



**The Chamber of  
Commerce of Hawaii**  
*Since 1850*

**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2008  
9:30 A.M. IN ROOM 211**

Re: SB 2447 RELATING TO THE NATIONAL GUARD

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Charlie Ota and I am the Vice President of the Military Affairs Department of The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii. The Department oversees the Military Affairs Council (MAC) which serves as a liaison seeking solutions to issues of common concern to the military, private sector, and state.

The MAC submits testimony in support of Senate Bill 2447, relating to the National Guard.

This measure provides for increasing the uniform maintenance allowance for enlisted members of the Hawaii Army and Air National Guards to \$10 per, not to exceed \$150 per year.

This bill recognizes the cost increases incurred by enlisted members in properly maintaining their uniforms in meeting the requirements established by the National Guard.

In light of the above, the MAC recommends approval of SB2447 as written.

**HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD ENLISTED ASSOCIATION  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816-4495  
February 21, 2008**

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair

**SENATE HEARING**

DATE: Thursday, February 21, 2008  
TIME: 9:30 am  
PLACE: Conference Room 211  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**From: CMSgt Ethan Toyama**  
President of the Hawaii National Guard Enlisted Association

**Subject: Testimony in strong support of SB2447**

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

My name is Chief Master Sergeant Ethan Toyama, President of the Hawaii National Guard Enlisted Association. I am providing testimony in strong support of SB2447, which will increase the uniform maintenance allowance from \$1.50 to \$10 a day.

The present cost of clothing maintenance far exceeds the current allowance and an increase is long overdue. The rate has not changed for more than 35 years, yet the cost to clean and service military uniforms has increased substantially. This bill will help balance out the out of pocket cost to guardsmen and it is a key to improving recruitment and retention in the Guard.

Our guardsmen have made many sacrifices to support our state during times of need, and I believe we should honor them and take care of them to ensure that the State of Hawaii is prepared and ready to deal with any emergency that could come upon us.

I thank you for your commitment and dedication to the well being of our State and the guardsmen that defend it.

NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII INSURANCE TRUST  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

WAM Hearing  
February 21, 2008 9:30 am  
Conference Room 211

To: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker  
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Senator Shan Tsutsui  
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Ways & Means

From: Peter Ching  
President of the Hawaii National Guard Association

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2447 RELATING TO THE NATIONAL GUARD**

Chairwoman and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB2447 which will increase the uniform maintenance allowance from \$1.50 to \$10 per day. I want to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss this important benefit as it relates to our State Militia.

My name is Peter Ching, President of the Hawaii National Guard Association. This bill sets the foundation to provide the State of Hawaii with an incentive for recruitment and retention purposes. It will help us attract the best and brightest young men and women committed to service to their state and country and the National Guard. It means we are going to continue to have a Guard that is going to be able to respond to emergencies, help local governments and help the people of this state in ways we cannot even begin to anticipate.

It is vitally important to Hawaii that we maintain an effective National Guard. In Hawaii, we are fortunate to have a balanced force of Guardsmen throughout our state. The National Guard is present on almost every island. That means you can count on the Guard to respond quickly and effectively across a wide range of natural or man-made disasters, with soldiers and airmen trained and equipped to deal with any emergency that may threaten the citizens of Hawaii and our visitors.

SB2447 is long overdue. In 1971, the uniform allowance was \$1.50 per day. That was over 35 years ago and the rate has not changed, yet the cost to clean and service our military uniform has increased substantially. This bill will meet the real life requirements for our guardsmen and absorb some of the direct personal cost to them and their families. This bill will put money back into the guardsmen's pockets. It will also tell them that the State of Hawaii appreciates and supports our soldiers and airmen. I believe we should honor our troops and take care of them to ensure the State of Hawaii is prepared and ready to deal with any emergency that could come upon us.