

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature
Regular Session of 2009

THE SENATE

Committee on Health

Sen. David Y. Ige, Chair

Sen. Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Sen. Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair

Sen. David Y. Ige, Vice Chair

LATE

State Capitol, Conference Room 229
Tuesday, February 10, 2009; 8:30 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 1205
RELATING TO TEMPORARY HEALTH INSURANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED PERSONS**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 1205, which provides temporary health insurance for unemployed persons who lost their health insurance.

The unemployment rate in Hawaii is the highest it has been in a decade. Thousands of Hawaii residents are without jobs or have reduced work hours. Most are collecting unemployment benefits, but many have exhausted their eligibility for benefits. With seriously reduced income, most of them find themselves and their families without health insurance, placing an additional burden on hospitals and insurance plans.

S.B. 1205 will help to close that gap and provide coverage to those who would otherwise be uninsured. While the Legislature may believe the State cannot afford such expenditure in this difficult economic climate, the alternative of having more people uninsured yet requiring health services which cost must be borne by taxpayers or passed on to employers and employees by insurance companies is unacceptable as well.

The ILWU urges passage of S.B. 1205. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.