



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

Testimony of
Linda L. Smith
Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor

Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
Friday, February 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
Room 309, State Capitol

H.B. 1106 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

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

The Administration strongly supports H.B. 1106, an Administration measure that preserves employee rights, privileges, and benefits when a State employee is furloughed. Specifically, this bill ensures that an employee's health, leave and retirement benefits remain unaffected by furlough. This bill also reaffirms the Governor's authority to implement furloughs.

In order to address the current budget deficit, which is estimated to be \$1.76 billion at the end of fiscal year 2010-2011, the Administration is considering all available options, including furlough. It is estimated that for each day of state employee furlough, the State would save \$8.7 million. Currently, Maryland and California have already implemented furloughs and other states are also considering the option.

In the event that furlough is necessary, the Administration believes it is important that the rights and benefits of employees are not affected by circumstances beyond their control. As such, this bill is vitally important for the purposes of limiting the impact of furlough on state employees. In 1996, the Legislature passed Act 283, a similar measure that would protect the rights and benefits of state employees furloughed during fiscal year 1996-1997. Although a furlough was not implemented at the time, Act 283 would have been an important tool for protecting employee benefits.

For these reasons, the Administration urges this committee to pass H.B. 1106.



THE JUDICIARY, STATE OF HAWAII

Testimony to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature, Regular Session of 2009

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Friday, February 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

by

Sharen M. Tokura

Human Resources Director

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1106, Relating to Public Employment

Purpose: Protects the rights of public employees by preserving health, retirement, leave, and other benefits if furlough is implemented in fiscal years 2009 to 2013.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports House Bill No. 1106 in preserving employee benefits should furlough(s) be implemented. We respectfully request that the Judiciary be included in this proposed legislation so that our employees may also have the same protection as executive branch employees in the event furloughs are similarly instituted by the Judiciary.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to be included in this bill.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



MARIE C. LADERTA
DIRECTOR

CINDY S. INOUE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
235 S. BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

February 12, 2009

TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
For Hearing on Friday, February 13, 2009
8:30 a.m., Conference Room 309

BY
MARIE C. LADERTA, DIRECTOR

**House Bill No. 1106
Relating to Public Employment**

TO CHAIR RHOADS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Marie Laderta, and I am the Director of the Department of Human Resources Development ("DHRD").

The purpose of H.B. No. 1106 is to preserve certain employee rights, privileges, and benefits when an employee is furloughed.

DHRD strongly supports this administration bill.

The present and immediately foreseeable condition of our State's economy has been well-documented in recent months. If no action is taken, the State faces a substantial budget shortfall.

As the State undertakes efforts to address the projected shortfall, employee furloughs may be explored as an option since furloughs will cause the least amount of disruption to public services and can potentially postpone or avert layoffs. Should furloughs be pursued, this bill is necessary to ensure that employees' rights, privileges, and benefits are not inadvertently adversely impacted.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie C. Laderta".

MARIE C. LADERTA

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

CLAYTON A. FRANK
DIRECTOR

DAVID F. FESTERLING
Deputy Director
Administration

TOMMY JOHNSON
Deputy Director
Corrections

JAMES L. PROPOTNICK
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1106
RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
by
Clayton A. Frank, Director
Department of Public Safety

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Friday, February 13, 2009, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety supports House Bill No. 1106, to protect the rights of public employees by preserving health, retirement, leave, and other benefits if furloughs are implemented in fiscal years 2009 to 2013. The Department also supports the bill in reaffirming the inherent and explicit authority of the Governor to institute furloughs.

As the State undertakes efforts to address the projected deficit, employee furloughs are a viable option since furloughs will cause the least amount of disruption to public services and can potentially postpone or avert layoffs.

In the event of a furlough, we support the effort to protect the rights, privileges, and benefits provided and accruing to state employees.

The furlough will allow our department to share in the reduction of the deficit and avoid layoff of state employees. Furloughs will have the least impact on the services we

House Bill 1106
February 12, 2009
Page 2

provide and allow us to successfully accomplish the Department mission and meet the service needs of those we serve.

The bill also reaffirms the inherent and explicit authority of the Governor to institute furloughs. It is a necessary step to remind everyone of the Governor's authority to take serious actions in times of need, such as the current global financial crisis impacting our State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



Testimony of

Hawaii Council of Mayors

Bernard Carvalho, Jr., Mayor of Kauai

Mufi Hannemann, Mayor of Honolulu

Billy Kenoi, Mayor of Hawaii

Charmaine Tavares, Mayor of Maui

Before the

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

February 13, 2009

House Bill 1106: Relating to Public Employment

The Hawaii Council of Mayors is very grateful to the House of Representatives, particularly the members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employment, for having the courage to confront the formidable economic and fiscal challenges facing our people. You have the difficult and unenviable task of crafting a budget during a time of great uncertainty, as do we, and we share your desire to balance frugality and prudence with fairness and compassion.

The Hawaii Council of Mayors recognizes that House Bill 1106 addresses the difficult matter of furloughs. While we are not considering furloughs, we stand united in our desire to ensure the protection of employee benefits should any one of us be forced to consider such an action. Accordingly, HCOM respectfully requests that the bill be approved for further discussion and debate, should furloughs ever become a necessary tool to help us balance our budgets.

Mahalo.



Mayor Billy Kenoi
County of Hawaii
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720



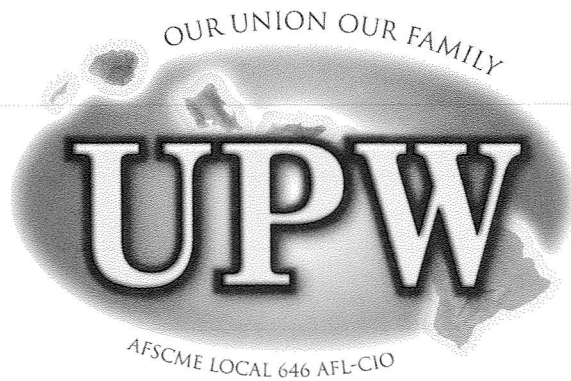
Mayor Mufi Hannemann
City and County of Honolulu
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr.
County of Kauai
444 Rice Street
Lihue, Hawaii 96766



Mayor Charmaine Tavares
County of Maui
200 South High Street, 9th Floor
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793



The House of Representatives
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature
Regular Session of 2009

Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 13, 2009
TIME: 8:30 a.m.
PLACE: House Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY OF THE UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS, AFSCME, LOCAL
646, AFL-CIO ON H.B. 1106 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua, and I am the state director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). The UPW currently represents approximately 8,700 blue collar, non-supervisory employees in bargaining unit 1, and 2,800 institutional, health, and correctional workers in bargaining unit 10 in the State of Hawaii and the various counties. The UPW opposes House Bill No. 1106 which authorizes the governor to unilaterally implement "furloughs," and to statutorily establish terms and conditions of employment relating to wages, lay-offs, vacation, sick leave, health benefits, and deferred compensation. This measure undermines the constitutional and statutory rights of employees to engage in collective bargaining and impairs longstanding contractual rights of employees.

HEADQUARTERS - 1426 North School Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914 ♦ Phone: (808) 847-2631
HAWAII - 362 East Lanikaula Street ♦ Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336 ♦ Phone: (808) 961-3424
KAUAI - 4211 Rice Street ♦ Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1325 ♦ Phone: (808) 245-2412
MAUI - 841 Kolu Street ♦ Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436 ♦ Phone: (808) 244-0815
1-866-454-4166 (Toll Free, Molokai/Lanai only)

We do not agree with the proponents of this bill that the right to "furlough" is an inherent right of the chief executive of this state. The term has been sparingly used in our statutes, and applies primarily to the correctional setting. See e.g., Section 352-26, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) (referring to furlough of inmates in custody at the youth correctional facility), Section 353-10-5, HRS (referring to furloughs of those detained in correctional facilities). In the employment setting the term has a well recognized meaning. A furlough is defined as follows in Roberts' Dictionary of Industrial Relations (3rd ed. 1986) at 236:

Furlough. A leave of absence from work or other duties usually initiated by an employee to meet some special problem. It is temporary in nature since the employee plans to return as the furlough period is over. The Civil Reform Act defines furlough as "the placing of an employee in a temporary status without duties and pay because of lack of work or funds or other non-disciplinary reasons." (Emphasis added).

Historically, the UPW and public employers consider a leave of absence without pay as a mandatory subject of collective bargaining under Section 89-9 (a), HRS. Courts have held that a duty to bargain applies "over furlough of employees." See Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, 557 A.2d 1112 (Pa. Cmwth. 1989). Section 38 of the unit 1 and 10 agreements sets forth the terms and conditions for leaves without pay. The current agreement contains a provision which was intended to forestall layoffs of employees as follows:

38.02 Leaves without pay to delay reduction-in-force. A regular employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for not more than twelve (12) months in order to delay a planned layoff when the position which the employee occupies has been abolished. If the employee has not been placed at the expiration of the

twelve (12) month period, the employee shall be subject to section 12. (Emphasis added).

If adopted the measure before you will impair the contractual rights of employees and may be unconstitutional under Article I, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution. See University of Hawaii Professional Assembly v. Cayetano, 183 F.3d 1096 (9th Cir. 1999).

Moreover, this measure will undermine the process of collective bargaining as set forth in Chapter 89. Hawaii is one of six states in the country which has afforded constitutional protection to private and public employees to engage in "collective bargaining" under Article XIII. A "furlough" is a core subject of "collective bargaining" because it affects employee's "wages," "hours of work" and terms of employment as referred to in Section 89-9 (a), HRS. A furlough of all employees once a month represents a significant reduction in the negotiated wages of employees as set forth in Section 23 of the unit 1 and 10 collective bargaining agreements. It obviously changes the hours of work expected of employees as defined in Section 25 of the collective bargaining agreements. The legislature should avoid enacting statutes which substantively determine the terms and conditions of employment. In 1999 lawmakers imposed a wage freeze (through Act 100) to address a similar fiscal crisis. The enactment was struck down as it violated the constitutional right of employees to engage in collective bargaining. United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO v. Yogi, 101 Hawai'i 46, 62 P.3d 189 (2002). In addition, this measure proposes to change the pre-emption provision of chapter 89. Section 89-19, HRS, currently provides that chapter 89 takes precedence over "all conflicting statutes concerning this subject matter." This bill in part contradicts

this long established statutory requirement by proposing that the proposed measure pre-empt the provisions of chapter 89.

We are aware that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has announced the furlough of state workers twice a month in California as a means of addressing the state's \$42 billion deficit. That action is being challenged in the courts in Professional Engineers in California Government v. Schwarzenegger, Case No. 34-2008-80000126-CU-WM-GDS in the Superior Court (County of Sacramento). We are keeping a close watch as that case works its way through the appellate court system. However, we are mindful that unlike Hawaii the State of California does not afford to employees the constitutional right to engage in collective bargaining. There are other differences between the two states which affect the collective bargaining process.

For the foregoing reasons we urge you not to intervene by enacting statutes which adversely affect the collective bargaining process over matters relating to furloughs or leaves without pay. As a final note matters relating to layoffs, vacation, sick leave, health benefits, and deferred compensation are also mandatory subjects of bargaining covered by chapter 89. If you wish to protect retirement benefits (which is not negotiable under Section 89-9 (d), HRS), chapter 88 should be amended to provide for service credit during leaves of absence without pay.

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

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 13, 2009

H.B. 1725 – RELATING TO THE
HAWAII EMPLOYER – UNION
HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST
FUND

Good morning Chair Rhoads and Members. My name is Frances Kagawa, HGEA Retirees Unit President. We represent over 9,000 retiree members statewide who strongly oppose passage of H.B. 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

Before retiring, I was a public employee at UH and the Department of Parks & Recreation. Like most other retiree and active employees, I took a government job because of health and retirement benefits. I knew I wouldn't get rich working for the public sector but stayed knowing that when I retired in 1987 I wouldn't worry about medical, drug, dental and vision plans.

I take five different medications daily to stay well. I live alone on a fixed income and with rising costs in the utility and gas prices, if these bills pass it will become a choice of paying for food or medications. There are 3,167 statewide retirees 80 years of age and over in the Retirees Unit who will be in the same or more serious predicament then I am since their pensions are much smaller.

Retirees also support current and perspective employees who will negatively be affected by these bills. These active employees decided to work in government to have the same benefits that I have during their retirement. Please oppose these bills that affect all public servants and retirees.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Frances Kagawa

February 11, 2009

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
And to the Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, 2009
State of Hawaii

Cheryl Matthews
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
(808) 989-2186 or cmatthew@hawaii.edu

RE: Committee hearing on Friday, February 13 at 8:30 a.m. in Conference Room 309

IN SUPPORT OF HB 1106

My name is Cheryl Matthews and I have committed myself to public service. I am very pleased to see that the legislators are seeking to protect the some of the rights of the public servant in considering HB 1106. However, the difficulty is expressed within the context of the amendment, "furloughs could be means of addressing the budget deficit *with the least amount of disruption to public services.*" If public employees are placed on furlough, the public would not be provided services, as the staff would not be in their offices and those that would remain are already doing more work with fewer resources.

As a resident of the Big Island, I am personal witness to a reduced staff and limited resources to provide to the general public. Our agency is consistently seeking creative ways to provide necessary services to our clients. In the event of a furlough being implemented by the governor, public employees must be guaranteed protection of their benefits, as the current financial crises we are faced with could have been prevented by allocating financial resources over the past two decades away from tourism into a more diversified and balanced economy.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 1106, as protecting the benefits of our valued public servant, the back bone of our State, is vital to sustaining the states mission, Ua Mau Kea O Ka Aina I Ka Pono, *The Life Of The Land Is Perpetuated In Righteousness*, and taking care of the people that take care of the State's daily business is a vital component to that mission.

Mahalo nui loa,

Cheryl Matthews

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: thirr33@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Arvid Tadao Youngquist
Organization: The Mestizo Association ('82)
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: thirr33@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:
House Labor and Public Employment (LAB)
Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita
Right Honorable Members of the House
LAB Committee

This is a testimony in opposition to:

HB 1106
HB 1718
HB 1719
HB 1725

This is purported as some "modest" efforts to help meet the fiscal crisis of the State of Hawaii.

However, all these bills are going to be perceived as yet another "King Ben Bill" after 9/11 and with the crisis visited upon the Nation mid-2008 (bail outs & econmic stimulus packages), all measures appears to be on the table.

Unless the administration and the Capitol is willing to sacrifice not only their own pay-raises together with high-end "legathy" CIP and other spending in their respective district (i.e. Turtle Bay Resort, Molokai Ranch Resort, even Highways and Railways, the public sector workforce new hires, retirees, their beneficiaries and dependents should not be respponsible for shouldering the heaviest fiscal burden. If one does not fight for one's own very own employees, who would one truly fight for?

Some of the proposals here at the Capitol have already led to my colleagues putting in their retirement applications before the maximum age for retirment is changed to 65, and the contributions, and coverage for prescriptions, dental and vision in the EUTF is nullified by fiat. A mass retirement payment for these new retirees will actually further drive south the Hawaii State Government budget.

Many of yourselves have taken care of elders on a fixed income, or are already a Kupuna. Do you think that these 4 bills are pono in regards to the Keiki and the Kupuna, not to mention all public sector employees?

Please consider defeating these four bills. Failing that, please consider affixing a defective effective date so that in 2013, or when the economy levels off, provisions can be repealed. Once a Union or any entity gives up any of the benefits of its membership, it hardly ever gets to recoup them in later years, even in times of plenty. Witness what happend to the Detroit automobile workforce that sacrificed benefits & pay, only to be exposed to CEO and management reward themselves with a bonus and a Golden Parachute.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to these four bills on your agenda.

"Peace be with you."
(1 of 16,588 local voices)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Suzette Esmeralda [Suzette.Esmeralda@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106

I support this bill. I believe we, as public employees, should be able to preserve our benefits should furloughs be implemented. I am not against temporary one day a month furloughs if that will prevent layoffs and keeping my benefits as is.

thank you,
SE

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jagnes@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: JOANNE AGNES
Organization: Individual
Address: 5400 LIKINI ST #402 HONOLULU, HI 96818
Phone: 808-387-5093
E-mail: jagnes@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

The proposed bill should add a provision that mandates the state government full disclosure on how the savings from this bill is being utilized. Also a provision that states "Savings from this bill shall not be used to supplement "certain members" of the executive, legislatives & judicial branches of the state (including other jurisdictions) salary increases or any other creative compensations that will result to an increase of pay."
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Concerned Citizens**Submitting Written Opposition to HB 1106**

	First Name	Last Name	Affiliation/Position
1	Audra	Sellers	Maui Police Dept.
2	Candace	Tablit	Hilo Medical Center
3	Jo Ann	Schindler	
4	Jennifer	Shishido	State Employee, HGEA
5	Bridget	Mowat	
6	Fredericka	Aikau	Library Assistant
7	Kenneth	Fields	Dept. of Health
8	Jean	Tanaka	Civil Servant
9	Gloria	Fernandez	RN
10	Pat	Tompkins	
11	Gwen	Oka Dang	Dept. of Human Services
12	Taylor	Maddisson	Public Employee
13	Cheryl	Rapoza	Honolulu Police Dept.
14	Caron	Wilberts	Dept. Edu
15	Lee	Kravitz	
16	Javier	Aceret	Public Employee
17	Susan	Nakagawa	State of Hawaii
18	Paulie	Schick	
19	Jean	Chock	Public Employee
20	Harry	Sprinkel	
21	Holly	DeMello	City & County Honolulu
22	Rose	Zastro	Public Employee
23	Diane	Nakashima	University of Hawaii
24	Jen	Ching	
25	Wayne	Lee	
26	Cara	Scanlan	
27	Erica	Hashimoto	Public Employee
28	Nancy	Nicola	
29	Mandie	Guerra	Public Employee
30	Carl	Bolding	Dept. of Edu and HGEA
31	Penni	LaBatte	

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
And members
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.

I have been a public employee/sworn police officer with the Maui Police Department since May of 2002. I am highly concerned about the recent proposed bills including but not limited to the following:

HB 1536 RELATING TO SALERIES
HB 1106 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
HB 1718 RELATING TO EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS
HB1719 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
HB 1725 RELATING TO HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFIT
TRUST FUND

I understand the House of Representatives have a hearing set for Friday, February 13, 2009 in Honolulu.

House Speaker Calvin SAY is trying to produce solutions to introduce bills that will "share in the pain" for the economy. But I find it disturbing that his ideas are to slash the retirement and medical benefits for state and county workers. It seems as though we as public servants are being penalized. Cutting public employee and retiree benefits will not solve the state's budget crisis, and that it's unfair to target public employees.

Knowing that the proposed bills will adversely affect all those state and county workers who do not retire by July 2009, that is only the beginning. Should the proposed bills pass, the catastrophic repercussions will not be limited to the workers, but their family, coworkers, the communities and ultimately the state.

Imagine take those that are eligible for retirement now, that have stayed beyond twenty five (25) years of service, they will be forced to retire. Their leadership and knowledge will be gone, leaving the space to be filled with the newly promoted. Now that leaves the patrol division short handed thus creating excessive overtime expenditures and safety conditions. Who else suffers, families since the officer will be required to do overtime, hold over and call backs. Then what happens to the community? The community is already struggling with the economic crisis and unemployment. Because of that we experience more calls for service, more thefts, crimes against property, assaults and domestic abuse. What if the force is so depleted due to the mass exodus of those forced to retired, and there is no one to respond. Now put that on a medical emergency, heart attack, stroke, car accident. What happens if our parks and division personnel are cut so

that the parks are unsafe for our children? Imagine no lifeguards at pools and beach fronts.

On a personal note, I served twelve (12) years in the Hawaii Air National Guard, defending our Country and State. I was taught to believe that one person really can make a difference. I then chose a career in service with the Police Department because of the benefits, stability and my desire to continue community service. Please don't let them take away our benefits that we earned. We make this state and county a safer place while putting our lives on the line each and everyday. Are you saying that our lives are not worth the benefits that we were promised?

As our elected official I hope that you take my/our concerns seriously and OPPOSE these bills! I know there is no easy answer, but I/We do know that if these bills pass, there will be catastrophic repercussions felt by all.

My family and I thank you for your time and hopeful consideration.

Audra Sellers

OFFICER AUDRA SELLERS
MAUI POLICE DEPARTMENT
55 MAHALANI STREET
WAILUKU, HI 96793
PH: 808-244-6303
FAX: 808-244-6308
CELL: 808-268-4777

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:21 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB1106: Requesting Your Help!

From: Candace Tablit [mailto:dulcenak@msn.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:03 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: HB1106: Requesting Your Help!

Regarding: HB1106; Public Employment; Furloughs

My name is Candace Walker Tablit and I am a government worker. I work at the Hilo Medical Center. This is one of the hospitals run by Hawaii Health Systems Corporation. I am also a member of the HGEA.

I am against this bill. I am contacting you to ask you for a "NO" vote to legislation that is attempting to place the burden of balancing our states budget on government workers, their families and their futures.

We hear many stories in the media about young people choosing to leave the islands to make a better life for their families elsewhere. Often, one of the questions asked is "how do we keep them here?" Taking away our benefits through this bill removes one of the incentives for young people to stay here and enrich our community.

I am one of those young people who chose to stay here in the islands. I am college educated and have worked in the private sector for many years. I chose to forsake my higher paying job and become a civil servant.

Just as with any other resident of this state, my paycheck economically impacts my community. The money I spend on housing, food, clothing and other essentials for my family has a direct effect on the well being of my local community.

A better way to balance the budget would be to increase the sales tax for the entire state. There was a great deal of money raised for mass transit on Oahu simply by raising the sales tax by a small percentage. Imagine what a statewide tax that we ALL share in could do!

Every resident of our state should equally share in the burden of balancing our budget. Government workers should not be forced to sacrifice their future and that of their families alone.

Please vote "NO" on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Candace Walker Tablit
Pahoa, Hawaii

yamashita1- Kathy

From: rhoads3-Christine on behalf of Rep. Karl Rhoads
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:24 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: Please Vote No on HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727

From: Jo Ann Schindler [mailto:joann.schindler@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:23 AM
To: Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: Please Vote No on HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727

Chair Karl Rhoads, House of Representative's Committe on Labor & Public Employment:

I would like to express my concern about the "take-aways" proposed in the following bills: HB1106, HB1715, HB1718, HB1719, HB1723, HB1725, HB1726, and HB1727. These bills will negatively impact State and County employees and retirees, notably those who are newly retired or nearing retirement after a lifetime of work and planning for their later years.

Speaker Calvin Say's desire to address the State's financial situation is commendable. However, I believe that these bills place an unfair share of the burden on government employees who, like their neighbors, have been affected by the national and local economic downturn. We have just learned the news about the \$2.95 billion devaluation of the ERS portfolio in 2008. Many have also suffered declines in their personal retirement and other savings accounts. Moreover, previous unfair raids on ERS funds have further impacted the long-range performance and health of the employees' retirement fund:

<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2007/Jul/24/ln/hawaii707240336.html>

Speaker Say's proposals – at best well-intentioned attempts to put more options on the table – are frightening additions to an already disturbing mix. It is counterproductive to jeopardize the health plans of aging workers and retirees whose conditions of hire included specific retirement benefits.

I have been saddened by news coverage of multinational, national, and local companies that have closed their doors, resulting in financial disaster for their employees and pensioners. However, I do not believe that the solution to this sad state of affairs is to "share the pain" by placing an additional burden on government employees whose pension fund has already been unfairly tapped.

Please help preserve the existing medical and financial safety net for our government employees and retirees. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Schindler

TO: House Labor and Public Employment Committee

Hearing Date & Time: 2/13/09, 8:30 a.m.

Bill No.: HB 1106, Relating to Public Employment

From: Jennifer Shishido, State employee and member of HGEA

Testimony in Opposition

I am opposed to this bill for the following reasons:

1. Furloughs would NOT be the least disruptive method of addressing the budget deficit:
 - a. The State administration has not exhausted all means to balance the budget.
 - 1) The State should pare down government services in a systematic manner, looking at core services that cannot be performed by private sector first. We have a number of duplicative government functions, i.e. tourism promotion, that should be done by private sector. The expenditure of government funds to promote one sector is tantamount to a government bailout, except it's done in both good times and bad. In all other sectors, private industry promotes their own business and sales.

State has not identified core services. We still don't know what government functions are absolutely essential. Instead the Governor has proposed eliminating all vacant positions. So programs that are historically underfunded, where employees are overworked are punished by a further reduction in staff. If those services are not essential, then have the guts to eliminate them and take the political fallout for the decision.
 - 2) There are still many unnecessary positions in State government. Exempt positions mean that the legislature has not seen fit to make them civil service, and the Department of Human Resources Development has not seen fit to make it a priority to create the civil service positions to transfer these people to civil service status. Eliminate them. State department heads will testify that these positions are necessary to carry out the government mandate because it takes too long to create and fill the positions in the normal manner. Then, I say, plan ahead and not wait until the last minute, and streamline the recruitment process. Again, we are using the exempt position to bypass the crippled and ineffective DHRD – unable to properly classify, unable to amend the classification system for appropriate pay for the work, and unable to hire qualified people quickly.

Other unnecessary positions include the Governor's advisors. In the past, there was the Chief of Staff, the lieutenant governor, and the cabinet to advise the governor. Now we have a senior policy advisor, and I assume other advisors too. Why? What's the purpose? Is the Chief of Staff, LG and cabinet so inept? Other unnecessary positions include public information specialists. Why can't department heads and their deputies do the communication with the people and the media? Why duplicate their work? And

what does State government have to hide that there has to be professional public information people whose main job is to “spin” the news.

- b. As the California example indicates, furloughs are disruptive. Right now there are state offices with such huge backlogs that the people have to work overtime just to make a dent in the work. Furloughs would exacerbate the backlog – creating havoc in the community. There would be additional delays in making determinations made, performing inspections, providing services such as training, benefits, etc. The impact on the community would very disruptive. At a time when government is needed even more than ever to make sure our food supply is free of toxins like salmonella in peanut butter, for example, we are going to furlough the people who assure are water is clean, food is safe to eat, roads are safe, and everything else the public uses is safe. Such a strategy will only put the most vulnerable of our population – the elderly and our children at greater risk.
2. The bill attempts to nullify the negative effects of furloughs on employee benefits but the most significant is the reduction in retirement benefits, including state pension and social security benefits. Many state employees, such as myself, have repeatedly accepted lower salaries than what the private sector is paying in exchange for benefits in the future, i.e. retirement benefits. This is renegeing on a contract with state employees. I suggest instead that we offer employees an option (but only after all other measures have been implemented – see point 1 above):
 - a. Option 1 – take the one day furlough. This option would work best for younger state employees who need to make ends meet and don’t need the current years to calculate their high-3 or high-5.
 - b. Option 2 – 2 days of “donation”. Similar to Aloha United Way contributions, payroll deduction, the employee “donates” 2 days’ pay each month back to the general fund. This option would benefit the older state employee who has a little more disposable income and who might want to use these years for the high-3 or would not want their social security and pension benefits affected. The W-2 would still reflect wages paid in the full amount – so those benefits dependent on wages paid would not be affected. The employee would also be contributing as if they earned the whole amount to pension, social security and medicare – thus preserving the assets of these programs. The employee would also benefit from the “charitable donations” deduction on their taxes.

I urge you to please hold this bill for the above reasons. Thank you.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 8:31 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: anake_bridge@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: uploader.dll

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Bridget A. Mowat
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 808-553-5255
E-mail: anake_bridge@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 2/9/2009

Comments:

The attack of the State Employees will provide no solutions to our economic situation. Rather, it will but less dollars into the consumer and therefore less to the businesses. The "Public Servants" are the backbone to this State. When unemployment and welfare recipients increase, you don't shut the doors. The state receives incentives from the federal government when services are provided in a timely manner and error rates are minimul. We will lose these incentives if already understaffed offices close the doors. This will cause stress, overload which may result to illness or injury. The "Public Servants" will be expected to provide more services during these hard times and should not be expected to cut back. I'm hoping the committees will look into some of the wasteful spendings in many of our state agencies before placing the burden on the servants of this state.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: RickiAikau@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2009 8:41 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: testing

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Per email testimony is in regards to

HB 1106 HB 1726

HB 1718 HB 1727

HB 1719

HB 1723

HB 1725

Aloha!

I am Fredericka Aikau, an employee with HSPLS. I am a Library Assistant. I am objecting to, and voting "NO", to the proposed changes to our benefits. We work so very hard, with very little pay. The main reason we do so is the medical benefits, as well as the retirement package. You must not take these away from us, or - for what do we work such a strenuous, physically and mentally, job? We are proud to offer public service, but must pay our bills. To avoid an increase in homelessness, as well as health related problems, it is imperative that none of these proposals are taken seriously, and are stricken immediately.

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Kenneth Fields [khfields@camhmis.health.state.hi.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:34 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony
Attachments: mfgcsignature2.jpg

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

My name is Ken Fields. and I am a Human Service Professional at the Department of Health, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division, Maui Family Guidance Center. I am a member of Hawaii Government Employees Association. I want it known that I

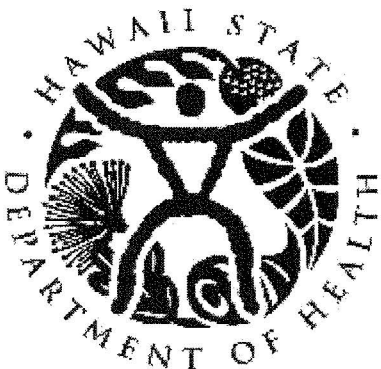
strongly oppose HB 1723
strogly oppose HB 1725
strongly oppose HB 1726
strogly oppose HB 1727

I am in favor of HB 1106
I am in favor of HB 1536

The economy of Hawaii is built on the workforce. When you start taking away things from the workforce, you weaken it, which does nothing but penalize and harm the fundamentals of the economy. It is understood that in these difficult times, nothing may be added. But, there is no call to take things away. It is up to the elected officials to find fair ways of dealing with budget shortfalls that do not penalize, harm and dishearten some families and workers who are not responsible for the economic catastrophe brought on by short-sighted and narrow-minded capitalists and politicians. Do the right thing. Spread the burden across the field equally, such as a small increase in the GET tax, and/or a small increase in the sales tax which includes visitors and short term residents. I implore you to maintain the benefits of dedicated state and county government workers as they have been.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Ken Fields



Kenneth Fields, MA, LMHC
Mental Health Care Coordinator
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division
Maui Family Guidance Center

270 Waiehu Beach Road, Suite 213
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
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yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jean T. [jeanta@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jean Tanaka. As a public employee for 21 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719

HB 1719- As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service." I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote **“no”** on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: fernandeb006@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

I am an employee for the State of Hawaii, Department of Health, and work as a Public Health Nurse for the Leeward Oahu Nursing Section. I also live in the district that I work in. As a constituent, I am opposed to the following House Bills:

- HB 1106 Relating to furloughs
- HB 1108 Relating to interest arbitration and cost considerations
- HB 1715 Increases the minimum age and length of service requirement for retirement of new public employees
- HB 1718 Medicare Part B reimbursement only for employees retired prior to 12/31/09
- HB 1719 Suspend EUTF payments for retirees who retire prior to Medicare retirement age
- HB 1720 Reimburse Medicare part B premiums only to those employees retired before 7/01/09.
- HB 1721 EUTF benefits for active members capped at a specified maximum cost
- HB 1722 EUTF to provide the minimum health benefits plan required under Hawaii prepaid health care act
- HB 1723 Makes employer contributions to EUTF non-negotiable and capped at 55% of costs
- HB 1725 Prohibits EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage from 7/1/2009-6/30/2015; public employees would pay for entire cost of the drug plan
- HB 1727 Prohibits EUTF from providing dental and vision coverage from 7/1/2009-6/30/2015; public employees would pay for entire cost of the dental and vision plan
- HB 1737 Eliminates the high three calculation for retirement

Please take into consideration how these bills, if passed, would affect the hard working State Employees. As a Registered Nurse, who has also worked in the hospital setting, the effects of rising insurance cost will have a negative impact on when people access health care. There are questions that should be answered before passing legislation that will decrease health care options.

- 1) How will the population be able to afford insurance premiums upward of \$750 for families monthly that do not include preventative screening such as vision or provide dental care? When given choices, people may choose to purchase groceries instead of paying for health insurance. Preventative care will take a back seat and people will seek medical attention when it becomes an emergency or urgent situation.
- 2) How will the law makers help residents who have chronic conditions access health care, if it does not include preventative care? Vision screening is important to certain conditions such as prematurity and diabetes.
- 3) What will the costs be for emergency and urgent care at the emergency rooms? When prices increase, people will opt to pay for the least amount of health insurance which most do not cover preventive care.

4) What will happen to those employees with health conditions who will be eligible for retirement in the next 6 years, who do not meet the medicare age requirement? Those with chronic health conditions will be forced to continue working or use their pension to pay for health insurance. It is a little late in the game for these state employees to start considering other options.

The economy will not fix itself, however, decreasing health benefits, increasing retirement age or premiums for insurance should not be the remedy for the failing economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gloria K.A.O.H. Fernandez, RN
Wai'anae, Hawaii

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: tompkinse001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: Testimony 02 13 09

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Pat Tompkins
Organization: Individual
Address: 87-152 Liopolo Street Waianae, HI 96792
Phone: 808.292.3281
E-mail: tompkinse001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

This letter is in opposition to House Bills 1106, 1718, 1719 and 1725.

My name is Pat Tompkins. I have been a City & County, HGEA Unit 13 employee since 1993. I will be 59 years old next month. I thought I was going to join my husband, who will be 62 next month, in retirement in 3 years. Now I'm not so sure either of use will be able to retire in the foreseeable future.

When I joined the public sector workforce in 1993, certain promises were made regarding the benefits that would be available to me and my husband when I retired.

I believed then and continue to believe now, that A PROMISE MADE IS A PROMISE KEPT.

Besides a desire to serve my community, what convinced me to accept employment with the City at a much lower rate of pay than I had earned previously in the private sector, were the retirement benefits. I don't use most of the medical insurance coverage now, as an active employee, because my husband has a much better, cheaper benefit through his employer who also pays the cost of most of my coverage. But we needed the retirement benefits because he wouldn't have medical insurance when he retired.

I've worked hard, served my community, and now, after almost 16 years, certain members of this Legislature have proposed changing the retirement conditions and rules for current employees as well as retirees.

HOW DARE THEY!

I made a life decision 16 years ago to join government service based on an employment agreement that contained certain rights and benefits that applied both during the term of my active employment as well as when I retired.

These bills, and others that will be heard next Tuesday, are bad news for public employees and they are bad news for the public in general.

Please consider the following points:

HB 1106 proposes to allow furloughs. Each day of furlough is really a 5% pay cut for those furloughed. 5% that will no longer be flowing into the economic pipeline here in Hawaii. Groceries won't be bought, clothing sales won't be made, savings accounts will not increase. Likewise, State revenue from income, GET, gas as well as other taxes will decrease, increasing lost revenues for the State and local governments. Furloughs will start a domino effect that will necessitate additional budget cuts. Public worker spending is the last secure source of revenue for our local businesses and tax base. Public workers don't expect to get raises in our next contracts to help offset the increased costs we're already experiencing. But please don't reduce the effective value public worker wages further with the imposition of furloughs.

HB 1718 proposes to halt reimbursement of Medicare Part B for those who retire after 12/31/09. The ERS/EUTF requires covered retirees to carry Medicare Part B. This helps lower the premiums to the EUTF and Employers for the secondary health insurance coverage provided by the EUTF to those who are also covered by Medicare that becomes the primary insurer when the retiree turns 65. Currently the monthly premium for Part B is \$96.40/mo. and usually increases each year. The non-reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums would result in a net reduction of a public worker retiree's income.

HB 1719 proposes to halt medical insurance premiums for any current public employee who retires after 07/01/09 and has not reached the age of Medicare eligibility, currently 65. This would force affected retirees to either pay the full cost of medical insurance coverage which would be available through the EUTF, currently estimated to be in excess of \$1,000/mo for a family policy, for up to 10 years. This could reduce the individual's retirement income for that 10 year period by \$120,000 or more. For many, that \$1,000/mo. payment would reduce their monthly retirement benefit by more than one-half. The result would be that most would have net incomes below the poverty level.

HB 1725 proposes to halt prescription drug coverage under the EUTF for a period from 07/01/09 through 06/30/15. Why have medical coverage if you don't have drug coverage? Lack of prescription drug coverage will result in both active employees and retirees being unable to afford to fill the prescriptions their doctors felt were necessary to treat either chronic or episodic conditions. Many maintenance drugs for chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure or cholesterol, cost hundreds of dollars a month. Paying for those drugs out of pocket for actives and net retirement income for retirees would push more individuals into poverty. Still others may become permanently disabled or actually die because of the lack of affordable prescription drugs.

Is increasing the number of people in poverty, who end up declaring bankruptcy for health related reasons, or who die because they are unable to afford medical treatment really what is intended as a result of these bills? Do people on welfare really deserve better coverage than the public workers who manage their care or provide their treatment have available to themselves? I'm sure it isn't. Yet that is what would happen if these bills are passed. It is sad to think that someone could work for government or be retired after many years of service and also be in poverty. That would truly be an injustice.

The stated intent of all of these Bills being heard in the next few days is to reduce the State's bottom line right now. However, these bills do that at the sole expense and on the backs of public workers.

What is being avoided is requiring the Governor and members of the Legislature from having to look long and hard at all programs to see which are absolutely needed and which are not. All

of you must decide where limited dollars should be spent. What is not being said is that these bill avoid that responsibility by making public workers look like the bad guys, leading the public to think that these cuts will actually solve problems with the bottom line. They won't.

Here are a few places to look to lower the bottom line for the long run:

Enact a real freeze on hiring. Hundreds of jobs have been advertised and many filled since the alleged freeze was put in place.

Review the core mission of each department and make sure each agency within that department is providing services that achieve that core mission. Eliminate the programs and services that don't.

Keep public dollars keeping public workers employed instead of privatizing services. When services are privatized, there are no controls over the amounts paid for wages, where items get purchased and cost overruns. Everyone knows the way to get a government contract is to low-ball the bid and then get whatever you can in change orders. That mentality and practice has to stop.

If contracting out must occur because there are not sufficient staff or expertise within government, then make sure cost controls are in place and enacted.

Streamline the contracting process for health and human services. It takes far too long to execute contracts and pay our service providers. This ends up costing government added dollars in increased costs because the non-profit organization's bids and unit rates must include costs for lines of credit to pay expenses in advance of reimbursement of costs.

Eliminate, to the extent possible, non-bid contracting. When there isn't any price to which to compare the cost of a contract, there is a lot of opportunity for overcharging.

Eliminate, to the extent possible, the appointments of individuals who do not meet minimum qualifications to a position. There are hundreds who have been hired by the current administrations, both State and local, on either emergency or 1 year contracts that have been renewed over and over again. Worse yet, some of those hired in this manner have now had their positions "converted" to either limited term or civil service. That has to stop. Positions should be posted in the prescribed manner and a fair and open competition should take place with the most qualified, not the best connected, being chosen for employment.

In closing, public workers know economic times are tough. We're working harder and smarter and we will continue to do our share to help strengthen our home state. But we are not willing to be made the scapegoats for all that ails Hawaii. No one person or entity created this situation. Likewise, no one person or entity will be able to get us out of it. We stand ready to support our elected officials but only if they support us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pat Tompkins
Waianae, Hawaii

From: Russell Dang [dangr004@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for LAB, Room 309, 8:30 a.m., February 13, 2009

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

**TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 1106, 1719, 1725
RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of my family. My name is Gwen Oka Dang and my husband is Russell Dang. I have been a public employee for 29 years for the Dept. of Human Services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. I am only 52 years old and 3 years shy of my anticipated retirement age of 55 years. I will have 31 years of service at that age. My husband has been employed with the State since 1982 through Hawaiian Home Lands, Dept. of Land and Natural Resources and since 1990 with the City and County Fire Department. He is 54 years of age and a candidate to retire possibly at the end of the year if he chooses to. We have a soon-to-be 10 year old daughter. We have gone through caring for elderly parents and understand the financial and emotional realities of that situation also.

My husband and I feel as if we are being slapped in the face after many years of hard work and service to the public as a result of the many bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. The manner in which these bills are presented by separating the similarly related subjects such as vision, dental, and drugs, medical premiums and retirement benefits gives the impression of deceit and conspiracy rather than negotiation and open communication.

We both knew, that at this time, we would need to make some sacrifices, compromises and concessions. We have friends who have lost their jobs. I have always been very aware of the labor market and the challenges society faces since my job entails assisting individuals with disabilities to be meaningfully employed. Though I did not care for a furlough, I was willing to do it. I would have even been willing to pay the vision, dental, drugs portion for the specified time period had I been asked. BUT, seeing the barrage of bills that potentially could result in lost wages from furloughs, paying additional medical premiums, and most of all being told to pay the premiums or lose my medical upon retirement because we were not of Medicare age despite the number of years served, infuriates us. **WE ARE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND NOT PUBLIC SERVANTS.**

On this date, I am specifically concerned about **HB 1719, 1725, 1106**. Though I understand the need for **HB 1106** since it will preserve my benefits in the event of a furlough, I **disagree** that the **Governor alone** should have the absolute authority to determine the details. After all, I have read that the Governor has utilized EUTF monies to build shelters for the homeless, borrowed and used money from our ERS, allowed her directors to utilize funds not allocated for the programs purpose. In general, has violated laws that protect funds and programs.

I know first hand that a reduction to salaries would be a hardship to some employees. Some of my co-workers cannot meet basic bills with their current salaries because they are single individuals without family support trying to find a place to rent, single parents with children living on one income, dealing with medical hardships and parent or child care. I also know that furloughs especially **along** with increased medically related payment listed in **HB 1725** would force public employees to shut down spending or do without services that may jeopardize the health and well being of themselves or family members. Spending is what helps the economy. Furloughs would reduce taxable income for the State because of lowered salaries. As a co-worker of mine stated, 2 days of furlough a month equals 24 days or one month salary.

I was raised by my parents who went through the Depression era. They advised me to save money for the future, but also to spend accordingly because that is what keeps the economy growing. My father was a retired State employee and my mother worked for a large private retail company and made more money during employment and after retirement. Their thoughts were: If people didn't spend at the retail company my mother worked for it would close and she would be out of a job. Isn't that what is happening now and a reason why many companies are shutting down. If everyone stops spending, even those who have jobs because of fears, who will support and purchase goods to keep the economy flowing? If people aren't working, where will the taxes supporting government come from?

HB 1719 is extremely bothersome to my family and other State government employees I have talked with. As public employees, we chose to work to serve the community and public. We were told and given literature when hired that the benefits of employment with the State were free medical after meeting certain retirement requirements and a pension based on wages. We were willing to take the hit upfront through lower salaries, automatic deductions for retirement and higher medical premiums for the sake of that **promised** retirement future.

HB 1719 arbitrarily picks dates for retirement to get the benefits earned and promised upon hire. HB 1719 decides who can and who can't get this benefit based on an arbitrary date, disregarding the number of years of service or age. If the EUTF is truly concerned about being unable to provide benefits and can demonstrate this need, come up with a more equitable system. Why force employees to work until Medicare age, which is slated to increase the age requirements shortly. Are you trying to increase State income by having employees die on the job so you don't have to pay the medical promised? Do you really want people who may develop age related impairments continuing to work because of financial need to pay for medical benefits that they can't afford on retirement pensions? Are you willing to chance having older employees claim workers compensation due to injuries that may more easily occur with age, or increase the public assistance rolls for food stamp and MedQuest because an employee retires because of illness or caring for elderly family members and can't make it on the retirement benefits having to pay the medical premiums?

Based on the ERS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2007, the average monthly benefit for all retirees was \$1,773.00 with a range of \$272.00 through \$2765.00. Based on the Hawaii EUTF 2008-2009 Retiree rates the cost of a non-Medicare Medical Plan with prescription ranged from \$403.84 to \$470.00 for a single plan; \$788.922 to \$916.86 for a two-party plan; \$1,166.60 - \$1358.72 for a family

plan. I don't know how many retirees can pay for the premiums if HB 1719 requires retirees to pay the full premium before Medicare age? Could you? I know my family can't so if this bill passes I will continue to work since my husband shouldn't based on his type of occupation. Think of what this bill would do for employees working in hazardous occupations with potential for injury. Will the State really save money or just divert it into TDI, workers compensation, or the rolls of public assistance benefits?

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET that all THESE BENEFITS that you want to take away, SUPPLEMENT THE LOW WAGE BASE AND HIGH MEDICAL PREMIUMS, used by the State to bring in qualified people who could earn more in the private sector. Do you think that just because the economic times are hard, you can take that away? What are you going to do when the economy recovers and the State cannot get qualified applicants, OFFER RETIREMENT AND LOWERED MEDICAL COST SHARE BENEFITS AGAIN?

Over my many years I have seen the many mistakes of this State in trying to save money using public employees. I have been through the COMPRESSION that was to save the State money through reduction of step movements for employees which resulted in concurrent work at two part time jobs for seven

years to supplement my income until Shredding occurred. That was a big expense to the State even though I was never retroactively compensated for that money lost during compression. I convinced myself that at least I was being compensated accordingly when the shredding occurred, that I could quit the 2 part time jobs to spend time with my daughter and unfortunately my newly disabled, elderly father. I have also gone through the States changes with the contributory retirement system to the non-contributory system in an attempt to save money and now through the Hybrid, a scheme made to put money into a failing State contributory retirement system.

At this time there are many employees rushing to ERS to file for retirement because of HD 1719. If passed, the State would be paying full retirement/medical benefits and hiring new positions to fill voids left by that retiree because there is no other qualified person to fill the position within the current State workforce. If memory serves me properly I remember recently reading a local magazine question and answer interview with a politician. The question raised the possibility of an early retirement offering for State employees. The response was that it cost the State more money and that would not be done again. Isn't this a similar situation but instead of giving an incentive for people to retire, HD 1719 is offering a disincentive to remain employed? Are we really saving and at whose expense?

We refuse to be good soldiers anymore and sit through another group of legislators and governors trying to use public employees to get out of poor management decisions during their administrations. I am tired of all the threats to take away what was promised when hired. I want to retire while I am healthy but I can see myself working with ill health forced on me by the unreasonable workload as result of too much work for too little personnel. My occupation as a rehabilitation specialist requires a specialized Master's degree in order to be certified in the profession and meet the requirements of the Federal law. My agency continues to have difficulty finding qualified employees with the required credentials because of the low pay base. Many of those employed have left because of the demands and the fact that they can earn more in private and Federal jobs using the credentials.

We all need to make some sacrifice at this time. How much, I don't know. Work with us through our Union to understand the facts and figures, reasons for the proposed cuts. This was recently done through agreements with the Union and the Honolulu Advertiser, why can't it be with us? Let's be

open, honest and have clarity about what is really going on. I know the economy has been in a downturn, but I'm not convinced it warrants all that is being pushed on us and I

don't believe it will resolve the problems. We need to really look at all the programs, consultants being paid for, etc. to see that money is being wisely spent. If it is, my husband and I would be willing to agree to some of the recommended reductions. HOWEVER, at this point, we don't understand or have documentation of financial crisis to warrant all that is listed in the bills!!!

We need LEADERS, not followers who rush out of panic. You were elected to be LEADERS, to be calm and evaluate, make good plans for our State and your State employees.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees. Please work with and inform the public employees and our representative Unions of the true status of our government's finances. The Union knew that there would not be a raise during this negotiation period, they are not unworldly or unreasonable. My family was willing to forego a raise in the future until the economy recovered, we were ready for a furlough for a specified period of time to help out, we would be willing to take on more payments to our medical benefits for a specified period of time, we would even consider partial payment of medical benefits upon retirement until Medicare age, **BUT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO DO ALL NOR CAN WE DO IT ALL, AND WE WILL NOT DO IT WITHOUT A REAL CAUSE.**

Thank you for your time in hopefully reading my entire testimony and considering my families position and concerns.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Taylor Maddisson [tamaddisson@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:50 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Taylor Maddisson.

As a public employee for 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker

Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough.

Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public

service." I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state?

A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we are the sole breadwinners. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the

authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able

to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe

retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical

benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public

service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us

can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans my sister had made to ensure that her child graduated from college before she retires are suddenly up in the air. She now has to make the choice - get out now so that she can afford to stay healthy during

her retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic

times and risk losing her current level of care during her retirement. She has worked for the city for **38 years**. Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

To: LABtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Cheryl Rapoza, Sr. Clerk Typist
Telecommunications Systems Section
Honolulu Police Department

Date: February 11, 2009

Subject: Labor & Public Employment Committee
Hearing, Friday Feb. 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
HB 1106 Relating to Public Employment
HB 1718 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits
HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees
HB 1725 Relating to Hawaii Employees-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund
Hearing, Tuesday Feb. 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m.
HB 1723 Relating to Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust
HB 1725 Relating to Retirement
HB 1726 Relating to Hawaii Employees-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund
HB 1727 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

I urge the Labor & Public Employment Committee members to oppose the above bills. It is a reality that the economy is in a poor state, both nationwide and worldwide. In Hawaii, we have one of the highest cost of living. When I started with the City almost 4 years ago, I accepted employment knowing the pay was much lower than what I was getting in the private sector, but knew the long term benefits as a government worker would outweigh the lower wages.

Because there is no control over the private sector where it comes to cutting staff members and benefits to save on costs, the burden falls on the public employees and the local government system. To have public employees bear the burden due to finances of the State of Hawaii is an unfair practice.

Personally, my husband, retired, and I will no longer be able to afford our home; we'll have to forego medications and make more cuts here and there. We may even have to drop the medical insurance altogether. We would have to choose between our home, our health, and our food. We have enough financial problems trying to stay afloat in Hawaii's ever increasing fees and costs and now we have bill proposals to "add to the fuel". It's frightening to think that your decision determines our livelihoods and the quality of our lives.

It will be chaos if the bills are not opposed. If the bills pass, it would affect thousands of lives. We would all have to make choices of whether to pay for our homes, for medical insurance, and other living necessities. It will lead to more people losing their homes, more people living on the beach, less police, firefighters, and paramedics to act as first responders which would then trickle its effect down to Hawaii's community as a whole.

An alternative to the above bills would be to possibly raise taxes so that all Hawaii consumers would bear the burden.

**Testimony for the House of Representatives Committee on Labor & Public
Employment Notice of Hearing Friday February 13, 2009 8:30 am Conference room
309 State Capital. Fax#586-6331**

From:

**Caron M. Wilberts
Department of Education Clerk Typist**

Please accept testimony on the following Bills:

HB1106: In favor of this Bill. Please protect the rights of your public workers. Referring to SB 372 that refers to state workers as, "whose base salaries often are already quite low". For those that are on the lower echelon of the pay scales, our benefits are all that we have. Most of us cannot afford a home, car or even the simple pleasure of going on a trip. But, we have our benefits, without our benefits we literally will have nothing. We have traded not being paid anywhere close to living wage but know that if we get sick we have our medical. If we need medication we can get that, or if we require dental or vision care we do have access to that. We your constituents who voted for you and would like to vote for you again, have faith in you that you will do the right thing and protect the rights of your public workers. We are not the problem.

HB 1725: Not in favor of this Bill. Prescription Drug Coverage is literally a life and death issue for hundreds and possibly even thousands of your public workers. This is not an issue that can be bartered away. People's lives are at stake here, and really think of what you are doing. By taking away the prescription drug coverage from the state workers, people will die. I am not saying that to create drama, this will be a fact. Because we are paid such low wages, people will not be able to afford the drugs that they literally need to live. Think about it, by taking away this most essential need you will literally have contributed to the demise of these state workers, whose only crime was to work hard for the state that they love and grew up in. Please do the right thing so that future generations of state workers can look up to you as their elected officials and that you will be able to serve us in years to come.

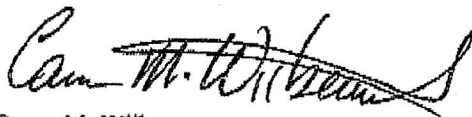
HB 1535: In favor of this Bill. Our higher paid officials that we have elected need to set this example. If the state workers are willing not to have a pay increase in these hard times then our much higher paid elected officials most certainly need to do the same thing. It's just the right & moral thing to do.

HB 1718: Not in favor of this Bill. Every single retiree that I have spoken to said that the part B reimbursements really helps. They are having such a hard time making ends meet. Please do not take this away.

HB 1719: Not in favor of this Bill: As a state worker you may work your whole adult life for the state. Once you have worked for all the years that are required one should be allowed to retire and enjoy what is left of their lives. Instead on punishing the state workers you as our elected officials should be looking for other avenues to better the lives of these workers who do work so hard. So you all are expecting someone who has worked for the state 25 years or more and say retires at age 55 to go without Health Insurance until they reach Medicare age, and they will probably have to because they will not be able to afford your "Carrier" that will provide the premium. Myself and everyone I know would be in that situation, so why retire. All you would be doing is just working so you can have medical, and that is no way to approach your job. Our jobs are so hard as it is already.

Please members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment do the right and just thing by protecting the right of your public workers. We literally are the backbone of the state. We serve the public who demands a lot of services and we do it to the best of our ability. All we have are our benefits, please do not take those away from us, for many it is a life and death situation.

I would like to ask all the members of this committee to have the insight and leadership to bring Hawaii into the 21st century on how we deal with fiscal matters in looking into generating new revenue for the state so this situation of trying to break the public workers never happens again. There have been discussions on having a state lottery and it is about time. We could call it the "Rainbow Lottery", and it would be run by the state. Just think of the money that could be generated for the state. I'm personally not in favor of gambling but it is high time that we have the lottery to help pay for all these services that the public demands. The state also needs to put a stop to people coming right off the plane and applying for services, that also has to come to an end. Punishing your hardworking state workers is not the answer. We work for low wages and provide all the services that the public demands, please do not take away what little we have. Thank you for your time.



Caron M. Wilberts
State of Hawaii Clerk Typist

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Lee N Kravitz [lk.hi@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:32 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: THEFT OF PUBLIC WORKERS HARD EARNED RIGHTS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Lee N. Kravitz. As a public employee for 33 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1718, 1719, 1723, 1725, 1726, and 1727 that steal from us in an attempt to balance the State budget at our expense, instead of raising the GET so all of us, residents and visitors alike may properly share in this burden.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state?

A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of great concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.
Mahalo,
The Kravitz Ohana (Claudia, Kent, Kailey, and Lee).

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Javier Aceret. As a public employee for 18 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is

playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Susan Nakagawa [ssnaka@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:11 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: TESTIMONY REGARDING HOUSE BILLS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom It May Concern:

I oppose the following House Bills:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

I am an employee that has worked in public service with the State of Hawaii for 12 years and will continue to do so for the next 10+ years. I have a family that depends on my income and therefore cannot support the House Bills that Speaker Calvin Say has addressed. It will be an extreme hardship for our family to survive if health benefits and wages are touched. Although I don't plan on retiring yet I am very upset about the fact that all the benefits that I thought I would get when I retire will change if these House Bills go through. Years ago I made the decision to leave the private sector and work for the State not because of the pay but mainly for the benefits that the State had to offer. I am sure I am not alone when I say I am not the only one that feels this way. You have thousands of dedicated employees that have put years of service to the State. Why should we be penalized and have our wages and benefits taken away from us. What do we have to look forward to when we retire.

Please look for other solutions to balance the State budget.

Thank you.

Susan S. Nakagawa

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Paulie Schick [paulieschick@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:15 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for today and Tuesday morning bills

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony Opposing:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage

I implore you to oppose the above listed house bills. They target the aged who went into public service, at lesser than private sector pay, on the promise of retirement benefits. Now on the eve of retirement, i become 62 on June 14, there are numerous bills threatening to reduce or negate benefits, effective July 1, 2009. Targeting the elders is demeaning our society. Equally is it unfair to the people who have been in public service for 32 years, such as my brother-in-law, but is only 53 years old. He was planning to retire at 55. Now he's faced with the prospect of being a public servant for another 12 more years! In addition, it will burden the ERS when it has lost more funds due to the economic downturn than at any other time. Further, because of no transition or training time to develop replacement staff with specific skill sets, it will cripple our government services to force a mass exodus of retirees who need to do so in order to keep the medical benefits. high three. etc. You should not bail out our economy by taking away hard-earned benefits from public employees.

Thank you.

Paulie Schick
paulieschick@hawaii.rr.com

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Jean.A.Chock@hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony HB 1719 Specifically

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Jean Chock. As a public employee for 39 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719.

HB 1719 is a major concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

HB 1725 says that from July 2, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and health lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: sprinkelh001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Harry Sprinkel
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: sprinkelh001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees would be sending the message that the services they render to the people of Hawaii are not needed by the people. This is not the time to take money out of the hands of the people who work for the State. However, If there are really some services not needed then do the job the people of Hawaii voted you into office for and delete those positions. Trying to be political correct and spreading the misery to all the employees only make everyone unhappy and less productive.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: DeMello, Holly M [hdemello@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:59 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1715, HB 1726, HB 1727, HB 1536, HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: DeMello, Holly M
Sent: Friday, February 06, 2009 4:53 PM
To: 'gov@hawaii.gov'
Subject: economy

Dear Governor Lingle,

I am very concerned about the economy. I have never written to someone in government, much less the governor. I work for the City & County of Honolulu and have been in various positions over the years. My supervisor has just passed out the different legislative bills that are being considered for us.

I object very much to all of it. I am divorced, single, 55 years old and I earn \$13.34 an hour. I will be at this pay rate for the next three years. I am barely making ends meet now and if there are cuts of any kind passed affecting the working poor, the government will have a bigger problem on their hands and that will be more and more homeless people. More and more homeless people will mean more and more mental health services will be needed. Believe me, I have been through both.

I am writing on behalf of all the people like me, who have gone through so many hard times already and are trying to put our lives together again. The blame for the deficit goes directly to our government officials, no one else. None of us have access to any government money and yes, shame on us because we have not demanded stricter stipulations as to how money is spent by the government. Restrictions need to be started for whatever programs, plans or expenses are not needed – not essential. Just like I live without cable, road runner, home phone, car insurance, and any kind of a decent vehicle, so does the government. If you being the governor would only pour our money into educating our children and developing exceptional programs for their mental well being, we would become a wealthy state. It is badly needed. You need to cut the government spending to the bare bones, like so many of us have to with ourselves. If you take any more from us and there is not much to take, we cannot survive.

I invite you or anyone else as a government official to live on \$13.34 an hour and then take away from that. We are already living below poverty. How much further below the poverty level do you want us to go?

I hope you read this and really, really give it thought, because this is from a real person who lives from paycheck to paycheck. You need to listen to us and do what is right. Whatever you have been doing hasn't worked otherwise we wouldn't be in this mess. Come out of your meetings, trips, and office and talk to us so you will really know what is wrong with our state. There are a lot of good people in small places and they have excellent ideas and the expertise to run the state's finances

better than it has been run. If things were run well, we would have a surplus rather than a deficit. You and no one else have to change things. You are in charge and no one else. Just like a household, the state has to get rid of the excessive spending and get down to the bare bones. Go without the big vehicles, luncheons, new furniture, anything to cut the spending; not take away from people who already don't have enough to live on.

And in case you are thinking, why don't I do something more than work for \$13.34 an hour. I am. I go to school half time and I'm aiming for a MFA in writing.

Sincerely,

Holly deMello

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Rose Zastrow [zastrowrose@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:21 AM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To my State Legislature, please be advised that your decisions effect everyone within our state. As a state employee I do not live in a bubble, the money that I earn is spent within our communities and I pay taxes just like everyone else. To imply that I am being over paid, or that somehow my salary reduction/furlough can save the state from financial ruin is ridiculous and I resent it.

As a Public Employee I work very hard to provide service to my fellow citizens and your proposed solutions leave people with the impression that we are a drain on society. If you wish to be fair about the solutions then everyone must share equally, that could be done by a small increase in the sales tax or excise tax rather than inciting the general public into thinking we are stealing their money.

All of your proposed bills listed below are unacceptable. Please remember that not only are we tax paying citizens, we are a strong voting power.

**Sincerely,
Rose Zastrow**

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees

HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09

HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09

HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

- AND -

HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;

HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;

HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;

HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Diane Nakashima [diane.nakashima@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:28 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for 02/13/09

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Labor Committee Members,

My name is Diane Nakashima, and I am an education specialist with the University of Hawaii.

I don't believe its fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. We are already working more with less in our areas. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as the private sector, but felt that I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family. I think its wrong to take these benefits away from me, especially since I am quickly approaching my twilight years.

Please don't make the public employees the scapegoats for this economic crisis.

Please vote No to HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725.

Respectfully,
Diane Nakashima

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:04 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jco88@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jen Ching
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jco88@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Hi,I live in your district and voted for you. I work for Dept of Health and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

As for the furlough, one day un-paid leave, is unfair. It really would make a big difference on my family's budget, which is hard enough already due to high cost of living.

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Wayne Lee.

As a public employee for 7 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1719, 1106 & 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough.

Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: what about the disruption to us as residents of this state?

A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

We should not be made the scapegoats !! We elected you because we thought you would protect public employees

Yours Truly,

Wayne Lee

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:26 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: momimakame@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Cara Scanlan
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: momimakame@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Cara Scanlan. As a public employee for 3 ½ years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically HB1106, HB1719, and HB1725.

HB 1106 is supposed to ‘protect the rights of public employees’ in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the “least amount of disruption to public service.”

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say’s bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don’t mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it’s not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai’i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai’i’s children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote “no” on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai’i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we

are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote “no” on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Erica Hashimoto. As a public employee for 7 ½ months, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106; HB1718; HB1719; HB1725; HB 1723; HB1715; HB 1726; HB 1727

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to

bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote “no” on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Erica Hashimoto
Dept. of Health
AMHD-HSH

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Nicola, Nancy [nnicola@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:15 AM
To: LABtestimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chairman Rodes, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Nancy Nicola. As a public employee for 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills being introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB's #1106, HB#1719, HB#1725.

HB#1106 is supposed to "protect the rights of public employees" in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: "What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?"

I also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of great concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice-leave now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of myself and my family.

HB#1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. Although the bill is temporary, it is unacceptable to expect us to carry that full cost for all those years. With talk of salary cuts and constant rise in our premiums, this is just one more financial burden to the hard working and dedicated employees who work the state and city. President Obama is talking of making our nation one of full health coverage and our state is proposing the opposite.

My husband and I are both state/city employees and these bills would be detrimental to our family and futures.

Please VOTE NO on these bills that take away benefits from public employees!

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: MGuerra@dhs.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:19 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1106, 1719, 1725
Attachments: ATT00001.jpg

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Mandie Guerra. As a public employee for 5 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, 1719, 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy? We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums

is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers, retirees and people with a disability. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Thank you,
Mandie Guerra



Mandie Guerra
VRSBD
Kona Field Office
(808) 323-0025
(808) 323-0028 Fax

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NOTICE: This information and attachments are intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged and/or confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited and may be punishable under state and federal law. If you have received this communication and/or attachments in error, please notify the sender via email immediately and destroy all electronic and paper copies.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: Carl Bolding [cbolding@k12.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:13 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Submitting Testimony on the House Bills Listed Below

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

Hi, my name is Carl Bolding. I work for the Department of Education and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Mahalo for you time and assistance.

yamashita3-Chelsea

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:30 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: plabatte@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM
Attachments: testimony - Feb 12 09.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Penni LaBatte
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: plabatte@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Penni LaBatte. As a public employee for 7 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1106, HB 1719, HB 1725

HB 1106 is supposed to 'protect the rights of public employees' in the event of a furlough. Speaker Say has said that a furlough would cause the "least amount of disruption to public service."

I pose this question to the Speaker: What about the disruption to us as residents of this state? A reduction in our salaries is hugely disruptive at a time when we find ourselves more and more the sole breadwinners for our entire families. How can we afford a reduction to our salaries when we are some of the last remaining wage earners in this unstable economy?

We also strongly disagree with Section 4 of HB 1106. The Governor does not have the authority to unilaterally furlough state employees.

HB 1719 is also of concern to me. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream.

This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement. Plans I may have made to ensure that my children graduated from college before I retire are suddenly up in the air. I now have to make the choice - get out now so that I can afford to stay healthy during my retirement, or stay even longer to provide for my family during these tough economic times and risk losing my current level of care during my retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of me and my family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will lose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. I strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is

playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote “no” on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Hawaii State Workers and HGEA Members
Same Written Testimony in Opposition to: HB1106, HB1718, HB1719, HB1725

(See Attached Letter)

	First Name	Last Name
1	Nalani	Fijimoto
2	Linda	Tamane
3	Dionie	Dela Cruz
4	Aaron	Teruya
5	Charles	Santiago, Jr.
6	Kaiulani	Lambert
7	Rick	Lau
8	Lillian	Haijima
9	Lolita	Perlawan
10	Leslie	Teruya
11	Elaine	Tokimasa
12	Alfonsa	Remoket
13	Jolynn	Kapeliela
14	Dawn	Nagahara
15	Nan	Suzuka
16	Kinau	Alka
17	Lelei	Aborda
18	Cynthia	Shimada
19	Ian	Rand
20	Linda	Gomes
21	Faith	Hope
22	Kathleen	Dela Cruz
23	Karla	Achiu
24	Lori-Ann	Lee
25	Cecilia	Gamil
26	Kerian	Onishi
27	Susan	Cummings
28	Tammie	Whitford
29	Imelda	Libao
30	Shirlene	Miyashiro
31	Michelle	Pang
32	Virginia	Tacto
33	Brenda	Viernes
34	Maile	Kakua-Haliniali
35	Rexford	Davis
36	Hannah	Domingo
37	Sharon	Togashi
38	Ernest	Hong
39	Theodore	Wong
40	Valerie	Germano
41	Jane	Nagai
42	Annabelle	Rambaud
43	Randy	Lum
44	Ofelia	Cueua
45	Susan	De Jesus
46	Jarriet	Enrique

HOUSE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE

Karl Rhoads, Chair

Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

My name is Nelani Fujimoto and I work for the state and am a member of HGEA.

I am also a taxpayer and support local businesses to buy food, clothing and everyday necessities for myself and my family.

I don't believe that it's fair for the **HOUSE** to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but decided that my retirement and health benefits for myself and my family were more important than the pay.

I OPPOSE:

HB 1106

HB 1718

HB 1719

HB 1725

HB 1723

HB1715

HB 1726 & HB 1727 and I am asking you for your support in opposing these bills too.

Thank you,

Fax Form

TO: REP. KYLE YAMASHITA fax number: 586-6331

FR: ANGIE HASHIMOTO fax number: 247-1852 (manual fax #)

RE: REQUESTING YOUR HELP, Please Date: Feb. 11, 2009

Hawaii State Capital
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 11, 2009

Dear Sir or Madam:

Aloha! We are Public Workers who are employed at King Intermediate School in Kaneohe. We take pride in our jobs and have made serving the community our career. We also pay taxes and contribute to the economy buying food, clothing, and other needs.

We don't believe that it is fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. Many of us have been employed in the DOE for numerous years and know that private sector employees have higher wages. Our health benefits and retirement was something we could rely on for ourselves and our families.

We think it is wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from us. We hope you will vote "NO" on the following bills, that will hurt us as public employees and our families.
<HB 1106, HB 1715, HB 1719, HB 1723, HB 1725, HB 1726, and HB 1727>

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Thank you,

Please see the signed attached list of employees at King Intermediate School who oppose the specified bills.

Vote "NO" on the following bills:
 HB1106, HB1715, HB1719, HB1723, HB 1725,

King Intermediate School
 HGEA / AFSCME Local 152 AFL - CIO

HB 1726, HB1727 - Print Name	Signature	email address or phone contact	Position	UNIT
1 Janice Yoshizu	<i>Janice Yoshizu</i>	JanYoshizu@gmail.com	Clerk	03
2 ANGIE K. HASHIMOTO	<i>Angie K. Hashimoto</i>	ahash94@gmail.com	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT III	03
3 Fay Lee	<i>Fay Lee</i>	cojpa@hawaii.rr.com	Health Aide	03
4 CAROL RITA	<i>Carol Rita</i>	carolrita@hawaii.rr.com	Library Clerk	03
5 Anna M Norris	<i>Anna M Norris</i>	annchenorris@gmail.com	EA III	03
6 MIRIAM KOKI	<i>Miriam K. Koki</i>	808-798-6381	E.A.	03
7 ANTOINETTE FARMER	<i>Antoinette Farmer</i>	Joie.farmer58@aol.com	Clerk, SSC	03
8 Stanley Dickson	<i>Stanley Dickson</i>		Security	03
9 Diana Jones	<i>Diana Jones</i>	247-1468	Security	03
10 Julie A. Lockyer	<i>Julie A. Lockyer</i>	499-4716	Educational Asst.	03
11 Charmaine Hopkinson	<i>Charmaine Hopkinson</i>	charm-2the3rdpower@yahoo.com	EA III	03
12 Amy Tamashiro	<i>Amy Tamashiro</i>	239-6491	Clerk Typist	03
13 Jori Kaneshiro	<i>Jori Kaneshiro</i>	jkaneshiro001@hawaii.rr.com	SSA	04
14 Jeff Camara	<i>Jeff Camara</i>	235-7514	PFSM III	02
15 James S. Galayan	<i>James S. Galayan</i>	236-3729	EA III	03
16 Teresa Maie	<i>Teresa Maie</i>	235-2974	EA III	03
17 Amoriana L. Luinane	<i>Amoriana L. Luinane</i>	230-5394	Account Clerk	03
18 Sharon Tom	<i>Sharon Tom</i>	sharontom@yahoo.com	EA III	03
19 Teresa Salmon	<i>Teresa Salmon</i>	255-3577	EA III	03
20 Sandra Adams	<i>Sandra Adams</i>	954-0082	Principal	06
21 Robert H Lockyer	<i>Robert H Lockyer</i>	233 5747	Vice principal	06
22 Danette Collins	<i>Danette Collins</i>	233 5747 ext 294	EA III	03
23 Aileen Yamashiro	<i>Aileen Yamashiro</i>	233-5727 ext.	EA III	03
24 Marilyn Deguchi	<i>Marilyn Deguchi</i>	206-4024	EA	03
25				

FEB-11-2009 12:28 PM PAGE 9 OF 900 080 241 1000

Date: February 13, 2009

To: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

We are taxpayers and active State employees. We spend our hard earned money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs to help keep the economy in our state. By approving and implementing these Bills you will be forcing us to use whatever monies we had extra, to pay for the increases and deletions of various medical bills and retirement. So that would mean even LESS monies going into the state economy. Which in turn would cause more companies to close which would lead to even more people being unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits.

We don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget with only public employees. We are long, loyal and hard working employees who have done our best to service the public of the State of Hawaii. We have made a career in public service knowing that our pay may not be as good as in the private sector but we would rely on retirement and health benefits for ourselves and our families.

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Please look for other ways to balance the budget such as raising the excise tax, some form of gambling, ie lottery, would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. Merle G. Schore	26. Pamela Rosa
2. Audrey G. Gito	27. Leticia Joubert
3. Jim D. Saggony	28. Paula A. Moran-Tolson
4. Myra M. Gamm	29. Louella Burke
5. Elynor dela Vega	30. Kelly
6. Kenneth J. McDavid	31. Melendrina Corcino
7. Norma J. Shinn	32. Wendy Osner
8. Kelly Swans	33. Patricia H. Jost
9. Mary Helen Cathcart	34. Judy
10. Kathleen K. Koon	35. W. Chee
11. Jim Koon	36. Jan M. Eubank
12. G. Santa Monica-Young	37. Glen
13. Gammara Gammara	38. Mrs. H. Muth
14. Rebecca J. Kalle	39. Ann Swate
15. Miriam Rose	40. Clinton A. Wang
16. Janis P. Sanders	41. Kathleen Baker
17. Judy Young	42. Vera J. La
18. Debbie High-Jones	43.
19. Elaine M. Kukunier	44.
20. Georgina Santana	45.
21. Lou C. G. G. G.	46.
22. Anne K. Hestayosh	47.
23. Kathleen Mack	48.
24. J. J. J.	49.
25. J. J. J.	50.

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Nancie J. Voyce</i>	26.
2. <i>Margaret Johnson</i>	27.
3. <i>Byron Williams</i>	28.
4. <i>Mary K. Johnson</i>	29.
5. <i>MA</i>	30.
6. <i>Lilia C. Martinez</i>	31.
7. <i>Joyce N. Nishimura</i>	32.
8. <i>Mary Jane F. Copuz</i>	33.
9. <i>Miriam</i>	34.
10. <i>Jan G.</i>	35.
11. <i>Lita C. O'Connell</i>	36.
12. <i>Lynne Kachola</i>	37.
13. <i>Gredley</i>	38.
14. <i>Joanne Mitchell</i>	39.
15. <i>Blair Finken</i>	40.
16. <i>Ferry M. Throda</i>	41.
17. <i>Julia Paragan</i>	42.
18. <i>Debrah Yon Dararjo</i>	43.
19. <i>Caroline Awan</i>	44.
20. <i>Bridget Kiroshita</i>	45.
21. <i>Valerie Brown</i>	46.
22. <i>Roland A. Hume</i>	47.
23. <i>Samuel</i>	48.
24. <i>Jamie Takahashi</i>	49.
25.	50.

Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Len Nunn</i>	26.
2. <i>Miss Keturahana</i>	27.
3. <i>Wendy P. H.</i>	28.
4. <i>Virginia Ishitani</i>	29.
5. <i>Archie Denny</i>	30.
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**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
 Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Rodriguez Hernandez</i>	26.
2. <i>William Lopez</i>	27.
3. <i>Rafael A. Jimenez</i>	28.
4. <i>Chris Malin</i>	29.
5. <i>Christina</i>	30.
6. <i>Mona C. Elvira</i>	31.
7. <i>Lesly Part</i>	32.
8. <i>Kate Leaj</i>	33.
9. <i>Diana</i>	34.
10. <i>Margaret Anguita</i>	35.
11. <i>Melanie</i>	36.
12. <i>Erin</i>	37.
13. <i>Jamie</i>	38.
14. <i>Randy</i>	39.
15. <i>Allyson</i>	40.
16. <i>Mitzya Puchalski</i>	41.
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Date FEB 12 2009

To: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
 HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
 Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>Yori E. Sakamoto</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Erie Sakamoto</i>	27. <i>Sam Freedman</i>
3. <i>Gareth Chen</i>	28. <i>Kelvin Cashman</i>
4. <i>Wm. T. [Signature]</i>	29. <i>John Wang</i>
5. <i>M. Umaka</i>	30. <i>Jim Versino</i>
6. <i>[Signature]</i>	31. <i>[Signature]</i>
7. <i>[Signature]</i>	32. <i>Corle Zukuda</i>
8. <i>Margeliaso</i>	33. <i>[Signature]</i>
9. <i>[Signature]</i>	34. <i>Marcy R. Johnson</i>
10. <i>Minda Yachin</i>	35. <i>Jerry D. Beck</i>
11. <i>Annie He</i>	36. <i>Shun K. Okamura</i>
12. <i>Luan Lee</i>	37. <i>Cheryl J. Sungai</i>
13. <i>[Signature]</i>	38.
14. <i>Tammie Chang</i>	39.
15. <i>[Signature]</i>	40.
16. <i>[Signature]</i>	41.
17. <i>Karina Nestela</i>	42.
18. <i>Charlotte Rego</i>	43.
19. <i>[Signature]</i>	44.
20. <i>Ken Chan</i>	45.
21. <i>Mal Arane</i>	46.
22. <i>[Signature]</i>	47.
23. <i>Hilary Lee</i>	48.
24. <i>Donna Taniguchi</i>	49.
25. <i>Valerie Lee</i>	50.

Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725

Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309

1. <i>Andri Wil. Tose</i>	26.
2. <i>Nalini Ali</i>	27.
3. <i>Ju An</i>	28.
4. <i>Endya Kalopodan</i>	29.
5. <i>Paulita T. Sari</i>	30.
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Date: February 12, 2009

To: Karl Rhoads
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Various Concerned Voters

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(See attached - list of bills with signatures)

If you have any questions, you may call me at 221-0840 or via email at suzy.okino@gmail.com.


Suzanne Okino

**Signatures of State Employees Opposed Passage of These Bills
HB 1106, HB 1718, HB 1719, HB 1725**

**Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m., Conference Rm 309**

1. <i>King Kookinawan</i>	26. <i>Eleonora Quintero</i>
2. <i>Sam So</i>	27. <i>Sam So</i>
3. <i>Jay Dyer</i>	28.
4. <i>Wendy Li</i>	29.
5. <i>Cecelina Okazaki</i>	30.
6. <i>Judy Dasanay</i>	31.
7. <i>Susan So</i>	32.
8. <i>Susana C. Quintana</i>	33.
9. <i>Alan E. Shodai</i>	34.
10. <i>Alan</i>	35.
11. <i>Jennifer K. Mauer</i>	36.
12. <i>Johel</i>	37.
13. <i>Michelle</i>	38.
14. <i>Anna</i>	39.
15. <i>Ruby Chumbe</i>	40.
16. <i>Kathryn Shestall</i>	41.
17. <i>Kathleen Jung</i>	42.
18. <i>Joye Arra</i>	43.
19. <i>Collen B. Nakamura</i>	44.
20. <i>Charmaine Mack</i>	45.
21. <i>Lori Yee</i>	46.
22. <i>Michelle</i>	47.
23. <i>Michael Wayne</i>	48.
24. <i>K. Jones</i>	49.
25. <i>Susan So</i>	50.

Date:

KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
To: Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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at 375 7135*

Audrey Akai
AUDREY AKAI

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1. <i>Deane L. Hanna</i>	26. <i>[Signature]</i>
2. <i>Madrey Ali</i>	27. <i>Olaf K. Jille</i>
3. <i>Sam Lai Hui</i>	28.
4. <i>Uma Lopez</i>	29.
5. <i>Kristine Frydette</i>	30.
6. <i>Ronalds Brown</i>	31.
7. <i>A. Stinson</i>	32.
8. <i>Farley N. Lomago</i>	33.
9. <i>Ron Luoma</i>	34.
10. <i>Omy Lee</i>	35.
11. <i>Amu Okami</i>	36.
12. <i>Shoreen Vasquez</i>	37.
13. <i>Randy Lee</i>	38.
14. <i>[Signature]</i>	39.
15. <i>Zandra Hightower</i>	40.
16. <i>Sham Kishi</i>	41.
17.	42.
18. <i>Andulochin</i>	43.
19. <i>Mattie Davis</i>	44.
20. <i>Racem Blonigan</i>	45.
21. <i>[Signature]</i>	46.
22. <i>G. Abrante</i>	47.
23. <i>[Signature]</i>	48.
24. <i>Ann Watanabe Pina</i>	49.
25. <i>Celia A. Selgado</i>	50.