HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Health

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 6, 2009

H.B. 1372 – RELATING TO THE TRANSITIONING OF THE REGIONS AND FACILITIES OF THE HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association has concerns about the purpose and intent of H.B. 1372. The bill, as drafted, would permit any of the regional systems or individual facilities to transition into a new legal entity, including but not limited to, a non-profit corporation, for-profit corporation, municipal facility, public benefit corporation, or any combination of these options.

To preserve the safety net for the neighbor islands, the system must remain intact. If the current HHSC is divided into different entities within a specific region or between regions, those residing on the neighbor islands may encounter a fragmented health care system that will erode the safety net. The entire system should remain intact if it transitions to another entity such as a non-profit corporation or a municipal facility.

Second, the current proposal could adversely impact the rights and benefits of HHSC employees. For example, selling part of a region or an entire region to become part of a for-profit corporation would likely result in drastic changes for HHSC employees such as layoffs and reduced salaries and benefits.

Finally, we do not support the changes to Section 323F-31, HRS, which would remove legislative approval as a condition of any substantial reduction or elimination of direct patient care services. Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns about H.B. 1372.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deputy Executive Director