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**TESTIMONY**

**To the Chair and Committee Members:**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

**On SB 2594 – Relating to Labor**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2008**

**9:00a.m.**

**Conference Room 309**

**State Capitol**

LATE TESTIMONY

We oppose Senate Bill 2594, Relating to Labor.

Government supervised secret ballot elections are fair for both the employer and the employee. Having a union organizer with a petition in hand can be intimidating and manipulative, knowing who signed and who did not, as opposed to voting in privacy. Free choice?

I respectfully request that this legislation not be passed. Secret ballot elections are the hallmark of a democratic society.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony.

Submitted by:

PAUL KOSASA  
President & CEO

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# HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

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

Testimony by  
Hawaii State AFL-CIO  
March 11, 2008

## LATE TESTIMONY

### S.B. 2594, SD1 – RELATING TO LABOR

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 2594, SD1 and the proposed amendments to Chapter 377, HRS (The Hawaii Employment Relations Act). As drafted, the bill would allow employees at a company to unionize if a majority signed cards expressing their desire to join a union. Currently, an employer does not have to recognize the majority's signatures and can insist on a secret ballot election. Unfortunately, in a high number of cases, the employer uses the time before the vote to pressure employees not to join a union.

The other suggested additions to Chapter 377, HRS will prevent efforts by employers to stall negotiations indefinitely. The parties are required to make every reasonable effort to conclude and sign a collective bargaining agreement. If the parties are not successful after ninety days of negotiations, either party can request conciliation through the Hawaii Labor Relations Board.

Labor unions have a significant role to play in helping to fix today's economic ills, most notably increasing income inequality. The cause of this problem is due in large part to the difficulty in organizing unions and the worker's resulting lack of bargaining power.

Furthermore, S.B 2594 SD1 is nearly identical to H.B 2974 HD2, which was passed out of Labor and Finance earlier this year. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 2594, SD1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
President

