

The Senate
The Twenty-Fourth Legislature
Committees on Judiciary and Labor and
Tourism and Government Operations
February 12, 2008
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Statement of the Hawaii Carpenters Union on S.B. 2780
Relating to Public Works

The Hawaii Carpenters Union supports S.B. 2780, to address in the statute what is currently in the Administrative Rules of Chapter 104, HRS, while narrowing the type of use of State or County land that would be affected.

Currently the administrative rules provide that prevailing wages are to be paid for construction undertaken through the use of "...land, or other resources of the State or any county...". State land is used for a wide variety of private activities, calling for S.B. 2780 to provide the clarification that is needed for enforcement.

This Bill would narrow the focus to the use of State or county land to commercial, for-profit activity. We believe it would also make it clear that the law must be enforced in this area.

In the example of the Naniloa hotel in Hilo, the benefit of using State oceanfront land should not become a part of depressing area standard wages and benefits for construction work. Prevailing wages are not being required for construction work in that case, including construction required by the State in the agreement for the use of the land.

Where prevailing wages are not required to "level the playing field", Hawaii contractors who contribute to skilled craft training are at a disadvantage. Hawaii contractors who lessen burdens on government and the community by providing family medical and dental insurance, and retirement income programs, not to mention decent wages, are at a disadvantage. State resources should not be used in this manner.

The fact that agreements are reached and documented prior to the use of the land and prior to any construction, provides the mechanism for the administration of the Chapter 104 provision.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for the passage of S.B. 2780.