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Committee on Health

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

SB 2152, RELATING TO THE TASK FORCE ON AGING

**Testimony of Noemi Pendleton
Director of Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to Department of Health**

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

1:30 p.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) appreciates the intent of this
2 measure. We, however, have serious concerns with the measure and respectfully oppose it as
3 written.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** There is an unspecified amount of general funds appropriated for fiscal year
5 2008-2009 to be used by the task force described in this proposal to support its work.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of this bill is to fund the establishment of a task force to
7 be known as the "task force on the department of aging," which is to be responsible for
8 determining the services and programs that would be under the jurisdiction of a new department of
9 aging. The bill states that "the executive office on aging already coordinates programs and
10 services available to Hawaii's population; however, the scope and magnitude of issues facing the
11 elderly necessitates department level attention. A departmental agency could better focus
12 resources and personnel to address the multi-faceted needs of Hawaii's older population."

1 In order to accomplish what this measure requests, any such task force would need to
2 gather extensive information and data, do an analysis of all programs for the elderly offered by the
3 State by all departments to determine what might be consolidated under the proposed new
4 department, study staff reassignments that would be necessary, determine what programs would
5 be possible to transfer to a newly-organized department, study how other states have structured
6 jurisdiction of elderly programs, study and propose staffing, operational budget, organizational
7 structure and all other items attending to creating a new executive department. It is not possible
8 for EOA to assist in the completion of the required report within the time period proposed by this
9 measure. In addition, EOA is not a voting member of the task force.

10 It is a priority of the Administration to effectively support Hawaii's elder population,
11 which is aging at 2.5 times the national rate. However, creating a new executive department is not
12 necessarily the most appropriate approach.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Hawai'i Alliance for Retired Americans

AFT Hawaii Retirees

HGEA Retirees

HSTA – Retired

ILWU Retirees

Kokua Council

Machinists Union Retirees

UPW Retirees

ADA/Hawaii

An affiliate of the Alliance for Retired Americans
c/o AFSCME · 888 Mililani Street, Suite 101 · Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

(Submitted via email, January 27, 2008, to testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov.)

Joint statement of Al Hamai, President, and Carol Nitta, Legislative Committee Member, Supporting SB 2152, Relating to the Task Force on Aging

Hearing by Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

January 29, 2008, 1:30 p.m. Conference Room 016

Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

We are submitting testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA). HARA represents 17,000 retirees, members of the above organizations and individuals. We are a chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA), a national advocacy organization for retirees.

HARA supports SB 2152 and considers the establishment of a Task Force on Aging as a very important step in establishing a Department of Aging in recognition of the fact that the number of senior citizens in our state is growing very rapidly and the state will need a strong, response department to work of senior issues. The state's current Executive Office on Aging does not have the resources nor the clout to deal with aging issues.

One of the speakers of the HARA Convention on January 12, 2008 discussed her experiences while serving as one of several voluntary commissioners, appointed by the Maryland Governor, on the Maryland Department of Aging and how the Department was able to coordinate all aging activities in the state. Judith Cato, Executive Vice President of the Alliance of Retired Americans also pointed out that the Department had sufficient staff and funding to look at the aging issues and take appropriate action and/or recommend appropriate action by the state Legislature.

HARA supports SB 2152 and urges your Committee to approve it. Mahalo.

Ke hana like nei na kupuna i 'oi loa a'e 'o Hawai'i
Senior citizens working together for a better Hawai'i

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature
Regular Session of 2008

THE SENATE
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 016
Tuesday, January 29, 2008; 1:30 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 2152 AND S.B. 2350
RELATING TO TASK FORCE ON AGING**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 2152 and S.B. 2350, which establishes a task force on aging to study the need for and feasibility of establishing a Department of Aging.

A crisis is looming as our aging population increases. Hawaii is not prepared for the huge numbers of those over 65 who will soon be upon us, much less those who are over 80, who will soon be the fastest growing segment of Hawaii's population. As people age, health deteriorates and the need for long-term care and other services increases. The State's resources in the form of taxes will potentially diminish with fewer people in the workforce.

Currently, many agencies and programs address the aging population within state government. These services are scattered and sometimes work at cross-purposes. A Department of Aging may not be the answer, but studying its potential to bring resources and ideas together is worth doing. The task force proposed by S.B. 2152 and S.B. 2350 is intended to do that.

The ILWU urges passage of S.B. 2152 or S.B. 2350. Thank you for considering our views.



Laura Manis Testifier

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Tuesday, January 29, 1:30. Room 016

SB 2152 RELATING TO THE TASK FORCE ON AGING.

Establishes a task force on aging to study the need for and feasibility of establishing a department of aging. Requires the task force on aging to submit findings and recommendations to the legislature. Appropriates funds for the task force on aging.

SUPPORT

Kokua Council whose mission includes advocating for the health of the elderly and those vulnerable populations who can not advocate for themselves supports this bill.

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING
ON
SENATE BILL NOS. 2152 AND 2350

January 29, 2008

RELATING TO THE TASK FORCE ON AGING

Senate Bill Nos. 2152 and 2350 appropriate funds for a task force on aging to study the need for, and feasibility of, establishing a Department of Aging.

We have a concern as to whether it is prudent to expand the State's financial commitment at a time when we are facing a moderation in revenue growth. Funding a task force to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Department of Aging is unnecessary as there are many existing programs which provide services to our elderly population, including services provided by the Executive Office on Aging, the counties' Area Agencies on Aging, and the federal U.S. Administration on Aging which is part of the federal Department of Health. With the economic challenges we face, the proposed appropriation would be better spent on maintaining existing services.

**Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing**

January 29, 2008

1:30 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

by

Dr. Gary K. Ostrander

Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education &
Interim Dean for the John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB2152 – RELATING TO THE TASK FORCE ON AGING

Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr., and Members of the
Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports the intent of this measure so long as it does not adversely impact the priorities set by the University in our Board of Regents approved budget request. The University has many needs, most notably repairs and maintenance, maintaining our library collections, and safety and emergency preparedness. Addressing these urgent needs is critical to our ability to perform the functions the state needs us to perform – including the study of aging.

However, we do believe that the objective of re-developing the Center on Aging is worthwhile. In fact, Chancellor Hinshaw recently charged me with the re-development of the Center on Aging under the auspices of my office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education. This is because our efforts on aging are truly cross-campus and interdisciplinary in nature. We have begun planning a multidisciplinary approach to what we believe will be a critically important facility for the state of Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing, which has scheduled a public hearing on Tuesday, January 29, 2008, @ 1:30 p.m. in Room 0016 on S.B. 2152

Aloha kakou,

I am in support of S.B. 2152 which establishes a task force on aging to study the need for and feasibility of establishing a state, executive and cabinet-level Department of Aging. My national experience in the field of aging, is that states who have a comprehensive, integrated and cabinet-level approach to aging and long term care public policy and administrative rule-making are more capable and better equipped to deal with the "Tsunami of Aging" that is already upon us. As a professional in the field of aging, I am convinced that piece-meal and seemingly reactive (as opposed to proactive) public policy in aging is holding our state back from making fundamental and even "paradigm shift" changes in the way we allow ourselves to age in place qualitatively as well as quantitatively. S.B. 2152 represents an opportunity for us, as a state, to finally understand what those changes are and when they need to happen.

Me ka mahalo pono.

John A. H. Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW

Maui County Executive on Aging

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