able to make ends meet or support our families.

Many of my coworkers close to retirement are planning on retiring early after hearing about these proposed changes to their retirement benefits. This will place more of a burden on the staff who are left behind, who are already stretched to the limit due to the current hiring freeze. I work at the Health Department - Tuberculosis Branch. Contrary to popular opinion, in general my co-workers are dedicated, hardworking and do care about the clients we serve. Our branch provides an important public health service to the community, preventing and controlling the spread of tuberculosis. There could be disastrous consequences to the health of the public if we are expected to do more with even less staff and resources.

I am extremely disappointed in the state legislators who proposed and support these bills; I am hopeful that you will find alternate ways to balance our budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Dzung Thai

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Joyce Kuniyuki [jkuniyuki@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 2:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: balancing the budget

I work as an educational assistant for the Department of Education and it is a job that I truly enjoy. I am very dedicated to my career/job and work hard at it because I know that my efforts do make a difference to the children at our school. My paycheck is not large therefore I do depend on the benefits (health and others) to help get by with Hawaii's high cost of living. While I realize that Hawaii's economy is in dire straits, please do not try to balance the budget by taking away our pay/benefits. With the cost of everything going up, more than ever I need to retain my pay and benefits.

Please vote NO on HD 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, and 1727.

My husband and I are not rich monetarily and we try not to be frivolous in our spending. I feel as if we "little people" are bearing the brunt of the burden. This will affect our whole family and will therefore affect our community and state as well.

Please consider our concerns and find other ways to balance the budget.

Thank you,

Joyce Kuniyuki

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

Scheduled Hearing: Tuesday, February 17, 2009, 8:30 am, State Capitol
Conference Room 309

Opposed to:

HB1725 – Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;
HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

I am a state employee with more than 30 years of service but am only 56 years old. These bills are highly unprincipled and severely affect 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.

These bills discriminate 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 changes 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 the bills, HB1725, HB1723, HB 1726, HB1727, 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

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: *****SPAM***** BILLS AFFECTING RETIREMENT AND BENEFITA

From: freeman levon [mailto:mapuana22@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:30 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: *****SPAM***** BILLS AFFECTING RETIREMENT AND BENEFITA

Dear Representative,

I am writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all

islands.

Respectfully submitted,

Officer Levon Freeman

Maui Police Department

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:51 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW:

From: Jamie P. Wright [mailto:Jamie.Wright@mpd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:53 PM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject:

Dear Representative Karl Rhoads

My name is Jamie Wright and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

I have been employed with the Maui Police department for 8 years after serving in the US Army. I joined the department primarily because of the benefits and my love of the community. I am currently Field Training Officer and SWAT officer and go to work every day knowing I may be putting my life in danger. I believe it is unbelievable that the government I have served would even consider backing out of my employment agreement by taking away the benefits I have worked for.

I sincerely hope that all of you do the right thing.

Aloha

Jamie P. Wright

Police Officer, Maui Police Dept.

From: elaine Needham [needhamelaine@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: my testimony

Aloha Legislators,

My name is Elaine Needham and I live on the island of Maui in Keanae. I work for the Dept. of Education as a School Health Aid for over 20 years. I am a member of the HGEA. I am looking forward to my retirement. I am a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses everyday, buy food, clothing and other needs for my family. I also have to spend on gasoline since I drive over 50 miles a day to work and back.

It is very unfair for the House to be looking at the Public Employees for the budget's shortfall of the state. I am already living on a shoestring income of \$23,000.00 a year. The burden should be placed on all the residents in the state of Hawaii by increasing the excise tax. I am asking for your help to say NO! to HB 1715, HB 1723, HB1726, HB1727 and any other bills that will hurt my retirement and health benefits. Mahalo Elaine Needham

February 11, 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,

As a Radio Telephone Operator of the Maui Police Department for 15 years, I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following House Bills:

House Bill No. 1723 – Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715 – Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726 – Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727 – Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed House Bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Wendi-Liz P. TANCAYO-MEBILLE
Maui Police Department
Radio Telephone Operator II

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Keola Akana [keolabear@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:43 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726 and HB 1727

Here is my testimony for the 2/17/09 Labor and Public Employment Committee Hearing. Please make the appropriate copies. Mahalo.

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
2/17/09, 8:30 am hearing
Room 309

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the House Committee on Labor and Public Employment. My name is Wayne Akana and I have been a State government employee with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for over 10 years. I am in opposition to HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726 and HB 1727. Government workers at the DLIR are hard working and attempt to provide the best service to the community that we are able given the increased volume of cases that are filed in our offices even though many vacant positions have not been filled and are frozen. As you know government pay is not as high as working in the private sector. However, government work serving the community is a reward. Another reward are the benefits that are offered to government workers and their families. To cut these benefits in order to improve the State's economy will demoralize government workers and make it such that we will reserve our incomes even further from spending in the State's economy. Also why are government workers targeted as the ones to suffer financially to bring additional funds for the State?

Government workers did not cause the negative State economy, why should it be the government workers and their families to be the ones who are economically penalized? All of Hawai`i's citizens should equally share in the remedy to ensure that the State's financial health improve, not just one group such as government employees. Please vote against HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726 and HB 1727. Mahalo.

Wayne K. Akana
449 Kawaihae Street
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96825

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Leslie K. Louis [Leslie.Louis@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:43 AM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki
Subject: House Bill Nos 1723, 1715, 1726 & 1727

Dear Representative

My name is Leslie Louis, Warrants Clerk, Maui Police Dept., and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

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.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: angela_pahia@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Angela Pahia
Organization: Individual
Address: 45-303 Kulauli St. Kaneohe, HI 96744
Phone: 808 239-3125
E-mail: angela_pahia@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: michele.ikeda@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michele Ikeda
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: michele.ikeda@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Lucia M. Wallace [Lucia.Wallace@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:44 AM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki
Subject: House Bills

Dear Representative,

My name is Lucia Wallace and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

For 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.

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.

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect would bring larger problems that would cause a disruption to State and County services on all islands.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:56 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: cherylmi@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Cheryl Nishioka
Organization: Individual
Address: 92-738 Palailai Street Kapolei, HI
Phone: 808-387-2909
E-mail: cherylmi@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Please vote "NO" on all of the bills that will take away benefits from public employees.
HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727.

We the civil servants of the State of Hawaii have worked hard to earn those benefits.
With the economy the way it is, the reason I have chosen to work for the State of Hawaii, is
for the stability of the job. It is not right to use the civil servants benefits to fix the
State of Hawaii's economy, please look at me as an individual working hard to make ends meet,
and to be able to look forward to any type of retirement. Please do not let me bear the
burden of our States economy problems.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Nishioka

From: Zenaida_Sawyer/KEONEPOKO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:59 AM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Subject: please vote NO on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB110

Aloha, my name is Zenaida Sawyer and I live in your district and voted for you.

I work for Keonepoko Elementary School and am a member of HSTA. I have worked as a teacher on the Big Island for the last 5 years and another 9 years on Moloka'i for the DOE state system. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

I am urging you to vote "NO" on HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, and HB1106.

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.

Mahalo no kokua mau ia 'oukou,
Zenaida Sawyer

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Regarding benefits for state employees

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

From: dawn [mailto:dkinhi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:16 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Regarding benefits for state employees

Please vote no on HB1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727, HB 1106, HB1718, HB 1719, and HB 1725. These are bills that will reduce benefits I will eventually receive when I retire. These benefits are the reason I became a State employee. We are already expected to do more with less people. Our case loads are increasing, vacant positions are frozen, and we are still expected to complete our jobs accurately. DHS has gotten Food Stamp Performance Awards, my department has actually brought money into the budget. Morale is already low and now you want to take away and/or lower our benefits. The benefits are the only reason most of us stay, we put up with bad situations because there is a reward when we retire. Don't lower and/or take away our benefits.

Thank you for your time and hard work,
Dawn Kutaka
DHS employee

From: Nichole K. Comilang [Nichole.Comilang@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:01 PM
To: governor.lingle@hawaii.gov; ltgov@hawaii.gov; dylan.nonaka@hawaii.gov; andy.j.smith@hawaii.gov; george.kaya@hawaii.gov; laurie.yoshida@hawaii.gov; LABtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; rekeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Henry J.C. Aquino; Rep. Mark Nakashima; Rep. Karen Awana; Rep. Scott Saiki; Rep. Roy Takumi; Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Marilyn Lee; repmarcospine@capitol.hawaii.gov; gladys.baisa@mauicounty.us; danny.mateo@mauicounty.us; michael.molina@mauicounty.us; jo_anne.johnson@mauicounty.us; sol.kahoohalahala@mauicounty.us; bill.medeiros@mauicounty.us; wayne.nishiki@mauicounty.us; joseph.pontanilla@mauicounty.us; charmaine.tavares@mauicounty.us; mayortavares@mauicounty.us
Cc: Avaneil K. Kalalau

The Honorable Governor Linda Lingle,
Honorable Karl Rhoads, chair and members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI

Dear Honorable Governor Linda Lingle, and Representatives:

My name is Nichole K. Comilang, I am a Police Officer with the Maui Police Department, and I am writing you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723 – Related to Public Employees
House Bill No. 1715 – Related to Retirement
House Bill No. 1726 – Related to the Health Fund
House Bill No. 1727 – Related to the Hawaii Employer –Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

By eliminating these benefits from the employees, it will create a great majority to seek retirement and those who do remain may seek other employment else where like the mainland police departments. We are one of the lowest paid in our jobs as police officers compared to the entire United States. If this is the case we would have no other choice than to take the larger pay just to be able to put away for later for some benefits we may have to pay for.

As for the ones who have the time in and can retire we are looking at about 30 individuals and leave with full retirement benefits before July of 2009. We are already short as it is and will be even at a all time low on man power causing a major concern with public safety, and that jobs will not become immediately filled unless the county and state would like us to fill a police or fire positions just with anyone off the road that would be carrying a lethal weapon.

As a Police Officer for a little more than seven (7) years now, putting my life on the line everyday helping people in the community I do not even know. How can I rely on the state to make sure that if something happened to me on the job that my family will be taken care of? If that is up in the air then maybe I need to find that desk job, and come home everyday to my family without taking that chance. It boils down to my family or my job!! Please do not get me wrong I enjoy everyday as a police officer for the Maui Police Department, and I enjoy serving my community but now I don't know what will happen to my own family which promises were made upon my hiring with the Maui Police Department.

And as for raising the minimum age, as a police officer it is a proven fact that we do not survive much longer after retirement due to the stress levels that we rich throughout our career. And that is another benefit I look at that I can actually retire after twenty-five (25) years of service and spend quality time with my family at the end of my life.

Last but not least, is paying our own premiums for our medical for the employee and the spouse. It is very expensive as it is to be a retired elderly party to pay for your medical, drugs, and dental with only your retirement as your only pay. As you get older your doctor visits become more frequent, and more costly to now the retired employee. Waiting to be able

that it will be re-evaluated in about six (6) years, since the promises that I got when I was hired was taken away without any hesitation. The state of Hawaii will become very untrustworthily if these bills are passed.

Suggestions:

I was always taught to give suggestions to problems that I bring to anyone's attention hopefully it will help a little.

- 1) Maybe look into the county and state on temporarily taking away the vehicles given to employees to utilize for work as take home vehicles that belong to the state or county. Have employees drive to and from work in their own personal vehicles instead of the county or state pay for them.
- 2) Look into essential and non-essential situations, police, fire, dispatchers, are all essential employees, without them it will be complete chaos.
- 3) Also another money maker could be a law passed through legislator on all Burglary and Fire alarms dispatched by alarm companies that is false that they pay a fee to the state or county where the alarm came from. As an example a fire alarm is called in by an alarm company and it is called in once a day everyday, and police and fire respond every time with it being false that is a waste of police and fire services responding to the false alarm. Charge the alarm company fee so the problem is rectified, and with charging the fee it can be put into a fund to help some what with the deficit.

These are just some suggestions to help with this situation, and I hope and pray all goes well with the legislative sessions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

*Officer Nichole K. COMILANG
Maui Police Department
Wailuku Patrol Division
Police Officer II*

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: House Bills 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

From: Jonathan E. Acosta [mailto:Jonathan.Acosta@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:33 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: House Bills 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

My name is Jonathan Acosta, and I'm a Sergeant with the Maui Police Department with 12 years of service. I am vehemently opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families. As Officers we sacrifice our family lives to work on nights, weekends, and holidays to keep our streets safe. Sometimes, Officers even make the ultimate sacrifice for the public by giving up their lives performing their duties. These bills send a strong message to all police officers: that our sacrifices are meaningless to lawmakers and we are nothing more than another public servant. These bills also contradict the arrangements that were in place when we were hired. Any lawmakers who support this bill does not support or cares one bit for police officers. I will not vote for anyone who supports this bill, and I will make it a point to tell my friends, family and any member of the public who will listen to not vote for or support anyone that thinks that these bills are a good idea.

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. By creating such a situation, public safety would be a major concern. As jobs would not be immediately filled or certain jobs would have to be eliminated. Recruiting and retaining officers will be extremely difficult. Most mainland Police Departments allow their officers to retire with 20 years of service. Increasing the amount of service time before officers can retire will do nothing good for retainment of newly hired officers, some of whom have no local ties here in Hawaii and will give them a reason to work for a Mainland department for higher pay, lower cost of living, and BETTER BENEFITS.

I for one will seriously consider finding another career if these new bills are passed. What will be the point of staying on? I have over 12 years of police experience in patrol, Field Training

Officer, marijuana eradication, SWAT operations, fugitive apprehension, firearms instruction and jail operations that will be lost to the Police Department if I choose to leave. There are other police officers whose resume is more varied and extensive than mine and feel the same way.

You can't just take a guy off of the street and replace a seasoned cop at the drop of a hat. If having experienced and effective police officers working the streets matters in the tiniest bit to you, these bills should not be passed. Many, many dedicated and experienced officers will retire or resign if the bills pass. My name will most likely be on that list.

From: Kim_Ching/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:15 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1723,HB1715,HB1726,HB1727,HB1718,HB1719,Hb1725,HB1106

Dear Representatives,

Please vote **NO** on these bills. We are having a hard enough time trying to make ends meet. The cost of everything has gone up so much. If you raise our cost of medical some of us will no longer be able to afford it. A lot of families are depending on only one income to survive. It will also place a burden on our already ailing health care system here in the islands. We do not have enough physicians as it is and if people have no medical how will the physicians get paid? A health issue that may have been small and easily taken care of by a Dr. visit could grow into something much greater that could require hospitalization. Who would end up paying for that? There has also been talk of cutting state employees one day of work without pay a month. If the cost of things keeps going up & our wages stay the same or are cut what are we supposed to do to survive? Please once again I ask you to vote NO on all of these bills.

Thank you for your time,
Kimberly Ching

From: Fayne Jeremiah [fayne.jeremiah@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposing Bills

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to express my concerns for HB1723(Limit employer contribution to 55%), HB1726 (Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits), HB1727(Prohibits provision of dental & vision coverage). I am opposing to these bills due to the fact that I am a 0.750 employee working to get medical benefits. My disabled parent only allows me to work six hours a day. If the bills are past it will take a crucial turn in my life.

Obviously,I would be stricken to find other means of caring for my disabled parent by the state and would loose my medical benefits because of the high cost and little income to spare. If time permits me I would surely be at the State Capital to express why I oppose to these bills. Thank you for taking

your time to listen to my testimony.

Sincerely,

F. Jeremiah

From: EBatalona@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HEALTH & RETIREMENT BENEFITS

I WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY TESTIMONY TO THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

I OPPOSE THE PROPOSED BILLS THAT SPEAKER CALVIN SAY HAD INTRODUCED THAT WILL REDUCE OUR HEALTH AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

THE LEGISLATORS CANNOT BALANCE THE STATE BUDGETS ON OUR BACKS.

I REFUSE TO BE TARGETED FROM THESE BILLS THAT THE LEGISLATORS WANT TO PROPOSE.

I FEEL THAT THE LEGISLATORS SHOULDN'T BAIL OUT OUR ECONOMY BY TAKING AWAY HARD-EARNED BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.

THESE ARE THE FOLLOWING BILLS THAT WILL BE AT RISK:

HB 1536, 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 AND 1727.

THANK YOU FOR HEARING AND RECONSIDERING THIS OPPOSITION.

Ened K. Batalona
Secretary
East Hawaii Child Welfare Services Unit 70
75 Aupuni St. Rm. 112
Hilo, HI 96720
808-933-0655

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From: Hiram Respicio [iograpes@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:22 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: "no" on these bill

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. Hi, my name is Hiram Respicio, I'm a father of four children, and I work for the Honolulu Board of Water Supply for 25 years and am a member of HGEA, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: 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. 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 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 balnce, 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 whenever politically convenient.

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 me 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 my family and many others in Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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.

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.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for me and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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.

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

Thank you,

Hiram Y. Respicio

Hiram Respicio

From: Lance E. Marks [Lance.Marks@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:37 AM
To: LABtestimony

Dear Representative

I'm a member of the Maui Police Department and I'm opposed to House Bill 1723 Related to Public Employees, House Bill 1715 Related to Retirement, House Bill 1726 Related to the Health Fund and House Bill 1727 Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund.

By eliminating benefits it will cause morale problems and in the will affect not only our county but the state as a whole. The benefits is what kept a lot of employees to stay working within the government and to take it away would be detrimental to all employees and their families. I have literally "bled" in the line of duty yet, you want to change our benefits-Thanks for nothing. If the bills pass, it will be a sad day for the state of Hawaii and its community due to the loss of many valuable officers. I came into this job (1997) with good benefits and it is these benefits that has kept many seasoned officers on the job and lured many recruits in the hopes of a secure future.

For this reason, I do not support the proposed bills.

Sincerely,

Lance Marks, P.O. III, Maui Police Department

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice-Chair
House Labor & Public Employment Committee

Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 am

In opposition to:

HB 1723, EUTF; Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Trust;
Employer Contributions
HB 1726, Hawaii EUTF; Group Life Insurance Prohibition
HB 1727, Public Employees' Health Benefits Plan; Exclusion of Dental
and Vision Coverage

Dear Representatives Rhoads and Yamashita,

I am a social worker with the Department of Education, and I am very concerned about proposed legislation that would take away benefits for public employees. HB 1723 would reduce employer contributions for active public employees to 55 percent of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan and remove the right to negotiate this benefit under collective bargaining. HB 1726 would prohibit the state or any county from paying premiums to group life insurance. HB 1727 would suspend dental and vision coverage for a six-year period, requiring employee-beneficiaries to pay for vision and dental coverage in its entirety.

I realize that these are difficult economic times, and that the legislature is faced with the challenging job of reducing the State's projected expenditures. However, these bills seek to balance the State's budget on the backs of the hard-working middle class. Many of us are having a hard enough time making ends meet as it is. We cannot carry the additional burdens of paying more for medical insurance, group life insurance, and vision and dental coverage.

I urge the committee to vote in opposition to HB 1723, HB 1726, and HB 1727. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauri Konishi

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Guy [kunitakeg003@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:53 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HGEA Health Benefits

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Guy Kunitake. As a public employee for nine (9) years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1723, 1725 and 1727.

I have two (2) young children, ages 11 and 3, and my family depends on me providing health coverage for them. By increasing our medical premiums and burdening us with the total costs of our families prescription drug, dental and vision coverage is creating a hardship on my family that I cannot afford. Although the bill for prescription medication is only temporary, essentially I would not be able to afford prescription medication for six (6) years. As it is now we live paycheck to paycheck and are struggling to make ends meet. My young children will need this coverage to protect them against diseases. I understand the State is facing this economic crisis and am willing to do my share in helping our economy get thru these tough times. I am not against a one (1) day furlough to help the State balance our budget, however a reduction in my salary coupled with the rise in my premiums for my families health coverage would result in taking prescription medication, dental and vision coverage away from my children. I for one cannot burden the additional costs of these Bills and would be hard-pressed to make ends meet. I humbly ask that you not gamble with the lives of my children.

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. By choosing to work for less pay I believed that my medical benefits during my retirement makes my total compensation plan for the State equivalent with the private sector. I am counting on my medical benefits during my retirement and I cannot afford to lose this benefit when I will need it the most.

I do not believe this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away medical benefits from my family.

I, Jacob Kawa'a Heffernan, **oppose the following bills** heard on Friday, February 13 and Tuesday, February 17 at 8:30 a.m. State Capitol, Room 309:

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.

Reasons:

"Our committed staff strives, day-in and day-out, to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits, for the purpose of achieving the outcomes of empowering those who are the most vulnerable in our State to expand their capacity for self-sufficiency, self determination, independence, healthy choices, quality of life and personal dignity"(Department of Human Services Vision).

As a new Department of Human Service (DHS) employee and State worker, I believe in being part of a bigger Ohana where something "good" and honorable can continue to be done on a grander scale. Instead of being a private service provider who used to work with a dozen or so families, I can now be part of a service that impacts hundreds to thousands of families statewide. This decision to move into public service was a no-brainer, especially since it used to be common knowledge that the security and benefits were stable. The wages are not competitive, but nevertheless, it was a great decision to join DHS and make it my career to do what I love the most, which is to help others to improve their quality of lives across many challenging areas. I have never worked for an agency or department with a vision which closely matches my own. My fear is that if the aforementioned bills are passed, it will dim DHS' mission in my heart as it will in others tasked with an already difficult, yet rewarding, job to do. When considering likely repercussions in the near future, it is not farfetched to assume public service will be mediocre at best and we will be faced with bigger problems than our current economic crises. Despair and hopelessness will be far more common in our community and among our public/state employees. My hope is that state officials can nurture public and state employees to keep the flame of passion burning brightly in our efforts in positively impacting the community. Opposing the aforementioned bills is a first step in the right direction towards this nurturance that not only the community, but public and state employees need too. Thank you for your time.

With the Utmost Aloha,

Jacob K. Heffernan
DHS employee

From: Andrea_Chinen/WAIAKEAI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 11:41 AM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Subject: HB1715,HB1725,HB1723,HB1726,HB1727,HB1718

Hi, my name is Andrea Chinen and I live in Hawaii District. I work for Waiakea Intermediate School and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. 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,
Andrea Chinen

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:20 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kodamam001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michael Kodama
Organization: Individual
Address: 310 S. Alu Rd. Wailuku Hawaii
Phone: 8082839752
E-mail: kodamam001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

From: Denton K. Galarza [Denton.Galarza@mpd.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:57 PM
To: LABtestimony

Importance: High

Dear Representative

My name is Denton Galarza, I have been a police officer with the Maui Police Department for the past 10 years and I'm writing to you to voice my concerns about the following House Bills that I am greatly opposed to:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The benefits are what drew and kept 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.

Thus, through no fault of the employees should these benefits be taken away from us. Taking away benefits in these hard economic times would greatly affect morale and lead to less effective and efficient police work and officers. Therefore, I wish to voice my opinion that I oppose these proposed bills, which would eliminate benefits to State and County employees.

Denton Galarza

From: Catherine_Caine/WAIKIKIE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725, HB1723, HB1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

To: Rep Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
Rep. Henry Aquino
Rep. Karen Awana
Rep. Faye Hanohano
Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Rep. Marilyn Lee
Rep. Mark Nakashima
Rep. Scott Saiki
Rep. Joe Souki
Rep. Roy Takumi
Rep. Kymberly Pine

My name is Catherine Caine and I am a Nationally Certified teacher employed at Waikiki School and I strongly oppose HB 1725, HB 1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727.

If these bills are passed it will impact a significant portion of the states population. I believe this population I am referring to understands that times are difficult for all of us and we should all bare the burden of these short falls. However, stripping these faithful employees of the health benefits is counter intuitive and lack creative solutions to a difficult problem.

There are many other ways to cut spending such as pay-lags which teachers have endured for many years or furloughs. Many of us bargained in good faith and financially planned based on what we were lead to believe was a commitment by the state to be true to their word. Removing health benefits from negotiate is appalling and chips away at our basic rights as citizens to organize and make our voices heard. In the end without these benefits or proper warning to prepare for the lack of these benefits the state will bare the burden of more indigent citizens in need of assistance from the state.

Please consider the human element and the impact during an already difficult economic period and vote against HB 1723, HB1725, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727. We need your support or we can no longer support you as our representatives.

With grave concerns,

Catherine Caine

From: Jane Jamison [kinijamison@earthlink.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Committee on Labor and Public Employment, Tuesday, February 16,2009, 8:30AM, regarding HB 1723

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jane Jamison, Behavioral Health Specialist, State of Hawaii, Department of Education and a member of HGEA.

As a public employee for over five years years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: **HB1723**.

HB 1723 limits employer contributions to 55% and makes it non-negotiable. Again here is another bill that negatively affects the welfare of the people who provide the state with important public service. I oppose this bill because it further places the financial burden on the public servants of our great state and does not allow for negotiation. All these bills that have been introduced by Speaker Say take away our rights under the constitution and our rights under our union negotiations. These bills negate the rights of working for the union and make the union ineffective. Shame on any of you that want to do this to us. I have worked in non-union states and they are destructive to their employees as well as their state. I have seen this in Arizona.

I am the sole worker for my family with a husband and son who are disabled. My daughter is attending the University of Hawaii studying to be a teacher in order to help provide Hawaii's children with an education that will help them to succeed in today's troubled world. I have a disability myself. My prescription drug benefits are a life saver for me and my family. If I have to pay for more of my benefits, I will not be able to afford medical care, utility bills, and my mortgage. I will become at risk for foreclosure, homelessness, and welfare. Trying to balance the budget by hurting the people who are the life source of providing state services will further exacerbate the economic crisis and further destroy Hawaii's families abilities to survive.

Please vote ³no² on HB1723 that take away benefits from public employees.

Mahalo,
Jane Jamison

From: David Hammes [dlhammes@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:39 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: questions@uhpa.org
Subject: Testimony--HB 1723--2/17/09

To the Honorable Members of the State of Hawai'i House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

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

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is David Hammes, a professor of economics at the University of Hawai'i-Hilo, where I have been since August 1988. I reside at 155 Alohalani Drive, Hilo, HI 96720; phone # 808-959-2426.

I wish to have these comments considered in your meeting Tuesday, 17, 2009, 8:30AM.

Specifically, I comment on House Bill

- *HB 1723 Relating to Public Employees*

This will prohibit bargaining over the employers contribution to the Employer-Union Trust Fund. It will cap employers contribution to health benefits to 55% of the benefit cost. Currently faculty members have a 60-40 split with the employer paying 60%.

This bill is another frontal, cynical, and dangerous assault on the sanctity of contracts and the faith and goodwill of the State of Hawai'i. The result of these being passed will be to reduce the credibility of the State government in the eyes not only of its own employees, but any agency assessing the honesty and credibility of this State. Therefore, bond-rating agencies would be very likely to reconsider their ratings of this state's debt obligations, lowering them significantly, at great cost to the state's taxpayers.

Each of the benefits in these provisions was bargained in good faith by labor and management. People have planned on these provisions in the same way they plan on their monthly wages and salaries (also negotiated sometimes at high cost). For these benefits now to be altered by fiat exposes the State to charges of, at worst, dishonest bargaining, and, at best, using short-term economic exigency to cynically manipulate agreements in their favor when the will of the people is being ignored.

Consider anyone negotiating with the State in the future. All future 'promised' benefits will be ignored because their existence is now highly doubtful, and an attitude of "Pay up-front" will be enforced. The state consequently, will see payments rise and lose the ability to smooth wage and benefits packages through time to better mediate the business cycle. Passage of these bills will worsen, not lessen, our exposure to cyclical, economic swings.

Your responsibilities and duties obligate you to hear this bill, but your duties and obligations also require you to uphold contracts honorably entered in to. By considering passage of this bill you abrogate any pretence at upholding the honor and credibility of the State therefore doing grievous damage to its economic future.

While this appears to affect only state employees, I submit to you that anyone dealing with this state for any purpose, think Lenders, will be twice shy to purchase any obligation of this State. If they do, they will only purchase it at great discount reflecting what they know to be State renegeing as a common policy. In the future, anyone considering working for the State, will think twice and require payment and expenses up-front.

Short term economic exigency, that will be made worse, not better, by passage of these bills, should not be a cover for attacks on labor, state employees, the bargaining process and the credibility of the state.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

David Hammes, Ph.D.
155 Alohala Drive
Hilo, HI 96720

From: p.kanakas [p.kanakas@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 3:26 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: bill 1723

2/13/09

To whom it may concern:

I am opposed to bill # 1723. I know that many people such as teachers work for the state because of the benefits. They certainly could make more money in the private sector! Please do NOT pass this bill. We need to attract good employees to work for our state, and let's face it..... you get what you pay for!

Thank you,
Susan P. Harrington
2372 Jennie Street
Honolulu, HI 96819
(808)847-3547

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Doris Wada. As a public employee for 39 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB's 1723, 1715, 1726, 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.

Thank you.

Doris Wada
Administrative Assistant
Hawaii State Hospital

From: Diane Nakashima [diane.nakashima@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 3:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for 02/17/2009

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, and have been employed since 1991.

As in my testimony for 02/13/2009, 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, and am increasingly relying on the health benefit for my daily upkeep.

Please don't make the public employees the scapegoats for this economic crisis.

Please vote No to
HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, and HB1727.

Respectfully,
Diane Nakashima

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 3:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: lindakuoha@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Linda James
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: lindakuoha@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

To Whom it may concern:

As a teacher at Leihoku Elementary, I am opposed to these bills: 1723, 1719, 1725, & 1727. I already spend over a thousand dollars a year to buy supplies and other materials to aid in my students' learning. I use this money from my own pocket because I want my students to have all of the things that everyone else has i.e. white boards, note books, folders etc. Most of my students are on reduced or free lunch because their families cannot afford a lot. I feel for these families. I am still facing financial difficulty even with my health, vision, and dental benefits. I can't imagine having to pay more than I already do. If you take away health benefits for the retired teachers this is even worse because they do not have as much income coming in and this is when going to the doctor is much more important. I am around twenty-four five year olds each day so getting sick is very easy because my students are always picking up germs left and right. I need my benefits to help keep me healthy but without draining my already tiny income. The cost of living in Hawaii is not cheap and if the state hopes to keep teachers who are qualified from leaving then these bills should not be passed because every year we lose teachers because the officials here in Hawaii just don't seem to deem the work that we do as important. I am shocked that these bills were even considered, it makes teachers around the state feel that education is your last priority. Well, it shouldn't be, these students need us. The amount of work that we do is priceless. Everyday I come to school between 6:45am and I leave at 4:00pm. I put in extra hours everyday and am never paid for it. I do this because I care about my students. The thought that you would take away my vision, hearing, and health benefits to save a few dollars sickens me. I know countless teachers

that feel the same way. Haven't we given back enough? We give our time and our money to provide a safe educational environment for our students and you reward us by taking away our medical, vision, and dental? I pray that bills 1723, 1719, 1725, & 1727 never get passed.

Sincerely,

Jillian Przygodzinski

From: Carrie Luna [sea-luna@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 5:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: RE: Opposed to Health & Retirement Bills

I am opposed to the bills listed below because I feel it is not fair. Our cost of living and taxes in Hawaii are already high. How can we afford to pay out more when we are already living from paycheck to paycheck. You must stop these bills from passing.

- *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.

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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: jaurello@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Government Employees House Bills

Our economy is in such a grave situation. Those of us HGEA employees who are on the "line" everyday for 5, 10, 20, 30years deserve what we already have in place as benefits. Any cuts to our benefits will put your state/county workers into financial ruin and halt government operations! If you want the governments to run, then allows us the benefits! We are all suffering and our departments has earnestly tried to curtail spending, cutting our departmental budgets with equipment, supplies, travel to abide by Governor Lingle's initial request.

The bills I am NOT for: HB 1725, 17223, 1715,1726, 1727

As elected officials voted in by not only the general public, but also endorsed by the unions I fervently hope that you will take our needs to heart. We are not just numbers, we are people in your community, your next door neighbor, your friend and relative.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:26 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jhidani@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Joyce Hidani
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jhidani@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: harpygirl@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jan-Joy Sax
Organization: Individual
Address: 402B Kawainui Street Kailua, HI
Phone: 808-371-2587
E-mail: harpygirl@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

After working for the State of Hawaii since 1981, I oppose the state attempting to take away the bargaining rights for public employees yet another time. Not only is it unfair to force state workers to take cuts and have to pay more money for health insurance, but it is a poor decision for the state in the long term. There has been a shortage of employees, especially in the area of Speech Pathologists since I began working here. In this economic climate, there will not be any more mainland or local workers attracted to jobs working for the state, when benefits, or even the right to negotiate are eliminated. This will cause more stress to current employees, who will be more likely to leave their positions, and a domino effect will occur. Too much work for too little pay and benefits. If special education students do not get the service to which they are entitled, more hearings will occur, and the state will lose more money. This bill is short sighted and will cause more money to be spent in the long run. Be smart and think of another way to equally reduce spending. Do not punish your loyal workers like myself, so close to retirement, or doom this state to a worse shortage and need to spend more money in the future!

From: mellissa petro [missmelliss@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 10:43 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony Against Bills Targeting Public Employees

Hello. My name is Mellissa Petro. I have been a Registered Nurse at Maui Memorial Medical Center Intensive Care Unit since 2005.

It is unfair that I might have to suffer from the effects of the bad economy on the State of Hawaii. I don't feel that my working benefits, pay (including step movements), retirement, medical, dental, and vision benefits should suffer because of the State of Hawaii's financial situation. I plan on continuing to work at Maui Memorial Medical Center until I retire 30 + years from now. I work hard every day caring for the residents and visitors of Maui. It is very difficult to give my patients the care that they need when nurses aide, unit clerks and secretaries, and other RN jobs are frozen.

I feel that there are other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a better way to address the State of Hawaii's revenue problem. I don't feel that State of Hawaii employees should suffer because of this.

I do not support any of these bills targeting pubic employees:

HB 1536, HB 1106, HB 1108, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727, HB 1720, HB 1721, HB 1722, HB 1737

Thank you,

Mellissa Petro RN

(808) 264-1366

From: Alpheus Mathis [alpheusmathis@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 11:00 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony

Re:HB1725 – Halt prescription drug overage under EUTF;
HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 – Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

Legislative representatives from the House committee:

I am in opposition to this bill and feel it poses undue financial hardship on my family and kids.
I have been committed to the provision of public service for the past 17 years and feel this bill is not in the best interest of the public at large. Please rescind this proposed legislation

Aloha
Alpheus Mathis MPA, OTR
Dept of Health
Adult Mental Health Division
Hawaii State Hospital

From: Kathleen Chee [cheek002@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:00 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposed to following bills

HB 1723
HB 1715
HB 1727

There are those that wish to stay on later in their years but those of us close to retirement with the parameters given want to do just that, retire without penalties. Thank you

From: gordines@kauaiflowers.com
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Labor Committee bills for state employees!

Importance: High

Dear Sirs,

I am writing because I humbly urge you to not endorse or pass the following bills as I have been a state employee for the past 29 years and plan to retire in 2010. The future of my family is at RISK!

Just say NO to: HB 1106 and HB 1718 also

HB1725 – Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;

HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;

HB1715 – Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;

HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;

HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

Respectfully,

John R. Gordines

808 651-9711

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toll free 800 453-6416

From: auntysam [hawiwi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:58 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: stop it!

Stop trying to make the public workers pay for the economic setbacks! We deserve to keep ALL our benefits! If we take cuts, I believe ALL lawmakers should be an example and take that step first! Come on, let's be realistic! Honestly, do you really think taking away from the middle class will change the economy much...don't you think the lawmakers make more then I do?

Shirley Remular
HGEA member

HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;
HB1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

Aloha a hui hou!

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jacqueline Phillips. As a public employee for 27 years, I am extremely upset with the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.

HB 1723 and HB 1727 relate specifically to the health benefits for thousands of public employees across the state. If HB 1723 is passed and enacted, the State of Hawaii as employer will have a cap of 55% of the monthly cost of health benefit plans. Do you know how much paying an employee's share of the cost is for a single parent paying for family coverage? Health insurance now is expensive and is only going to increase every year. Medication is also very expensive. Salaries for public employees are not anything to brag about and raises are the result of long, often contentious negotiations between the employer and the union. Now you are discussing a bill that will shrink our take home pay more and more as time goes on.

HB 1727 will actually prohibit the employer from providing dental and vision coverage from 07/01/2009 to 6/30/2015. So we will have no coverage at all for maintenance and cleaning of our teeth, filling cavities, taking care of toothaches, root canals, abscesses or gum problems, and more. We will also have no coverage to get new eyeglasses, contacts, or check for cataracts and glaucoma, etc. (If this passes, it will be interesting to see how many dentists' and optometrists' offices close as fallout from thousands of people not going for checkups or to get additional services.) I can see that many adults and children will not get go to a dentist or optometrist during that time period or put off getting services until a problem has gotten so bad they are forced to see a doctor thus endangering the health and welfare of many.

HB 1715 relates to new employees and would increase the minimum age and length of service for unreduced service retirement allowance. After 27 years, this bill does not affect me personally but I am amazed that you want to make things less attractive for well-qualified people to work for the state at all. Because of the disparity in salaries and benefits between the state and the private sector, the retirement plan is one of the big reasons people want to get a state position.

All state departments have had to make do with less as all vacancies have been frozen. At my current position, caseloads are already high and getting bigger everyday. I don't have a problem with rolling up my sleeves and working harder. I already work late several days a

week but have never been "caught up" on my cases. What you are considering is incredibly demoralizing. As a single parent, taking care of myself and my children has been a challenge for years. I'm happy to tell you that I have been able to manage although I don't have a nice home and I've never been able to take my family to Disneyland (or anywhere else) or do anything that will cost me money. Taking away or reducing what I now receive will cause me (and those in a similar situation) to be among the many, many others who cannot manage on their own financially.

I take no pleasure in the fact that I have a job while so many have lost theirs, although I am extremely relieved that I am still employed. Adding many public employees to the ranks of those with such serious financial struggles so we can "share the pain" is not only pointless but I find that thinking offensive.

Please, please do not take away benefits that I, and thousands of other public employees, currently receive. I rely on you as state representatives to help the people of Hawai'i which includes all public employees.

From: jonfia@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 2:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Bills impacting state workers

Im writing to let you know that I am against bills:

HB 1715
HB 1718
HB 1719
HB 1720
HB 1721
HB 1722
HB 1723
HB 1725
HB 1727

In fact, I implore you to vote against these bills. As a public school teacher, these bills are an insult to the already poor working conditions that we have. What makes being a teacher even bearable in the state of Hawaii is our benefits. We exchange meager pay for the comfort of knowing we have our benefits.

Passage of these bills will drug, dental and vision will immediately impact our families and will be a MAJOR expense that will have to be absorbed by a teacher and his family. In my case (as is with many others), I am married to a teacher so we have no recourse to choose a different health plan. The amount of money we look to lose would force us make choices between our children's prescriptions, dental work, etc and paying our bills. Either way is a lose-lose situation. This in of itself could put families who already in a financially precarious situation into foreclosure and bankruptcy.

In regards to the bills concerning retirement age and benefits, passage of these bills would result in a mass exodus of senior/veteran teachers from the DOE. Many are already making plans to retire this June in anticipation of these bills. Who will replace these people? We already have a hard time finding enough teachers to fill our vacancies. I actually found it ironic that in today's Honolulu Advertiser there was an article about Sen. Norman Sakamoto's introduced Senate Bill 206. On one end Say wants to stick to the teachers and Sakamoto wants to help the teachers from the mainland who will more than likely leave our ranks within a few years. If these bills pass, anyone in their right mind would not become a public school teacher in the State of Hawaii. I am considering taking my 14 years in the DOE and leaving back to the mainland if these bills pass as it would make it virtually impossible for me to retire here. To make matters worse, the certain departure of many veteran teachers would only exacerbate the NCLB laws that all the schools are struggling to deal with. Not only to students need to meet certain test scores, but schools must have a very high percentage of its teachers be considered highly qualified. If those veteran teachers leave, their positions will likely be filled by non certified substitutes and emergency hires.

I am counting on you to make the right decision. I am actively following these bills not to mention 13,000 of my fellow teachers and will remember those who think so little of us to vote to pass these bills.

Thank you for your time.

From: Patricia McCarthy [pattyhawaii@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 2:35 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Clifton K. Tsuji; Sen. Russell Kokubun
Subject: Oppostion to HB 1715,1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726 & 1727

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

My name is Patricia McCarthy and I am a public employee. I have been a school based therapist at Keaau High School (80% poverty level) for 8 years. My intention was to stay here until I retire (2-5 years from now). I own a home in Keaau, pay lots of taxes and am very concerned about all of the above bills. When I was first hired it was as an exempt employee. The state was desperate for qualified, licensed therapists who would help support the Felix Consent Decree. After two years, we were made civil servants and my salary was decreased by over 22%. I almost left at that point in my career; however, I chose to work for less pay to be able to stay in my home, raise my child and end my career contributing to the community. I thought I was going to have a secure and safe retirement. The above bills are unfair and take away benefits from public employees and I would like to requests that you vote "no" on all of them.

Sincerely,
Patricia McCarthy
Keaau High School
School Based Therapist

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From: Plwamoto@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 2:39 PM
To: LABtestimony

Importance: High

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

My name is Payge Iwamoto. As a public employee for 20 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.
Specifically HB1718;1719;1725;1723;1715;1726;1727

HB1719 is a 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 bills, 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 mortgage is paid up 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, 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 Hawaii at risk. State programs that protect Hawaii'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 HB1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawaii.

HB1725 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.

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From: jean yamanaka [jeansachi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 3:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Fw: Requesting Your Help!

Testifier name, position/title/organization: Jean Yamanaka, Office Assistant IV, DOH
The Committee the comments are directed to: Labor and Public Employment
The date and time of hearing: February 17, 2009, 8:30am.

Measure numbers HB 1723, HB 1726, HB 1727

I have been working for the State Government for 40 years and have been working for my health and retirement benefits. I am pretty close to retirement and wouldn't want to lose what ever I have been working for. Please DO NOT pass these bills as it will affect my family and many many others.

Please find some other ways to balance the budget.

Thank you.
Jean Yamanaka

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jym_Duncan/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Angela_Miyashiro/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us;
Robert_Domingos/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us;
Steve_Stephenson/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us;
Malia_Panglao/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us; Sharon_Beck/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Bills HB 1723, 1719, 1725, 1727

I voice opposition to the bills above because they create hardship for our faithful state employees in the DOE and other departments. We feel that we are being pressured to retire early, and are being deprived of expected health benefits before and after retirement.

I am appalled that the State House of Representatives voted unanimously to allow school reconsitution, a drastic measure which will only cause disruption and failure among the youngest and most vulnerable members of our community -- our youth and children. Apparently you think that federal employees are better able to teach our children than teachers who live in our communities and know the people, unique cultures and languages, including Hawaiian Creole, of Hawaii's people. Our people are too smart to believe that reconsitution of failing schools is a solution. It's a recipe for disaster!

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Susan Nakamoto [srinkon@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:29 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 AND 1726

As an HGEA member for 30 years, I would strongly object to the proposed amendments. I would propose that there are other ways to cut costs -- i.e., lowering the temperature for air conditioning; turning off the hot water heater -- it is not necessary for State buildings (the courthouse). I believe there are other cost-saving measures that can be taken before you start taking away health benefits. Also, another way would be to use cost-efficient lighting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Nakamoto, CSR #237
Official Court Reporter
State of Hawaii, Third Circuit - Kona Division

From: Sharla_Mohica/WAIAKEAI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:05 PM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. Faye Hanohano; Rep. Mark Nakashima
Subject: HB1715,HB1725,HB1723,HB1726,HB1727,HB1718

Hi, my name is Sharla Mohica and I live in Hawaii District. I work for Waiakea Intermediate School and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. 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,
Sharla Mohica

From: Toby_Neal/MAUIDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:52 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: OBJECTING to bills in House/Senate that cut retirement benefits!

These bills are short sighted and ultimately will cost the state MORE when aging employees end up applying for Quest and Medicare!

OBJECT to:

- 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;
- HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
- HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

The state should NOT cut costs to our loyal, hardworking state employees to bail out the budget. This will ultimately cost the state good employees and more money in the long run, and it violates our Union-negotiated rights and due process.

Toby W. Neal, MSW, LCSW
Behavioral Health Program Manager
Maui District Office
(808) 344-9657

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:57 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Christopher_Pagdilao@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Christopher Pagdilao
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: Christopher.Pagdilao@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/13/2009

Comments:

My name is Chris Pagdilao. I am an athletic healthcare trainer with the Department of Education. In reading about all these tax cuts that legislation is proposing, HB 1723 strongly affects me and my colleagues, and all state employees. With the current economic status of the state and country being in such a drastic decline, a small, yet costly increase in the employee contributions will affect us all and could have a negative effect on the economic burden that we as the people of Hawaii will have to take on. Tax cuts on medical issues should not be a route of "saving money." By doing this you take away from the people who have helped you to build this state to what it is. Either change the language to reflect a time period, from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011 or do not pass this bill, as this bill with the other bills currently before this legislative session will increase the economic burden on all of Hawaii's citizens.

Thank you for your time

Chris Pagdilao AHCT
Athletic Health Care Trainer
Maui High School

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Cynthia_Shimoda/MOAHS/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 1:59 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1725 & HB 1723

My name is Cynthia Shimoda, I am an athletic health care trainer in the Department of Education. I am strongly opposed to HB 1723 & HB 1725. HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, I will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. HB 1723 says that I will also I have to pay 5% more every paycheck, and then some with the increasing prices of health insurance over the years. I am a pregnant diabetic mother of soon to be 2 children with a mortgage. I don't spend my hard earned money frivolously, why should I be expected to balance the Budget with my life? I work 6 days a week, with no "overtime" compensation. I depend upon my benefits to survive in Hawaii. 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. If these bills were to pass, you may find yourself short more than a few public servants.

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

Cynthia Shimoda

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Roslyn_Moresh/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 2:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1723 and HB1719

These bills are a huge disservice to the teachers of Hawaii who are putting out a tremendous effort to ensure that the students get a good education.

It is basically a slap in the face. I don't know if I can continue working for the DOE if this bill passes. I thought that it was mandatory for an employer to provide health care for full time employees.

From: Guieb, Stephanie K. [stephanie.guieb@doh.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 2:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony for 02/13 and 02/17/09

Hi, my name is STEPHANIE KEAHI WILCOX GUIEB, and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs. I was born and raised in Hawaii and have all of my ohana living here.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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,

STEPHANIE KEAHI WILCOX GUIEB, RN

See bill numbers below

HB1536 - Freezing salaries of Governor, Lt Governor

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.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Corinne [chongn006@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:53 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: repaquino@capital.hawaii.gov; repawana@capital.hawaii.gov;
rephanohano@capital.hawaii.gov; repkeithagaran@capital.hawaii.gov;
replee@capital.hawaii.gov; repnakashima@capital.hawaii.gov; reppine@capital.hawaii.gov;
reprhoads@capital.hawaii.gov; repsaiki@capital.hawaii.gov; repsouki@capital.hawaii.gov;
reptakumi@capital.hawaii.gov; repyamashita@capital.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony on Take Away Bills: HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1536, HB1106,
HB1718, HB1719, HB1725

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. My name is Corinne Chong and I work at the Kona Community Hospital. I have worked as a public employee for 20 years, and I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.

As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. 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 the public service community, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and that promises can be broken mid-stream. It is not fair that the economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and the rest of the public workers who have dedicated themselves to their jobs.

HB1725 relating to public employees bearing the entire burden of prescription drug coverage is not acceptable. With the rising cost of healthcare and the increase in chronic diseases that require medication, this bill along with talks of salary cuts and increases in our premiums is detrimental to each public worker and their families. This will have ill affects past the six years and will definitely have an effect on the quality of life for each of the public employees and their families.

I don't feel it is fair that we the public employees take the burden of resolving the State's economic situation. We have sacrificed over the many years and those of us that have long years of service have been dedicated to our employers. Penalizing the public employees and taking away benefits is simply not fair to us.

I humbly ask that you vote "NO" on all the bills that take away benefits from public employees like me.

Sincerely,
Corinne Chong

From: peggy moore [puailikea@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 1718, HB1719, HB1725,HB1723, HB 1727

I have worked for the State DOE for over 20 years. I will be retiring when I reach 62 which is 12 more years so then I will have more that 30 years of service. I feel that we have a union that is there for negotiating the fairest ways to keep us motivated to do more than our job calls for with our employer. By putting caps on benefits and taking away benefits that we have earned already is wrong. The public needs us and we want to continue serving them. We don't have a choice of whether or not to join the union -- we pay for it. Let the union do its job for us as intended. When we don't have anything to negotiate then the union won't be needed. I've always felt safe working for the State of Hawaii and now uncertainty is becoming a daily worry for myself and many workers. Let's vote no on these bills, and look for other ways to help our State economically.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kristine Yahiku [kyahiku@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:15 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: oppose bills 1723, 1719, 1725, 1727

I strongly oppose bills 1723, 1719, 1725, and 1727. How can you cut the benefits of retired teachers? Did they get paid enough when they were working in order to have saved enough for these unexpected costs? With everyone struggling as it is, using a chunk of our paychecks to have to pay for these extra costs (vision, dental, and drug) is going to be impossible. Please do not pass these bills.

Thank you!
Kristine Yahiku

yamashita1- Kathy

From: zombies@hawaiiantel.net
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:00 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony: HB 1715, 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726, 1727

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony. My name is Jim Hayden. As a public employee for 16 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1715, 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726, 1727

HB 1719, HB1718, and HB 1723 are of greatest concern to me. As a civil servant, I choose to work for roughly one third less pay than my counterparts in the private sector. Every negotiation cycle the value of our retirement package has been touted by administrations past and present.

I personally don't consider these to be "take away" bills simply because we've made sacrifices and have earned these benefits. They weren't handed out to us like party favors and to suggest otherwise is deeply insulting.

For years the legislator has raided the ERS funds; and they haven't had a second thought. Yet the minute things head south, they expect us to take one for the team. It is a public disgrace, you people may have the ability to write something on a piece of paper and call it a law; but I call it stealing, and I don't think very highly of it.

These bills are blatant attempts to force people into early retirement. The plans I have made to ensure that my daughter graduates from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to ask myself if it is worth keeping this job knowing that a single ailment could completely negate my family's future. I take great comfort knowing that even if I were to drop dead tomorrow there is a safety net for the widow I would leave behind and for our nine year old daughter. She could be the biggest loser under the honorable speaker's purposed reforms. If I choose to get out now so that I know my wife and I won't become a burden to her during our retirement, we're going to be looking at a few lean years. I'm probably not going to be able to send her to a private school, and may have to spend some time out of state to chase after work. I'm certainly not going to be pumping a lot of bucks into the economy if I have to worry about what I'm going to do for a living.

But it's not like it's the first time I've seen huge pay cuts. I took a job as an SR-9 to get my foot in the door of the civil service, and I spent the better part of a decade getting my pay back up to the level it was prior to that; I've paid my dues, worked hard, and made a number of sacrifices to secure a future for myself and my family. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on these bills and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that when you decide to take something away from somebody, you had better make damn sure that it was yours to begin with; and not something that someone else had labored many years of their life to acquire.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jim Hayden

myhosting.com - Premium Microsoft® Windows® and Linux web and application hosting -
<http://link.myhosting.com/myhosting>

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Mynahs@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:57 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Please Do Not Take Away Health Benefits for State Workers

I am deeply concerned about some of the bills that you will soon be voting on. HB1106, regarding furloughing employees, is not well thought out. Part-time workers cannot afford to have any hours taken away from them and it would affect their ability to be eligible for health insurance and unemployment insurance if they do not work 20 hours a week. We need to make a living too, and balancing the budget on us would not save much money anyway. Bill HB1725, which would take away our drug coverage, bill HB1727, which would take away our dental and vision insurance, and bill HB1723, which could make health care unaffordable, all need to be taken off the table. At a time when President Obama is trying to make sure everyone has health coverage, Hawaii does not need to be an example where everyone is uninsured. State workers work hard and many of us, especially at the DOE, put in overtime for free. I don't think that kind of dedication deserves to be rewarded with taking away our basic health insurance plans. Hawaii is know as one of the top healthy states, and this is not the direction we need to be going in. There are many other ways to cut the budget without punishing people just because they happen to work for the state. Balancing the budget by cutting health plans should not be an option, and I especially can't understand how a democrat like Calvin Say can propose these things when democrats are the ones who worked so hard for us to have health plans. Those who get the largest salaries, our leaders and legislators, should be the ones to make the biggest sacrifices and remind us why we elected them in the first place. Thank you for your attention.

Nothing says I love you like flowers! [Find a florist near you now.](#)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: jillfitz@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:55 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jillfitz@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Legislative Bills 1106,1718,1719,1725,1723,1726,1727

Dear Members of the House of Representatives of the State of Hawaii,

My name is Jill Fitzpatrick. I have put my heart and soul into my work at the University of Hawaii, Maui Community College, have received the UHCC Excellence in Service award, and I am a member of HGEA. HGEA members are the people who perform a lot of volunteer work for many of non-profit agencies in the state of Hawaii, in addition to the work they perform at their jobs.

I do not believe that it is fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget by taking away benefits that I have worked for during the past 20 years. I do believe that a salary freeze or a short furlough or raising the GET tax by one percent would be a better way to solve the Hawaii's projected budget crisis. Please look for other ways to balance the budget than by taking away our hard earned benefits.

Thank you for your time
Jill Fitzpatrick
Media Specialist
Maui Community College

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: siu ying or [siuyingor@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:07 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting Your Help

Hi, my name is Siu Ying Or. I work for State Judiciary and am a member of HGEA.

I am also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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.

I strongly oppose to the bills #1106,1718,1719,1725,1723,1727

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Francis_Farrington/LEIHOKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:49 PM
To: LABtestimony

To whom it may concern,

I write this email as a concerned state employee. I feel privileged to be able to serve the state of Hawaii and specifically the community of Wai'anae. But however I am deeply saddened as well as disturbed to hear of HB 1719 and the proposal to suspend contribution of funds to those who will retire as of July 1, 2009. I understand that our current economic crisis is causing a tremendous strain on all facets of our society, but we need to preserve the bond between state and employees and their community. Cutting out hard earned benefits will only weaken the relationship between state employees and their superiors. The community will in turn suffer when those who here to serve them and better their lives, are betrayed and left disheartened by the possibility of abandonment of benefits to them. I felt it necessary to make it known that I strongly denounce any proposal or support of HBs 1723, 1719, 1725 & 1727. I hope that this can contribute in anyway, to preserve the commitments made to state employees years ago.

Francis Farrington
Special Education teacher
Leihoku Elementary School
Wai'anae, HI, 96707

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Donna Ho [dho221@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, HB1727

Aloha! House Labor & Public Employee Committee,

I appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on the subject House Bills. I have been a public employee for over 12 years. I enjoy my job, and the benefits seem to keep us dedicated and motivated to continue to serve the public.

I find it very disappointing that the representative I had voted for had introduced these bills. Nevertheless, the subject bills appear to have negative impacts on public employees and our families.

Even a possible decrease in income and benefits to a large number of persons will further negatively impact businesses and the overall economy in the islands. Businesses will suffer since employees will choose to spend less especially if their future is unknown. Nonprofit organizations will have fewer volunteers and may result in offering fewer services.

HB1715 would impact our future hiring of colleagues. This will affect those qualified and skilled individuals on their decision to decide not to enter as public employees. Less pay and less benefits is not attractive.

We cannot forget to mention how the subject bills would impact our retirees and those close to retirement.

Your consideration in voting against the subject House Bills is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Donna Ho
c 221-1400

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Kerry Holokai [kholokai@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:33 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Kerry Holokai and a member of HGEA, Bargaining Unit 03. I live in Ha'iku, Maui.

As a public employee for 16 years, I am truly disturbed by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically:

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.

HB 1106. I cannot afford a reduction in my salary during this time of economic strife. I am already living paycheck to paycheck, and just barely making ends meet. 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 disappointing. I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Sacrificing the health and well-being of people in the hopes that the economic crisis will be resolved is quite simply, ludicrous.

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. How odd to introduce such a bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

It seems that public employees are usually the target and often the ones to blame for our State's problems. Public employees are not the problem.

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

Mahalo

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:06 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: terrypulham@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Terry J Pulham
Organization: Individual
Address: 820A Kaipii St. Kailua HI 96734
Phone: 808-779-6310
E-mail: terrypulham@msn.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 Terry J Pulham. As a public employee for 8 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, 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 graduate 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.

NO to HB 1106

NO to HB 1718

NO to HB 1719

NO to HB 1725

NO to HB 1723

NO to HB 1715

NO to HB 1726

NO to HB 1727

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Donna Alalem [dalalem@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: REQUESTING YOU TO OPPOSE HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

You Must Oppose:

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

Re: HB1715, 1716, 1719, 1720 Etc.

Representative Calvin Say's proposals are a hard, insulting b**ch slap to government workers.

The threat of taking away our medical benefits and moving our acceptable retirement date to 65 will force us to retire before 6/30/09

I am a state employee with the Dept of Ed, and an HGEA Excluded Associate Member for a short 15 years. Others have dedicated 30-40 years or more.

I have worked happily underpaid and happily overworked, because I love my job and most certainly for the relatively good benefits I was promised.

My paycheck doesn't cover even minimum living expenses; retirement and social security will be minimum. I took a 30% cut coming from the private sector to the DOE primarily for the alleged security and benefits, certainly not for the salary.

I foresee Rep. Say's bills forcing out seasoned, knowledgeable employees from every part of the State Government, setting the stage systemic chaos.

It is curious that 35% pay increases for upper echelon state officials sail through unquestioned, while clerical and blue collar grunts like me--the backbone of the functioning system--are slapped with threats Calvin Say has presented.

It is curious that there are no proposals to cull the judges' and elected officials' retirement base of 3.5% compared to our 1.25%, PLUS their annuity, PLUS they may retire in only 10 years at any age.

Your proposals are an insult to government workers and political to any elected official who votes for those bills.

Thank you for your time and bandwidth,

Donna Alalem

P O Box 1151

Kapaa, HI 96746

I, Jacob Kawa'a Heffernan, **oppose the following bills** heard on Friday, February 13 and Tuesday, February 17 at 8:30 a.m. State Capitol, Room 309:

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.

Reasons:

"Our committed staff strives, day-in and day-out, to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits, for the purpose of achieving the outcomes of empowering those who are the most vulnerable in our State to expand their capacity for self-sufficiency, self determination, independence, healthy choices, quality of life and personal dignity"(Department of Human Services Vision).

As a new Department of Human Service (DHS) employee and State worker, I believe in being part of a bigger Ohana where something "good" and honorable can continue to be done on a grander scale. Instead of being a private service provider who used to work with a dozen or so families, I can now be part of a service that impacts hundreds to thousands of families statewide. This decision to move into public service was a no-brainer, especially since it used to be common knowledge that the security and benefits were stable. The wages are not competitive, but nevertheless, it was a great decision to join DHS and make it my career to do what I love the most, which is to help others to improve their quality of lives across many challenging areas. I have never worked for an agency or department with a vision which closely matches my own. My fear is that if the aforementioned bills are passed, it will dim DHS' mission in my heart as it will in others tasked with an already difficult, yet rewarding, job to do. When considering likely repercussions in the near future, it is not farfetched to assume public service will be mediocre at best and we will be faced with bigger problems than our current economic crises. Despair and hopelessness will be far more common in our community and among our public/state employees. My hope is that state officials can nurture public and state employees to keep the flame of passion burning brightly in our efforts in positively impacting the community. Opposing the aforementioned bills is a first step in the right direction towards this nurturance that not only the community, but public and state employees need too. Thank you for your time.

With the Utmost Aloha,

Jacob K. Heffernan
DHS employee

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Loreene Fujioka [lrfujioka@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony regarding State Employees

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Loreene Fujioka. As a public employee for over 35 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.

I truly believe it is a punitive and a travesty that your proposed solution is narrowly focusing on eliminating and/or reducing the health benefits for state workers. We have all worked long and hard and earned these benefits and to have them wiped away merely to balance the state budget is reprehensible.

Please look at other ways, than just penalizing the state employees by reducing and/or eliminating their dental, vision and drug benefits.

I truly believe that an increase of the excise/sales tax would generate millions of dollars and more than offset this anticipated deficit. This solution is "shared" by everyone in the state of Hawaii, including the tourists, not just the state employees. Food items should be exempt from the increase and be eliminated. This would lessen the pain of an increase in the tax. Hawaii has one of the lowest tax rates in the nation in comparison to other states.

if you look long and hard, there are other revenue generating options available including user fees, registration fees, excise tax increase on tobacco, alcohol and also increase in penalties for violation, etc. Additionally, programs that have outlived its usefulness should be evaluated and perhaps terminated.

Taking this simplistic approach of taking away benefits from state employees is unjust, dishonorable and shameful..

Speaker Say is being irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. The state employee are not the bad guys here. We should not be taking the blame for all the short-falls of the economy.

Therefore, I urge you to vote NO on the following bills:

Friday, February 13, 2009

HB 1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09.

HB 1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09.

HB 1725 - 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 - Prohibit provision of dental and vision coverage.

Loreene T. Fujioka

RE: HB 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727 1719 and 1725

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Beth Malvestiti. As a public employee, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say and strongly oppose HB 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727, 1719 and 1725.

I am a taxpayer and spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to support myself. I don't believe 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. 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 with health benefits.

The bills introduced are not only reducing medical benefits but will force many people into early retirement, which will gamble with the future state programs. We will lose institutional knowledge and expertise and could jeopardize many state programs. This wealth of knowledge is not easy to recover when the state has a hiring freeze and will overburden the current workforce.

I'd like to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the State of Hawaii. Please vote NO on all these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Please look at other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem or implementing a lottery system and set the funds aside in a special fund for education, affordable housing or "DLNR Renaissance"!

Thank you

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Shirley M Oyama [soyama@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: NEED YOUR HELP!!!

Dear Labor & Public Employment Committee,

It is very disturbing that the legislators would want to hurt the state workers by taking away the benefits that we have looked forward to when we retire and adding additional burden to us in the future as state workers. We in the State of Hawaii are all suffering with this economy and if you pass these bills we will suffer more. These bills are not the way to go, please find another avenue to address.

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 have worked from a young age so long ago in the state as a loyal worker waiting for my retirement and now I find that I am with a situation that I don't now what to do with my future. Please find it you your hearts not to pass this bill it will cause those who work for the state in dire need.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

Yours truly,

Shirley Oyama

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Gloria_Ishibashi/HAWAIIIDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

To: Labor and Public Employment Committee
RELATING TO THE HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND

I am a resident on the Big Island and take pride in the job that I do working for the State of Hawaii. I urge you to vote “NO” to the following bills HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727 HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, HB1106 which will be very devastating to many hard working families who already are struggling to make ends meet. The State needs to find other alternatives for funds and not take it out on public employees. The sector that represents me is HGEA Unit 13 and they have done a tremendous job in helping the community throughout the State. Again, please vote “NO” to the above bills.

Mahalo for taking the time to read this letter,

Sincerely,

Gloria Ishibashi
SBBH-Keaau High school

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Rowena Estores [reestores@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:16 AM
To: LABtestimony; EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov
Subject: HB 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

My name is Rowena Estores and I am a speech/language pathologist in Leeward District 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. I also oppose HB 1718, 1723, 1725, & 1727 which would further cut benefits to state and county employees.

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

The State of Hawaii Department of Education has already had several lawsuits regarding the provision of special education and related services. The bills in the legislature would discourage possible hires from seeking employment as a state employee. This would further increase the shortage of speech/language pathologists which would affect the state's ability to provide federally mandated special education services to Hawaii's students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Rowena Estores
Speech/Language Pathologist
State of Hawaii
Department of Education
Leeward District

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Steve_Stephenson/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:48 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Rep. Robert Herkes
Subject: No on HB1723, HB1719, HB1725 and HB1727

Please register my opposition to House Bills 1723, 1719, 1725 and 1727, all of which are pending discussion or action by the House Labor & Public Employment Committee.

As a nearly 30-year employee of the State of Hawaii, I have honored every aspect of my various contracts with the Department of Education. To unilaterally withdraw State support for our medical insurance costs at this point will send a very negative message to all current and prospective employees and greatly inhibit our ability to recruit and retain effective employees in our classrooms at a time when we have a major teacher shortage in nearly all subject areas.

In my opinion, if you feel the need to cut labor costs, the appropriate action is to terminate the employment of our Superintendent of Education and all of her assistants and deputies down to and including the unending supply of Complex Area staff, and require that all remaining employees of the Department of Education teach at least one class section for a semester duration every school year and to demonstrate that they can meet or exceed every standard that we expect students to attain. I expect that major cost savings may be had by introducing similar measures in every State agency to eliminate those staff who have retired in place and those who do not demonstrate the skill sets that we demand in our lowest paid employees.

I sincerely trust that you will also send a positive message to all State employees by rejecting your own salary increases for the duration of the current financial crisis.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Dzung Thai [dtthai@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:48 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, HB1108, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1720, HB1721, HB1722, HB1723, HB1725, and HB1727

Dear Representatives:

I am writing to express my outrage and disappointment in regards to the following House bills that would affect state worker salaries, benefits and retirement: HB 1106, HB1108, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1720, HB1721, HB1722, HB1723, HB1725, and HB1727.

These bills would place an unfair burden on the backs of state workers. There are many of us state workers, and we provide invaluable experience and service to the public. For all the important work that we do, we depend on the state's benefits because we are not compensated at the rate of those working in the private sector. By decreasing our already low salaries through furloughs, limiting employer contributions to health care benefits, and expecting us to pay for our own prescription drug coverage, dental and vision plan, many of us will not be able to make ends meet and to support our families.

Many of my coworkers close to retirement are planning on retiring early after hearing about these proposed changes to their benefits. This will place more of a burden on the staff who are left behind, who are already stretched to the limit due to the current hiring freeze. I work at the Health Department - Tuberculosis Branch. Contrary to popular opinion, in general my co-workers are dedicated, hardworking and do care about the clients we serve. Our branch provides an important public health service to the community, preventing and controlling the spread of tuberculosis. There could be disastrous consequences to the health of the public if we are expected to do more with even less staff and resources.

I am extremely disappointed in the state legislators who proposed and support these bills; I thought that they were supposed to keep the health and welfare of their constituents in mind. They need to remember that the people of Hawaii gave them this important job, and they will serve them well by listening to them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Dzung Thai

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Sandy_Amaral/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:48 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727

Short and sour -

We oppose HB 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727!!!!

yamashita1- Kathy

From: LYamamoto@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB Bills

Importance: High

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita and Committee Members:

I have been a public employee with the Department of Human Services for 28+ years. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony as I am very upset with the bills being introduced specifically, HB 1719, 1723, 1725, 1727 and 1737.

As a civil servant, I had been counting on a safe and sound retirement. With the bills that are being introduced, all my years of service along with my medical benefits for myself and my spouse are gravely jeopardized. My plans for myself and family are now up in the air as I am being forced to retire earlier than I had anticipated to.

I believe the State, as a whole, will lose many experienced and knowledgeable employees who have willingly devoted their lives to civil service and we should not be punished or targeted for our sincere dedication and commitment.

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

Thank you.

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Cindy Terao [dumas.808@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:00 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testimony

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.

Hi, my name is Cindy. I work for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and am a member of HGEA. I'm also a taxpayer. I don't believe 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. The stigma about state workers that we don't work hard is only a reflection of a few who make us look bad. We work hard, and do what we can with what we have to work with. I understand that we have to make changes, but if these bills are imposed, you will lose a lot of seasoned employees that can retire but have not due to the already struggling economy. The welfare of the people who rely upon the government agencies will be in jeopardy if we lose so many of these valuable employees all at the same time. The incentive to be a government employee will be lost. I have worked for the State for almost 18 years now and I appreciate the benefits that I have. If our out of pocket expenses for our dental, prescriptions and medical cost increase, and our pay remains the same it would be difficult to frequent the local stores for clothes, food and other items. Aren't we supposed to be trying to stimulate the economy?

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 retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. . I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me. 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. Ensuring that pay raises are frozen across the board for ALL government personnel. Change the way of how departments are issued their budgets, "if you don't use it you lose it" When divisions are able to spend below their budgets, don't take away money from them the following year. Reward them by giving them at least the same amount to add to their balance. That would ensure that monies are not wasted on things not needed because they are afraid if they don't use it you lose it!

Things just have to be done differently, it's no longer business as usual, simple changes can make a big difference, we just have to be willing to open our eyes and try. No more "post-it" brand name items go for the generic. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Thank you,
Cindy

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
TESTIMONY OF RICKY WATANABE
HB 1723, HB 1726, AND HB 1727
February 17, 2009
8:30 a.m., Conference Room 309

Dear Chairman Rhoads and Committee Members:

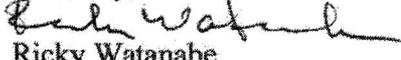
Thank you for this opportunity to submit my written comments in opposition to HB 1723, HB 1726, and HB 1727 relating to Public Employees, the Health Fund, and to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund, respectively. My comments are submitted in my individual capacity as President of the Kauai Chapter HGEA/AFSCME-MCEC unit and Vice-President of the HGEA/AFSCME-MCEC State Board.

Prior to reducing any benefits for public employees I believe that proposed State budget (County budget) reductions should be thoroughly scrutinized and all programs should be considered.

Secondly, and more importantly, I believe that reducing or eliminating benefits of public employees may be unconstitutional as the State Constitution protects many employee benefits.

For the reasons stated above I am in opposition to the bills cited herein, and any other bills that propose to reduce public employee benefits.

Sincerely,


Ricky Watanabe
PO Box 1014
Lawai, HI 96765

Cc: House Finance Committee Members

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Janet [jay@mail.admrec.hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:42 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting Your Help

Hi:

My name is Janet Mizuha. I wish to provide a written testimony regarding the following bills:

HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725 (February 13, 2009) and
HB 1723, HB 1726, and HB 1727

I would like for all the committee members listening to these bills to vote no on them. I have worked hard and diligently for over 30 years as a state employee and feel that I am entitled to all my benefits that are being taken away from us. The economic crisis the State of Hawaii was not caused by only state the city & county officials. Everyone in the State of Hawaii should be responsible for the economic shortfall. Why do you punish only government workers?

Some solutions to our economic problems may be solved by raising the retail state tax to 5% (This should have been done a long time ago).
In this way, everyone would be affected by the increase and not only government workers.

Also, I do not feel right when you allow former retirees with only 5 or 10 years of service to get free medical premiums. Some of these people may not even be government workers, but spouses of employees who worked for the government. Does it make sense for a government employee with over 20 - 40 years of service to have to pay for medical premiums, while spouses of employees with 5 - 10 years of service to have free medical premiums for their spouses who never even worked for the government.

Also, since the freeze of employees who have left their positions due to promotions or retirements, we have had to work even harder. We work for the government knowing that we at least had good medical and retirement benefits. The public sector may have paid a higher salary, however, our benefits were more attractive to us.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. As mentioned before, the shortfall in our budget was not caused by the government workers, so why are you punishing only them. I feel that everyone should be held for the shortfall from the executive branch, legislators. all government workers (state, city & county, even federal), teachers, and the PUBLIC SECTOR.

Another possible solution would be possibly bring gambling to Hawaii.

Many people travel to Las Vegas to spend lots of dollars there.
Maybe if Hawaii provided incentives for the local people, they would possibly spend money here rather than take it elsewhere. I think more people just might spend their vacations here and on the neighbor islands, if the airfare as well as hotel accommodations and car rentals weren't exorbitantly high.

Thank you very much for taking the time to listen to my testimony.

Janet Mizuha
A government employee

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Kevin_Diminyatz/KAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: NO On HB1723 and HB1719; also HB1725 and HB1727

To whom it may concern,

ARE you guys trying to destroy education,
and force teachers to seek other professions?

its bad enough we work for near poverty wages now.
You want to me to pay my medical out of pocket as well?!

You have no shame,

especially after your most recent raise you gave yourselves,

I'm appalled

Kevin Diminyatz
Teacher
Kau High School

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Jennifer Arashiro [jarashiro@kauai.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:30 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Takeaway bills

Dear Labor Committee Members:

I'm writing to you regarding your decision on the "takeaway" bills (HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, HB1106). I am a Victim Witness Advocate with the Kaua'i County Prosecutor's Office, and a member of HGEA. I don't think it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I'm also a taxpayer. I spend my money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other necessities.

I work hard at my job and things are even harder now that two of my colleagues' jobs were recently terminated and demands for services have increased. I've made a career of public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

I urge you to 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 for your time and the job that you do ensuring that the people of Kaua'i have their voices heard and concerns addressed.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Arashiro

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Among, Delene [damong@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:27 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments. My name is Delene Among, As a public servant for 19+ years. I am deeply concerned by all of the above named bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. I do not think that you understand the destructive impact that the our city and state will have if you pass any of these bills, especially the bills that will force many law enforcement and civilian employees to retire, prior to June 30, 2009. Why should we be responsible for the budget shortfall, we did not make the decisions to get into this problem in the first place. Isn't this America, The land of the free? Where is the responsibility to protect, and give us our free financial choices, rather than limit it to either force us into an early retirement, or stay in the system while our paychecks are at your mercy to be dwindled away by your devistating ideas in which you make laws thinking this plan will fix our money problems. There can only be a successful solution if there is true accountability for the past financial failures for this state, the one that is suppose to be the state of ALOHA.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Marbeth Aquino [akau_aquino96795@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: Lucy Akau; Rogelio Aquino; Paul Akau; Kamakana Aquino; Robert Akau
Subject: AGAINST HB 1106, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1726, 1727

Aloha Kakou,

I am a state employee for 20 years and am against the above bills because it will create more advoc to Hawaii and its people. Some of us already felt the hardship of Aloha Airlines and other companies shutting down. Some of our family has to endure more problems due to these negative changes to our lives. What do you hope to accomplish when we are the core of the servicing part of government? Just because we are government employees that you can treat us like 2nd class citizen. That's not right. We are just as human like you. We have rights, too! We have family that we need to care for and buy food, bills to pay, mortgage etc... You will create more people being homeless. Is that what you want, more homelessness? The last riff, lots of your government people lost their homes, unable to pay there bills, etc...Now you want to stop our medical, dental, vision, drug coverage payments even if we don't get paid as much, furlough, take away from the retiree what they earn for their many years of service. Why do we have to pay for their mistakes? Spending and not budgeting correctly!! THAT'S NOT FAIR !!!!!

Calvin Say states that he has family, friends and himself that are affected by these bills, then why can't they find other solutions. The taxes that is suppose to go to the rail, should be given to balance the budget until we are back up to par. The rail need to be put on hold till everything is back up and running again. THAT WOULD BE A HELPFUL SOLUTION.

You as our representatives, MUST FIND BETTER SOLUTIONS NOT EASY SOLUTIONS. REMEMBER WE ALSO VOTED FOR YOU EVEN IF WE ARE GOVERNMENT WORKERS. All of you are suppose to be servants to all our people, not your escape goats.

PLEASE FIND OTHER ALTERNATIVES!!!!!!

MAHALO AND GOD BLESS

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Matsuda, Howard [hmatsuda@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting Your Help!

Hi, my name is Howard Matsuda and I work for the Department of Planning and Permitting at the City and County of Honolulu.

I am speaking to bills HB1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725, HB1723, HB1726, HB1727.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend monies at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take away these benefits from me.

Please look for other ways like excise tax which is a broader base tax to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Thanks you for taking this time to read these concerns,
Howard Matsuda

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: miles murakoshi [milesmurakoshi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:30 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Public Employees Benefits Testimony

My name is Miles Murakoshi.

As a public employee for 12 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB1725, HB1723, HB1727, HB1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1715, and HB1726

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 very 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. I personally have diabetes, high blood pressure and chronic back pain that require maintenance medication daily. My wife has just been diagnosed with a possibly cancerous lung mass and Calvin Say wants to reduce the medical benefits at such trying time as this for my

family. After years of dedicated service is it fair for the medical benefits to be reduced just when I need them the most? This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of myself, my spouse and the entire public worker set. 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 myself and the rest of the public employees that were promised to us upon the acceptance of our employment.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Barbara Lee Lee [bayul25@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:50 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: prooposed health, insurance cuts

2.12.2009

Aloha Labor Committee members,

Hi, my name is Barbara Lee and I live on the Big Island. I work for the DOE in the Ka'u District and am a member of HGEA.

Being a tax payer, I purchase goods and services from local businesses e.g., food, clothing, gas etc. I am quite concerned about the proposed cuts - HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727, HB 1719, AND HB 1725. I would like for alternative methods to be considered such as raising the excise tax as a more equitable way to address the state's revenue problems, freezes and increase demand for services.

I want to preserve my benefits for which I've worked 25 yrs. as a state employee.

Thank you for seriously considering my request.

Barbara Lee
School Based Specialist

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Sue Okada [sueann@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: opposition of bills

Dear Labor and Public Employment Committee,

I have been a proud State worker for over 20 years. It has been an honor working for the State of Hawaii, and a privilege. I work on Kauai, at Kauai Community College. It's been a wonderful job, and I have spent many a happy and good bunch of years being employed here.

However, the news about these bills that may affect our health and retirement benefits are very harsh. Please, please do not allow these bills to be passed.

The bills are:

- 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.

We have worked and served with good faith. Please help us, and do not pass these bills.

with best regards, Sue Okada

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Erik Shuman [erikshum67@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:32 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills Relating to Benefits

House Labor and Public Employee Committee,

Aloha,

My Name is Erik Shuman and I am a writing you regarding House Bills HB1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB1725, HB1723, HB1715, HB1726, HB1727 which your committee is scheduled to consider on 2/13/09 and 2/17/09.

I urge each and every member of your committee to vote NO on these bills. There is no doubt that these are tough times financially for everyone in the State. However, targeting the the benefits of the State's working class peoples is a "knee jerk" reaction to problems that call for thinking out of the box and thoughtful solutions. The long term ramifications of the passing of this bill will be felt by our Kupuna long after these hard times have come and gone. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this manner.

Mahalo,

Erik Shuman

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Gemma Pytel [konagem@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 5:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Requesting for help

To All the representatives,

My name is Gemma Pytel, I live here in the Big Island Hawaii. I work for Kona Community Hospital and an HGEA member.

I am appealing to all of you to be considerate and put yourselves in our shoes if HB1725,HB1723,HB1715,HB1726 and HB1727 passed the legislatures. All of us here in our hospital are very concern and afraid because of what will to happen to us if this bills went through.

Are there any other measures to consider? Nowadays everything are very expensive here in Hawaii, we already struggle to meet our everyday needs. Maybe raising the tax is not a bad idea, but to take away our dental,vision,prescription and so on are very inhuman.

In behalf of my coworkers in Kona Hospital, please listen to our voices. We need your help and please vote **NO** to all of this..

Thank you for listening,

Gemma Pytel

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Wendell and Gabriella Cabanas [cabanasw001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 6:47 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, and HB 1727

Importance: High

Dear Chair Karl Rhoads and Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

I am a government managerial employee and currently have a total of 34+ years of service. I am humbly requesting that you do not support HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, and HB 1727 which are bills designed to cut the benefits of thousands of existing government employees. We work for government because of a desire to serve the public. We receive modest wages with the promise of reasonable benefits and job security. We don't work for government to get rich.

I have 2 children who will be in college, one is pursuing her master's degree and the other will be starting his undergraduate education. My husband is retired from the State. To cut our benefits that were part of our employment package when the job was offered to us many years ago is not the thing to do. To eliminate our health care and retirement benefits is cutting the rug from under us – the impact will be catastrophic for thousands. Why take away benefits that were promised us when we first starting working many years ago? Please place yourselves in our shoes. Many of us are close to retiring and we can't afford to not have these benefits.

I'm sure there are other ways to address the financial woes of the State. Please look at other options. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my concerns.

Gabriella M. Cabanas

Employee – County of Hawai'i

My name is Helen Hamada. I am employed at the University of Hawaii, Kapiolani Community College and am an HGEA member. I speak against House bills 1723, 1725, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

I am also a private citizen, one of seven who sits on the Honolulu Police Commission. I do not speak on behalf of the Commission, however, I do want to share what I have learned about the men and women in blue who put their lives on the line to protect the citizens of Honolulu.

We are all concerned about keeping ourselves, our families and friends safe from crime. Through the Police Academy, then years of on-the-job training, and additionally, in some cases, through specialized FBI and DEA training, police officers are well equipped to deal with the enormous task of maintaining public safety. For example, officers in Vice/Narcotics go through 18 months of training before they can go out on the streets and then it is under a veil of secrecy to protect themselves and their team members. During this time, their families do not see nor hear from them much, if at all. It would be a shame if all this valuable training goes down the tube when members find that these take-away bills affect their paychecks. These bills, will likely force many to reconsider whether they can afford to work for the police department which will compromise the safety and well being of law-abiding citizens.

These bills will also affect all of our members in HGEA who work hard to provide the state's services. One such group of employees are the Deputy Sheriffs. Besides serving the Department of the Attorney General's office and the Judiciary, these law enforcement officers are charged with protecting the Governor and Lt. Governor. If, as in all other areas of government, Deputy Sheriffs are forced to pay for health benefits, or applicants turn down these jobs because of the reduction in retirement benefits, there will be a significant gap in security.

We all know that crime tends to increase during times of economic downturn. Is it really in our best interest to take away benefits from these law enforcement officers at a time when they are most needed? You are our elected officials charged with making these decisions. I ask that you do the right thing and vote no on these bills that will negatively affect our public safety.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: koloke [koloke@hawaiianisp.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: House Bills: 1725, 1723, 1726, 1727

HB1725 – Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;
HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

As a recently retired registered nurse here on Maui, I would like to voice my opposition to the passage of any one of the listed bills that you are considering. At an age when access to life saving medication is imperative, you are considering eliminating it. At a time when it is imperative that labor and management work together, you are considering a bill that dictates non-negotiation. Curtailing the EUTF for life insurance benefits for retirees is guaranteed to put a great strain on survivors. Especially when you consider that the premium has already been reduced from \$36,000 (working) to \$2,500 (retirement benefit).

Dental benefits for retirees has already been halved to \$1,000 per annum and you are considering doing away with it all together. I know that my family has make sacrifices in my taking a lesser paying job working for the state in anticipation of a better retirement package. And that was a major factor in our deciding to work at Maui Memorial Medical Center. With the nursing shortage what it is I think I would be careful in deciding to depreciate the one attractive inticement to working as a nurse in the state system.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Richard D. Standard, R.N.

808-874-0176

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:09 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lyndsey and I am a teacher at Intensive Learning Center Sped. SBBH. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lyndsey Higa

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Patricia and I am a teacher at Keonepoko Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Patricia Shillingford

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:11 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carol and I am a teacher at The Office of Human Resources. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Carol Anton

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:13 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lois and I am a teacher at Kau-Keaau-Pahoa Complex Area. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lois Wakida

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:15 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kim and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapi'olani Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kim Springer

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Alna and I am a teacher at Kekaha Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Alna Mecham

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Florine and I am a teacher at Manoa. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Florine Nakasone

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelly and I am a teacher at Kihei. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kelly Duell

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Judith and I am a teacher at Kealakehe Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Judith Heath

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:25 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diane and I am a teacher at Kealakehe Intermediate Retired. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Diane McCary

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike and I am a teacher at McKinley High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Mike Lucich

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Suzanne and I am a teacher at Maemae. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Brauer

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 8:49 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle and I am a teacher at Keone'ula Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Michelle Bagaoisan

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Linda Changl [changl056@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:40 PM
To: PBStestimony; LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725; HB1723; HB1726; HB1727

Importance: High

TO:

REP KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
REP. KYLE YANASHITA, VICE CHAIR
REP. HENRY AQUINO
REP. KAREN AWANA
REP. RAYE HANOHANO
REP. GILBERT KEITH-AGARAN
REP. MARILYN LEE
REP. MARK NAKASHIMA
REP. JOE SOUKI
REP. ROY TAKUMI
REP. KYMBERLY PINE

I AM OPPOSED TO ANY ALTERATION OF THE HOUSE BILLS LISTED ABOVE THAT WILL CHANGE ANY OF THE HEALTH AND PENSION BENEFITS THAT RETIREES CURRENTLY ARE ENTITLED TO AND ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING. YES, OUR STATE AND THE NATION IS EXPERIENCING TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES, BUT IF YOU CONSIDER CUTTING THE BENEFITS OF PENSIONERS WHO WORKED HARD TO EARN THESE BENEFITS AS WAS OFFERED TO ALL OF US WHEN WE MADE OUR DECISION TO WORK FOR OUR STATE OF HAWAII GOVERNMENT, YOU WILL BE DOING A GRAVE INJUSTICE TO US SENIORS WHO WORKED SO HARD TO EARN THESE BENEFITS AS PROMISED BY OUR STATE. HOW IS A REDUCTION OF ANY SORT GOING TO IMPACT THOSE RETIREES WHO CURRENTLY RELY ON THEIR BENEFITS TO PAY FOR THEIR MEDICAL CARE AND/OR RESIDENCY AT LONG TERM FACILITIES AND AT CARE HOMES? AS FOR RETIREES WHO WILL NEED SKILLED NURSING FACILITY AND LONG TERM CARE IN THE FUTURE, DO YOU EXPECT US TO APPLY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES TO PAY FOR OUR ADMISSION TO THESE FACILITIES.?

SUGGESTION TO BUILD OUR STATE TREASURY: AUTHORIZE THE STATE AUDITOR AND PRIVATE AUDITORS TO AUDIT EVERY DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE STATE FOR THE PURPOSE OF IDENTIFYING EXCESS AND WASTEFUL SPENDING, INCLUDING (FEDERAL) GOVERNMENT FUNDING THAT WAS CARLESSLY ALLOWED TO LAPSE AND THEREFORE LOST. AS A PRECEDENT TO INTRODUCING 'THE BILL', GIVE THE GOVERNOR AND EACH DEPARTMENT THE COURTESY OF ADVANCE NOTICE. THEY WILL REACT BY CUTTING THE "DEAD WOOD" SO FAST THAT THE STATE TREASURY WILL BUILD UP WITHOUT HAVING TO PAY ALL THOSE SALARIES FOR **CRONIES** WHO FAIL TO PERFORM ANY MEANINGFUL FUNCTION OF 'GOVERNMENT SERVICE'.

ALL OF YOU ARE AWARE THAT THIS KIND OF SPENDING EXISTS IN OUR STATE GOVERNMENT. LOOK THERE FOR WAYS TO LESSEN THE STRAIN ON OUR STATE COFFERS. STOP PENALIZING THE RETIREES (AGED AND INAPACITATED) AND THE HARD-WORKING STATE EMPLOYEES. LOOK ELSEWHERE TO CHOP FUNDING. WE PAID OUR DUES AT THE WORKPLACE.

I RESIDE ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII, AND AM UNABLE TO ATTEND THE HEARING NOR TO BE PRESENT TO MARCH WITH MY FELLOW RETIREES.

I RESPECTFULLY THANK YOU FOR ACCEPTING MY TESTIMONY.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:00 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diane and I am a teacher at Baldwin High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Diane Diehl

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle and I am a teacher at Moanalua High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Michelle Shin

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:03 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Barbara and I am a teacher at Windward District Office. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Barbara Pretty

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:20 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Clarita and I am a teacher at Keaau Elem. School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Clarita Maneja

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ruth and I am a teacher at Keaukaha Elem. School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ruth Jarneski

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:15 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Glenn and I am a teacher at Royal Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Glenn Fernandez

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:19 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherri and I am a teacher at Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sherri Takamoto

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:14 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ahulani and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ahulani Haleamau-Kahawai

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon and I am a teacher at Waimanalo Elemenatry. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sharon Lieberman

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tobias and I am a teacher at Wahiawa Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tobias Duffy

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 12:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karen and I am a teacher at Kailua Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Karen Kutsunai

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is David and I am a teacher at Maui. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
David Hughes

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 11:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marsha and I am a teacher at Honoka'a High & Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Marsha Clement

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:32 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tiffany and I am a teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Tawata

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:35 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diane and I am a teacher at Kealakehe Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Diane Aoki

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 11:02 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lynn and I am a teacher at Nanakuli Elem. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lynn Hasegawa

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: edna mukai [mukaiedna@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:49 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Legislative Concerns - HB Nos. 1106, 1719, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725 and 1727

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee

My name is Edna Mukai, a civil service employee who recently retired after 35 years (continuous) of service with the State of Hawaii. I am also proud to say that I am a member of HGEA, the organization that helped us to progress in both the work place and in our personal lives in such a way that we could perform our duties to the best of our abilities thereby "making a difference" in the quality of service provided by us to the people of this State. I have some very strong concerns about some of the bills which are being introduced/supported by Speaker Calvin Say.

HB No. 1106

Furloughs should not be a consideration.....There is already concern re the "bodies" available to provide required services to the people of this State, and the freezing of vacant positions have only added to this problem. Furloughs, then, would only guarantee that the needs of the general public would not be adequately provided for.

HB Nos. 1719, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, 1727

For most of us who were not in "administrative" positions, we worked diligently to serve the public for salaries that were well below salaries paid to employees in private enterprises. Further, monetary bonuses were not a consideration with public service as in private enterprise (year-end, job well performed, etc.). For the most part, many of us decided to become public servants because we worked in positions for which we had the proper skills/background, and went to work each day knowing that we would be compensated with a paycheck which supported the daily needs of ourselves and our families. Because our salaries were not comparable with private enterprise, we took great comfort in the BENEFITS which were more than a mere "perk" to our livelihood. These benefits supported us in good times and bad (as when civil servants were not given pay increases in order to help save the State's economy, and pay increases were only given to YOU – our elected officials who claimed during campaigns past that your only interest was in trying to make life better for the people of the State of Hawaii, not to make more money for yourselves).

Like most/all of our elected representatives, most of us work full time jobs (some having to work part-time as well) and spend whatever time we have left in activities with our families/loved ones.....irreplaceable quality time. We DEPEND on the benefits we EARN while active at work and even later, after we retire, following years of public service to which we dedicated ourselves. These benefits become even more critical once one has retired and is now faced with a "fixed income." In general, we realize that many of you have full-time jobs or a business to fall back on, as your seat as a Representative for the people of this State is in fact a "part-time" job you ELECT to take on with full knowledge of the time constraints/work involved – a job for which you also enjoy a generous monetary compensation.

Public servants are also taxpayers who support the State/City governments; many of us are the voters who you can thank for helping you attain the office you sought and now sit in. I believe this is a good time for you to "go to bat" and HELP US RETAIN THESE BENEFITS for which we not only worked for, but had to fight so hard to acquire.

Please look for other ways to balance the State's budget woes. Other states have raised their excise taxes in an effort to pull themselves up – can we do the same? This would be a much FAIRER consideration as it would affect EVERYONE and the monies generated would benefit EVERYONE.....rather than to unfairly "target" a particular group to make all the sacrifices.

PLEASE VOTE "NO" ON ALL THE BILLS THAT TAKE AWAY BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.

Thank you!

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Wilfred and I am a teacher at Dole Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Wilfred Kusaka

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:46 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Isabella Noelani and I am a teacher at Kaumana Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Isabella Noelani Spencer

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:43 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carl and I am a teacher at Konawaena High. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Carl Ciriako

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:37 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carolina and I am a teacher at Keone'ula Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Carolina Cariaga-Camacho

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dorothea and I am a teacher at Pahoa Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Dorothea Fendentz

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:23 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jackie and I am a teacher at Kula Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jackie Davis

yamashita1- Kathy

From: lynn tagawa [tagawal001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:44 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723

Testimony for HB1723

Hi, my name is Lynn Tagawa, and I work for the DOE, Nanakuli/Waianae Complex and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses everyday to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe 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 I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

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,

Lynn Tagawa

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 10:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marilyn and I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Roitman

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Julie and I am a teacher at Makawao. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Julie Vandervoort

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Suzanne and I am a teacher at Waiakeawaena. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Ochi

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is charlotte and I am a teacher at innovations public charter school. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
charlotte davis

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laura and I am a teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary . I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laura Imai

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:44 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is crista and I am a teacher at ilima intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
crista mendoza

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:43 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann and I am a teacher at Kihei Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ann Anusewicz

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:41 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Terry and I am a teacher at Kauai High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Terry Low

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:40 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Diane and I am a teacher at S.E. Kalama Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Diane Banks

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cindy and I am a teacher at Maunawili Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Cindy Searfoss

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: BATA [bata-777@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** FW: Bills affecting state employee benefits

Subject: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

Honorable Labor Committee,
Please DO NOT support any bills that take away state employee benefits. My wife and I both work for the state. We are not being selfish. A lot of good, upper management workers will choose to retire immediately instead of losing benefits. All of their knowledge, history, and abilities will be lost without properly training the younger generations. Worst yet, the state will have to pay off their vacation days soon after. Furlough (through collective bargaining) is more appropriate where everybody will share the pain.
The only way to make up the projected MAJOR shortfalls is to raise taxes so that EVERYBODY will share the pain (with the help of tourists and military). If they can pay for it, then they can afford it!!

P.S. If upper management retires because of any reduction in benefits, I (Corey) will most likely be promoted to fill their vacant slots. However, I will consider leaving state government too at age 39, with 13 years of service, just to preserve my retirement benefits. If the government plan to take the lead on stimulating the economy, then the government need to ensure that good, competent workers are available.

Yours Truly,
Corey and Lori Shibata
1304 Naulu Place
Honolulu, HI 96818

See how Windows Mobile brings your life together—at home, work, or on the go. [See Now](#)

Want to do more with Windows Live? Learn "10 hidden secrets" from Jamie. [Learn Now](#)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Tracy Oshita [tanigirl007@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:22 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Taking Away Benefits

House Labor Committee,

Re: House Bills 1723, 1725, 1726, 1727

I know that the State is having a hard time balancing the budget and it looks like it will only worsen during the next couple of years. People working in the private sector are saying that like them, the State must reduce wages and benefits for its employees.

However, I do not believe it is fair to balance the budget on the backs of the public employees alone. If everyone must work together then we as a State, all need to tighten our belts to ensure that services are kept and maintained for the public while allowing the public employees to keep the benefits that were promised them.

I have chosen to work as a public employee with less pay than in the private sector with the knowledge that what I was not getting paid for in salary, I was getting in benefits. Please do not take these benefits away and find other ways to balance the budget.

Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Tracy Oshita

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 9:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lisa and I am a teacher at Castle High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lisa Vegas

You Must Oppose:

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

Re: HB1715, 1716, 1719, 1720 Etc.

Representative Calvin Say's proposals are a hard, insulting b**ch slap to government workers.

The threat of taking away our medical benefits and moving our acceptable retirement date to 65 will force us to retire before 6/30/09

I am a state employee with the Dept of Ed, and an HGEA Excluded Associate Member for a short 15 years. Others have dedicated 30-40 years or more.

I have worked happily underpaid and happily overworked, because I love my job and most certainly for the relatively good benefits I was promised.

My paycheck doesn't cover even minimum living expenses; retirement and social security will be minimum. I took a 30% cut coming from the private sector to the DOE primarily for the alleged security and benefits, certainly not for the salary.

I foresee Rep. Say's bills forcing out seasoned, knowledgeable employees from every part of the State Government, setting the stage systemic chaos.

It is curious that 35% pay increases for upper echelon state officials sail through unquestioned, while clerical and blue collar grunts like me--the backbone of the functioning system--are slapped with threats Calvin Say has presented.

It is curious that there are no proposals to cull the judges' and elected officials' retirement base of 3.5% compared to our 1.25%, PLUS their annuity, PLUS they may retire in only 10 years at any age.

The proposals are an insult to government workers and political to any elected official who votes for those bills.

Thank you for your time and bandwidth,

Donna Alalem

P O Box 1151

Kapaa, HI 96746

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:23 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is John and I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
John Jacques

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:24 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lauren and I am a teacher at Kanoelani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lauren An

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:24 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kathleen and I am a teacher at Keone'ula Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Infiesto

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sybil and I am a teacher at Farrington High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sybil Hamada

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 10:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is vijay and I am a teacher at Kamehamehame III. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
vijay Thangaraj

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:39 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jaclyn and I am a teacher at Makaha. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jaclyn Wills

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:39 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laurie and I am a teacher at Waikiki. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laurie Yamamoto

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lyanne and I am a teacher at Roosevelt High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lyanne Iwamoto

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:06 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sara and I am a teacher at Nuuanu. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sara Drost

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:36 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is jon and I am a teacher at kalakaua midle. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
jon tillery

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Peter and I am a teacher at Roosevelt High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Peter Coleman

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:33 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Saofai and I am a teacher at Waianae High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Saofai Lowe

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:10 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelvin and I am a teacher at Honolulu. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kelvin Chun

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sandra and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elem. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sandra Munekata

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 8:02 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lori and I am a teacher at Pearl City Highlands Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lori Teixeira

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Wendy and I am a teacher at OCISS. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Wendy Larrow

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:18 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is William and I am a teacher at Washington Middle. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
William Hardin

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 7:03 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah and I am a teacher at University Laboratory School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sarah Orvis

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 7:00 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dorothy and I am a teacher at Retired. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Blinn

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 6:51 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Linda and I am a teacher at Henry Perrine Baldwin High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Linda Coleon

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Elsie and I am a teacher at Likelike Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Elsie Gushiken

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: J. M. Baybado [jmarlia11@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 1:00 AM
To: LABtestimony; Sen. Shan Tsutsui; Sen. Roz Baker; Sen. J. Kalani English; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Angus McKelvey; Rep. Joe Bertram III; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Mele Carroll
Subject: House Bills 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Mary Ann Baybado. As a public employee for 18 years (19 on 2/19/09) I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727.

The bills stated above if passed will be a threat to my retirement benefits and to the future of my family. Our economy should not be "bailed out" by taking away hard-earned benefits from public employees. We as state employees are being targeted and the state's budget should not be balanced on our backs!

Please vote 'NO' to the above-mentioned bills.

Thank you.

Windows Live™: E-mail. Chat. Share. Get more ways to connect. [See how it works.](#)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:31 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dayle and I am a teacher at Kealakehe Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Dayle Yokoyama

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Nolan T. Crossley [Nolan.Crossley@mpd.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:52 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony Letter N. CROSSLEY

Dear Representative,

My name is Nolan CROSLEY and I am currently a Police Officer with the Maui Police Department. I'm writing to you to voice my opposition of the following bills:

House Bill No. 1723- Related to Public Employees

House Bill No. 1715- Related to Retirement

House Bill No. 1726- Related to the Health Fund

House Bill No. 1727- Related to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

By eliminating benefits from us employees, a great majority of management will retire to preserve their benefits promised to them as they got hired. For I and those who do not have time to retire, will be forced to seek employment back in the Mainland as Police Officers. It will not make since to put us employees into a situation with no incentive to remain within this State or County governments if you eliminate our benefits.

By creating such a situation, public safety will be a major concern, many jobs would have to be eliminated and even more would not be immediately filled (no incentives).

For this reason, I am voicing my opposition to the proposed house bills. The overall effect will bring such large problems to this state and will cause disruption to all State and County services throughout the islands.

As an employee of the Maui Police Department, I do not and never will agree with this bill. It's such a shame for those who elected you to your positions, trusting that you would take care of them, are now thinking of leaving the islands as their families are now impacted.

This just shows that even on paper..... Anything goes and it is just so disappointing.

I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Nolan Crossley
Kihei Patrol

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:20 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joan and I am a teacher at Moanalua Elem.. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Joan Miyasato

yamashita1- Kathy

From: etaira [etaira@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:43 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725/HB1723/HB1715/HB1726/HB1727

Dear Committee Members:

- **Rep Karl Rhoads, Chair**
- **Rep Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair**
- **Rep. Henry Aquino**
- **Rep. Karen Awana**
- **Rep. Faye Hanohano**
- **Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran**
- **Rep. Marilyn Lee**
- **Rep. Mark Nakashima**
- **Rep. Scott Saiki**
- **Rep. Joe Souki**
- **Rep. Roy Takumi**
- **Rep. Kymberly Pine**

Thank you for not taking away retirement benefits for public employees. You are setting an example for the word "honor", by keeping your promises and commitments for the things we have believed the State of Hawaii for and have worked for in agreement with the State for most of our work lives. Personally, I have worked for the State of Hawaii for 17 years and am looking forward to retirement in 6 years.

This is a season where we must use all of the gifts and talents of everyone who is able to help to put this economy back on track. There must be better ways to balance the budget. Rather than lay people off and discourage people from working by not keeping your word, we need to change wrong mindsets about good, honest, hard work, and teach people to work smarter. We need to teach people to work, to accept responsibility for themselves, and to think of others.

My husband retired 3 months ago. He is 57 years old. He has a proven work record in his job for over 33 years and has a treasure chest of skills that has been learned over years of work that could be used to help us get through these troubled times. My daughter has been unemployed since last August, being discharged from 10 years of active duty in the Navy. She is a single parent with 2 children. Hopefully, she will be back to work soon. Our son, with a family of 4, is employed, but also needs help financially. We help our children, grandchildren, elderly parents, and elderly widowed aunts and uncles by cooking, cleaning yards, painting houses, baby sitting, and running errands for others in addition to taking care of our own selves on our holidays and other days off.

In addition to contributing to our communities by the work we do, State and County workers are the ones who help their families, donate to the United Way, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, churches, community organizations, help in school fund raisers, and so forth. If our work hours, pay, and benefits are cut, we will not be able to help a lot of other people we have been helping. Laying people off and furloughing State and County workers will adversely affect our whole State.

I respectfully ask you to consider voting against reducing benefits for State and County employees specifically pertaining to these bills:

HB1725 – Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF;
HB1723 – Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable (health care);
HB1715 – Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire (future generations: you child, grandchild, etc.);

**HB1726 – Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB1727 – Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.**

**Thank you.
Susan Taira**

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 11:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Vanessa and I am a teacher at Mililani Uka Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Melendez Makimoto

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: tamiwata01@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Tami Watanabe
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: tamiwata01@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/15/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melinda and I am a teacher at Kaneohe Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Melinda Ahn

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:56 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Isi and I am a teacher at Highlands Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Isi Nau

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karrie and I am a teacher at Waianae High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Karrie Sellers Arquette

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelly and I am a teacher at Liholiho. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kelly Lopes

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: thesuze19@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1723 on 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/17/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1723

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Susan Higa
Organization: Individual
Address: 5373 Keikilani Circle Honolulu, HI
Phone: 377-0831
E-mail: thesuze19@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/15/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:57 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dawn and I am a teacher at ISB/HSLPS. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Dawn Sang

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Disamif@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:40 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony on House Bills 1715 1723, 1725, 1726, and 1727

To: Labor & Public Employment Committee
Re: House Bills 1715, 1723, 1725, 1726, and 1727

Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and oppose the bills listed above. I am a retired state worker with 31 years of service. I am presently physically incapacitated, and I have a spouse with a chronic illness. I am concerned about the bills as anti-public employee and targeting the vulnerable retirees. I am very worried about the bills that would eliminate needed medical insurance coverage. Please support your public workers and government retirees and vote "no."

Mahalo,
Earline Funakoshi

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

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is charlotte and I am a teacher at innovations public charter school. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
charlotte davis

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:35 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Curtis and I am a teacher at James Campbell High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Curtis Matsushige

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sue Ann and I am a teacher at Webling Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sue Ann Goshima

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mara and I am a teacher at Waiakeawaena. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Mara Saltzman

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Colleen and I am a teacher at Waiakea High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Colleen Ray

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ross and I am a teacher at S.W. King Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ross Takahashi

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Howard and I am a teacher at Molokai Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Howard Selnick

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Alan and I am a teacher at Leilehua. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Alan Kinoshita

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:23 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lisa and I am a teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lisa Nishizuka

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:56 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is susan and I am a teacher at nahienaena. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
susan kasper

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Pamela and I am a teacher at Kalaniana'ole. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Pamela Wilson

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Susan Werner [werners002@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:44 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposing bills taking benefits from Union workers

To Labor Committee Members: Rep Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
Rep. Henry Aquino
Rep. Karen Awana
Rep. Faye Hanohano
Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Rep. Marilyn Lee
Rep. Mark Nakashima
Rep. Scott Saiki
Rep. Joe Souki
Rep. Roy Takumi
Rep. Kymberly Pine

Aloha, my name is Susan Werner. I am a state employee and an HGEA member. I live on Maui in Haiku and work at the Wailuku Public Library.

I am writing today to voice my opposition to HB1725, HB1723, HB1726, and HB1727. All of these bills propose to take away benefits that we have already negotiated with our employers and are guaranteed with legally binding contracts. Each of these bills would unfairly take away health or life insurance benefits that our families count on.

Everyone knows that the cost of health care is increasing. By capping the employer's contribution, you will be cutting the salaries of all state and county employees, which is an item that should rightly be dealt with using the contract negotiation process. Without prescription drug coverage, these members and their families will be forced to choose between paying for their prescriptions or putting food on the table or a roof over their heads. Without vision and dental coverage, they won't be able to afford eye glasses or regular dental visits. They won't be able to stay healthy, and that will cost the State more in the long run. The workers and their families will become an added burden to the state's health care system.

Finding the money to keep the State afloat until the economy turns around is a very tough job. Cutting back on the benefits of Union members might seem like a quick fix. But in the end, that solution would only increase demand for state-sponsored assistance programs. I hope that you vote in opposition to these bills, and work together with all stakeholders to find other ways to get our economy moving forward again.

Thank you.

Susan Werner
2923 E. Lelehuna Place

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:35 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laura and I am a teacher at Pearl City Highlands Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laura McHugh

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is pandi and I am a teacher at Kua O Ka La. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
pandi weston

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cindy and I am a teacher at Pearl City High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Cindy Kawamura

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:13 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is John and I am a teacher at Molokai High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
John Van Ornum

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:05 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Celia and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Celia Kawabata

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 6:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jane and I am a teacher at Kaleiopuu Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jane Pedicone

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:44 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Elsie and I am a teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School (RETIRED). I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Elsie Santiago

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:44 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kiley and I am a teacher at Maunaloa Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kiley Adolpho

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:43 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Donalyn and I am a teacher at Kilohana Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Donalyn Keliipuleole

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Victoria and I am a teacher at Lanikai Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Victoria Villegas

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Lacey Matsuda [lacey_matsuda@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:21 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony to The Twenty-Fifth Legislature House of Representatives Committee on Labor & Public Employment for the hearing on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 8:30am

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

Good morning. My name is Stacie Hiwatashi and I am an Office Assistant V at the Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs, Professional and Vocational Licensing Division. I've worked for the State for 8 years, and am truly disturbed by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say.

I speak in opposition to HB 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

House bills 1723, 1726, 1727 and 1725 will increase the medical costs that I must pay. My husband and I have just started our family and work hard to make ends meet. While I realize that working in the public sector may not provide as much salary or as favorable working conditions as in the private sector, this is balanced by the health benefits that we receive in the State government.

If you pass these bills, I will struggle to meet the additional costs. I already live paycheck to paycheck and would be hard pressed to find the means to have to pay additional premiums for drug, dental, vision and life insurance benefits which I need for myself and my family. This comes at a time when I am not getting a pay increase and will probably have to pay more for health care, as we see premiums go up every year.

I am also speaking in opposition of HB 1715 which will reduce retirement benefits for new public employees. While it does not seem to affect me directly, it makes a difference in my job. Already, we are short staffed and the morale is low, as we are overloaded with work, and are already struggling while trying to keep up with the processing timeline. Not being able to recruit qualified people will only make it more difficult for existing employees, and will ultimately diminish our customer service affecting the public that relies on our office for their livelihood. It is short sighted to reduce health and retirement benefits at a time when the economy is so difficult. The work we do is important and the public must understand that these bills will mean decreased public services at a time when they are needed more than ever.

I respectfully request that you vote "no" on each of these bills and thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition.

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lawrence and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lawrence Denis III

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:21 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gerry and I am a teacher at Ho'okena ES. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Gerry Snyder

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Phyllis and I am a teacher at Iliahi Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Phyllis Chee

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:14 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sybil and I am a teacher at Pearl City Highlands Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sybil Oishi

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:12 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ruth and I am a teacher at Wheeler Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ruth Teraoka

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 4:11 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Victoria and I am a teacher at Puunene. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Victoria Leworthy

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Anne and I am a teacher at Waihee Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne Kloft

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nadine and I am a teacher at Kipapa. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Nadine Milan

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is David and I am a teacher at Kapaa High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
David Mireles

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Wynn timer Joy and I am a teacher at Farrington HS. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Wynn timer Joy Hee

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: leah p [leah808@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:42 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723: Hearing on State Retirement Benefits

February 17, 2009

To:

Honorable Chairperson, Karl Rhoads

Honorable Vice-Chairperson Kyle Yamashita

Committee on Labor and Public Employment

From:

Bob Mielke Adult Correction Officer IV

Halawa Correctional Facility

RE: HB 1723

I would like to testify against HB 1723. I feel this bill is not only anti-labor, it is also an insult to all of the correctional workers in Hawaii. Benefits were taken away from state employees during the reign of Ben Cayetano. Taking away benefits from state workers did not work then and will not work now. I strongly urge all of you not to take away anymore benefits that were promised to us. We are not the cause of this recession. Our budgets are nowhere close to that of the state. However to us our budgets are much greater.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Mielke

Address: 2847 Waialae Ave #301

Honolulu, HI 96826

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lianna and I am a teacher at Kaimuki Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lianna Lam

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:31 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Eddeille and I am a teacher at Kohala Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Eddeille Thomas

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:04 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Claire and I am a teacher at retired from Kalani High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Claire Furukawa

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:02 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Angie and I am a teacher at Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Angie Miyashiro

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:55 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Grace and I am a teacher at Kapolei Elem. School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Grace Lum

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: WMa27@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: WMa27@aol.com
Subject: Testimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for your February 17, 2009 meeting.

My name is Wallace Ma. I have been a public employee for almost 15 years with the State of Hawaii.

I am a taxpayer like yourselves. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing, gasoline and other necessities.

I don't believe it is fair for the House of Representatives, through their Speaker, Calvin Say, to be looking at cutting health and retirement benefits for public employees as a way to balance the budget. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen. 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 retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it is wrong for the House of Representatives to take these benefits away from me.

I respectfully ask this committee to please vote "NO" on the following house bills that seek to take away benefits from public employees:

HB 1715; HB 1723; HB 1726; HB 1727

I would also like to thank the committee for their actions taken on Friday, February 13, 2009 in support of public employees.

God Bless.

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Victoria and I am a teacher at Konawaena High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Victoria Woo

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:32 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marissa and I am a teacher at Wilson Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Marissa Faleolo

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:27 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joyce and I am a teacher at Nanaikapono Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Joyce Kaneshiro

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:15 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Patriciajo and I am a teacher at Kea'au High. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Patriciajo Peifer

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 2:01 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Caryn and I am a teacher at Kailua Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Caryn Rosen

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Evelynn and I am a teacher at Kealakehe Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Evelynn Holman

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mark and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Mark Jones

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:30 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lynn and I am a teacher at Kapunahala. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lynn Yoshida

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mary Kate and I am a teacher at Kalaheo High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Mary Kate Powers

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:25 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karen and I am a teacher at Niu Valley Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Karen Wrobel

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Trevina Wiest [wiesttrevina@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:24 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725,HB1723,HB1715,HB726,HB1737

Aloha,

I am state employee and have been for the past 3 years with Department of Human Services as Eligibility worker.

My mother retired from state government work.

I vote and I live in Makiki.

I do not want drug,dental and vision coverage touched.

I have stressful job and I have seen many co workers get ill and sad part is I have coworkers who are on assistance and I know that if the price of drug,dental and vision coverage goes up,many more will need assistance.

Some will not take the coverage and pay more out of pocket.

We do not make much money and many are single parents.

Raising the retirement age will hurt some people who are caring for elderly parents and children.

I see economy is bad,but I do not feel that government employees is the place to look for making the budget balance.

We work for the government for various reasons.

Money is not one of them,private companies pay way more.

We are taxpayers.

Affecting our salary ,also affects the amount of taxes you get from us.

Sicerly,

Trevina Wiest

Windows Live™: E-mail. Chat. Share. Get more ways to connect. [See how it works.](#)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Pat Grossman [pgrossma@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 1:06 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HBs 1715, 1723, 1725, 1726, 1727

Members of the Labor Committee,

Please consider the following before voting on the state employee bills on the agenda for Tuesday, February 17, 2009.

Enact legislation which prohibits each department from filling vacant positions, any interviews in progress should be halted, and employees now within the 90 day probationary period should be terminated. Further, reduce the total number of sick days and vacation leave accumulated by employees in any one calendar year.

Such measures would go a long way in curtailing personnel costs and mitigate the necessity of putting House Bills 1715, 23, 25, 26, 27, as well as those considered on Friday (HBs 1106 and 1718), into place.

Thank you.

Pat Grossman
PO Box 704 Hilo, HI 96721

Employee: University of Hawaii at Hilo

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rebecca and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Gebreyesus

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:39 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer and I am a teacher at Farrington. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Grant

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:28 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Eric and I am a teacher at CK School Support Center. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Eric Kanemoto

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: TakaGD808 [takagd808@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:22 PM
To: LABtestimony; takagd808@aol.com
Subject: (no subject)

RE: HB1725

I have been employed by the County of Hawaii for 32 years. When I began my career in the county it was with the belief that one of the main benefits of working for the county was free drug coverage after I retire. I feel it is unfair to remove this benefit after dedicating my life's work to the county. If I was told the drug coverage would be taken away I may not have chosen this career in the county. I am against the bill.

RE: HB1723

I am opposed to this bill for the same reason cited above.

RE: HB1715

Increasing the retirement age for new employees may be fair since they will know before they begin service what the retirement requirements are, however, how old do you want your work force to be? As the work force ages you can expect them to have more ailments and sickness which results in sick leave and possible backlog in workflow.

RE: HB1726

If we are applying this to new employees only than the new hire knows up front life insurance benefits have been curtailed. However, this should not apply to current employees who again hired on with the belief that life insurance was one of the benefits for county employment.

RE: HB1727

Same comment at HB1726. It should not apply to current employees..

Why do government employees have to be the whipping boy for government every time the economy goes bad? We are real live people just like you. Is it any more humane just because you are doing it to us and our families financially and maybe not physically? We are being punished because of government administration's failure to put money aside for a rainy day. I believe the law requiring excess tax monies be refunded to the people should be repealed and the excess should be placed into a rainy day fund. Administration knew or should have known that the financial market was in a bubble and should have been laying a contingency plan for the day the bubble broke. It is shameful to think that the legislature would even consider punishing us for its own failings.

Aloha,

Glenn Taka

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:16 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michael and I am a teacher at Kohala High. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Michael Cservenak

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:13 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jeni and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jeni Nishimura

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:11 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Eric and I am a teacher at CK School Support Center. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Eric Kanemoto

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:56 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is David and I am a teacher at Kailua High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
David izumi

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Karen Nakamura [khnakamura@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:36 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Karen Nakamura. I was a dedicated and a proud public servant for 37 years.

As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. I did so believing that I could count on a safe retirement. According to these bills, my fellow workers may not be able to do so. It disregards their years of service. This is irresponsible and **brings me shame. It makes me feel as though our years of service is being taken lightly.** Instead of supporting public service, the message I get is that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:30 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is KATHY and I am a teacher at KONAWAENA ELEMENTARY. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
KATHY LAROSA

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Doreen and I am a teacher at Roosevelt High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Doreen Dudoit

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:18 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Garyce and I am a teacher at Kahala Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Garyce Kitaoka

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gertruda and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Gertruda Taylor

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 11:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keith and I am a teacher at Kealakehe High. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Keith Colvin

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Aaron and I am a teacher at Waianae High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Aaron Day

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:42 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees.

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lynne and I am a teacher at Waipahu Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lynne Asato

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:27 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Arthur and I am a teacher at McKinley High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Arthur Murchison

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: T Cachola [pueo1017@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:05 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Written Testimony

To Whom This May Concern,

I am writing regarding the following Bills:

HB 1725
HB 1723
HB 1727

As a state employee and as a resident of Hawaii, I do not agree with the above proposed bills. I am a single mother getting no help from the state or my child's father, I am the sole provider, and our medical, dental and vision care is very important to not only myself but for my children. I have worked very hard to not live off the system, but to provide for my children, and now I feel as though I am being punished for all my hard work, because you want to take away my benefits, and have me pay for it. As a resident of Hawaii I pay my taxes and what little I have left in my paychecks continues to go to the state whenever I shop anywhere. It just stresses me to think in order to provide coverage for myself and my children I have to give up more of my paycheck, as if I make enough to give up more, I don't know how we can possibly survive if my paychecks get even smaller. It is unfair to be looked upon solely as a "state worker" and not as a resident, I struggle like every resident on this island because I live here too, I pay the same taxes and the same bills as everyone else. My family and I shouldn't have to sacrifice so much because of who my employer is.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Tiana

Windows Live™: E-mail. Chat. Share. Get more ways to connect. [Check it out.](#)

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 10:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joy and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elem. School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Joy Hirayama

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:43 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Colleen and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Colleen Umetsu

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom and I am a teacher at Windward District. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tom Aitken

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Aaron and I am a teacher at Manana Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Aaron Paragoso

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 9:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marcia and I am a teacher at McKinley HS. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Marcia Gross

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:52 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michael and I am a teacher at Liliuokalani. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Michael Fahey

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:51 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Catherine and I am a teacher at Maui Waena Int.. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Catherine Giamenelli

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:44 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robin and I am a teacher at Lana'i City. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Robin Fancy

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:43 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robin and I am a teacher at Lana'i High & El. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Robin Fancy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Patricia and I am a teacher at Kealakehe High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Patricia Champagne

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:31 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Verna and I am a teacher at Farrington Community School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Verna Chow

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:29 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon and I am a teacher at Kapaa Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sharon Cassidy

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Iris and I am a teacher at Aiea High - retired. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Iris Tamayose

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:19 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laura and I am a teacher at Highlands Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laura Zoller

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:18 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Yvette and I am a teacher at Kapaa Elementary . I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Yvette DeSilva

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: soderberr001@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:14 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: opposition to bills 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726, 1727

Honored lawmakers- As 61 year old teacher who may retire at age 66 with only my state retirement, my social security, and my health benefits, I oppose the intent of bills 1725 to take away my perscription coverage, bill 1723 to cap the employer contribution to 55%, bill 1715 to increase the retirement age, bill 1727 which would take away my life insurance, and bill 1727 which would take away my dental and vision covage. For my wife, also a DOE employee and future retiree, this would be devastating. We have been loyal employees for the past two and a half decades and upon embarking on our DOE employment, we entered a compact with the state- we would exchange our expertise and energy in the classroom, and the state would take care of our salary, health and retirement requirements. We have faithfully upheld our end of the bargain. I have even received my National Board for Teaching Professionals certification and my wife has served as both a classroom teacher and now a principal. We expect the state to stand by us today and in the future and uphold its end of the bargain. We are looking to you as our representatives to do the right thing by us. Ralph and Nancy Soderberg, Kealakehe Intermediate and Konawaena Middle Schools, Kailua Kona, Hawaii. 808-329-0115

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ethan and I am a teacher at Moanalua High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ethan Paraso

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:09 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon and I am a teacher at Ali'iolani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sharon Esteron

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Beverly Gotelli [bgotelli@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 8:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Oppose - HB 1723 Relating to Public Employees

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Beverly Gotelli a retired teacher and I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plans.

As a teacher retiree my benefits are negotiated for by HSTA through collective bargaining. If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Beverly A. Gotelli

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:57 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Don and I am a teacher at Volcano School of Arts & Sciences. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Don Lawrence

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:54 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sylvia and I am a teacher at Waialua High & Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sylvia Plemer

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:52 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is stephen and I am a teacher at keaukaha elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
stephen santos

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:46 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Celeste and I am a teacher at Ahuimanu Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Celeste Katayama

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:42 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is curtiss and I am a teacher at dole middle sch. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
curtiss ako

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:42 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jacquelyn and I am a teacher at Waipahu Intermediate. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn Wanner

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:38 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jared and I am a teacher at Wheeler Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jared Wells

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:19 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon and I am a teacher at Moanalua Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sharon Inouye

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:07 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Will and I am a teacher at Molokai High School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Will Carlson

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 7:03 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is rusty and I am a teacher at wailuku. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
rusty pundyke

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:37 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Margaret and I am a teacher at Enchanted Lake Elementary retired. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Margaret Haring

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:21 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melvin and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Melvin Nakao

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 3:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lynn and I am a teacher at Ala Wai Elementary. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lynn Miyashiro

Lois Lee
44-114 Bayview Haven Place
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

To: Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

Re: H.B. No 1723 Relating to Public Employees
H.B. No 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund
H.B. No 1727 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits
Trust Fund

Hearing: February 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m., Room 309

Health care for Hawaii citizens should not be approached piecemeal. Reduction of health care benefits for state employees and retirees, the bankruptcy of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, the physicians' demand for increased Medicaid reimbursement and the proposed demise of Healthy Start all point to health care. Yet nowhere in the Legislature is there evidence that these issues are being addressed as a whole.

Hawaii has glided on its laurels as the Health State since 1974 when Hawaii Legislature passed the Hawaii Pre-paid Health Care Act that mandated all employers to provide full-time employees with health insurance. Hawaii is the only State in the Union with such a mandate, having subsequently received a congressional exemption from the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, ERISA, which prohibits States from mandating health and retirement benefits.

I remind you of your counterparts of the 1974 Legislature. This was not a bill embraced by all, certainly not by the business community. But, the Legislature of 1974 recognized that health care is a basic, an entitlement. Also, during the discussion of the 1974 legislation, interestingly, some labor officials were concerned about the bill's passage because the unions were already negotiating for health insurance and felt that the passage of the bill would undermine their organizing efforts. Concern for the common good convinced these same labor officials of the bill's worth.

I urge the 2009 Legislature to study – to systematically study health care and all its variables. Not just respond erratically to introduced bills but develop a

coherent policy and plan that embraces health care for Hawaii's citizens. Nationally, in this time of economic recession/depression, President Barack Obama and the Democratic Congress have stated that health care is a priority and with the passage of the Stimulus Bill, Congress and the President are now looking towards the development of a national health care plan. To critics who have raised cost as an issue, the President has remained firm in his belief that health care for all is worth the additional budget allocation.

On a pragmatic level, unless the 2009 Legislature undertakes to develop a health care policy for Hawaii, how will the State evaluate and judge the health care proposals that will be coming forth nationally? Will Hawaii actively participate in the creation of a national plan, as it should, or will it just react?

This brings me to HB 1723, HB1725 and HB 1727. Aside from my above stated belief that the concern of these bills should be evaluated as part of Hawaii's health care as a whole, all three propose to reduce benefits already received by State employees and retirees. It may be argued that State employees and retirees receive more health benefits than those in the private sector and as such the bill is fair. I argue that existing private sector practice should not be viewed as the measure of fairness, and the legislators of 1974 did not either.

Lastly, current employees and retirees entered into an agreement with the State at the time of employment. Retirement benefits were taken into consideration as a plus to off-set the salary that was lower than that offered by the private sector. To take away these benefits is to renege on the agreement.

Accordingly, I oppose passage of HB 1723, HB 1725 and HB 1727.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 1:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Starr and I am a teacher at Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Starr Asselin

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 1:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Beatrice and I am a teacher at Kahuku High & Interemdiat. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Beatrice DeRego

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Megan Tanabe. As a public employee for 4 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced this legislative session by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726 and HB 1727.

I oppose HB 1725, HB 1723, HB 1715, HB 1726, and HB 1727 because I strongly believe it will deter possible new employees from serving the state of Hawaii, when there are many vacant positions that need to be filled. It will also place a burden on employees to make difficult health decision. Finally, it will also make it difficult for personnel to retain excellent employees.

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 will hurt those employees who are in lesser paying state jobs and who may have health conditions. Although the bill is only temporary, this will be a huge burden on all employees.

As a young and healthy employee, you may wonder why I would care. At any time we are vulnerable to airborne illnesses or chronic disease and by not providing drug coverage, many will not be able to afford proper medication and possibly prolong what could have been a short-term illness. This makes for a less productive workforce.

During this difficult economic climate, it is not a time to reduce drug, vision, or dental coverage, nor is it time to reduce life insurance benefits (HB 1726), increase the retirement age (HB 1715), or limit employer contribution (HB 1723). In my current state position, I am overworked due to the vacant positions in my section. This means caseloads are higher, my colleagues and I are working longer, more rigorous hours, and in turn benefitting less and are at risk for short- and long-term health problems. Please hear our voices and don't support these measures.

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

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 1:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sandra and I am a teacher at Mililani Mauka. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sandra Kubota

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 1:54 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Beverly and I am a teacher at Roosevelt. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Beverly Hashimoto

yamashita1- Kathy

From: do_not_reply@members.hsta.org
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2009 9:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1723 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony Message

Subject: HB 1723-Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
Conference Room 309
08:30 a.m.

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert and I am a teacher at Moanalua Middle. I strongly oppose HB 1723 which makes the employer contributions non-negotiable under collective bargaining, and increases the active public employees to 45% of the monthly cost of the health benefits plan instead of the current cost sharing where the employer pays 60% and the employees pays 40% of the health benefits plan.

If this bill should pass, it would take away the only negotiable item under collective bargaining we have when it comes to our health benefits. Even in these tough economic times, it would be unfair for legislators to try to balance the state budget on the backs of public employees, especially when other alternatives have not been fully explored.

It is much better to leave the cost of our health benefit plans to collective bargaining where it will allow the Employer and the Union to work out.

I strongly urge against passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Robert Walker