

Honolulu, Hawaii

Ag-128, 2006

RE: H.B. No. 2558
H.D. 1
S.D. 2
C.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Honorable Robert Bunda
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Conference on the disagreeing vote of the House of Representatives to the amendments proposed by the Senate in H.B. No. 2558, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION,"

having met, and after full and free discussion, has agreed to recommend and does recommend to the respective Houses the final passage of this bill in an amended form.

The purpose of this bill is to encourage employees who have suffered work-related injuries to return to work by authorizing the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations (Director) to refer, for vocational rehabilitation, those employees who are unable to return to their regular jobs upon medical stabilization and who have not been offered permanent suitable work that is comparable in earnings to their former jobs.

Your Committee on Conference notes that existing laws allow employees who have suffered a permanent disability as a result of work injuries to be referred by the Director for vocational rehabilitation services. Existing laws are not clear on whether

HB2558 CD1 HCCR HMS 2006-3849



employees who are restricted in their daily living and working activities as a result of their work related injuries are eligible for vocational rehabilitation.

Your Committee on Conference believes that limiting the Director's referrals for vocational rehabilitation to employees who have suffered a permanent disability would be contrary to the intent of this legislation. The recuperative process following a work injury should not only include healing from the physical effects of the injury itself, but also assisting injured workers to reintegrate into the workforce in a timely manner.

Your Committee on Conference has amended this measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 2006.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the managers of your Committee on Conference that is attached to this report, your Committee on Conference is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2558, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Final Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2558, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, C.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted on behalf
of the managers:

ON THE PART OF THE SENATE

ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE


BRIAN KANNO, Chair


KIRK CALDWELL, Co-Chair


SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Co-Chair


BOB NAKASONE, Co-Chair


BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, Co-Chair



