

**SB 256**

**EDT**



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on  
Economic Development and Technology  
Friday, February 6, 2009  
1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 016**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 256 RELATING TO TELEWORK**

Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Tollefson and I am the President and CEO of The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber"). I am here to state The Chamber's support to Senate Bill No. 256, relating to telework.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,100 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

SB 256 establishes the telework task force to develop a comprehensive plan that will encourage and expand telework opportunities in Hawaii while reducing harmful environmental impacts, traffic congestion, the dependence on fossil fuels, and encourage a better quality of life for people who commute to work in Hawaii.

Telework is a concept that changes the notion of work being a place to work being a process or activity. With today's affordable PCs, Internet access, on line services and software designed to support teleworking; businesses are in a position to leverage the concept.

During this tough economic period, we should look for options that stimulate the economy while balancing the social and economic landscapes. Therefore, the Chamber generally supports a telework task force to evaluate how we can effectively develop a comprehensive plan without imposing mandates on businesses and compromising their ability to run their firm effectively.

Keeping up with the rules and regulations contribute greatly to the cost of doing business in Hawaii. Therefore, providing incentives to businesses, especially small ones would help them stay viable as well as stimulate growth in our economy.

Thus, The Chamber respectfully requests SB 256 be passed for further discussion. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



VIA Capitol Website

February 6, 2009

**Senate Committee on Economic Development and Technology  
Hearing Date: Friday, February 6, 2009, 1:15 p.m. in CR 016**

**Testimony in Support of SB 256 – Relating to Telework**  
(Establishes telework task force to develop plan to encourage telework opportunities.)

Honorable Chair Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair Rosalyn Baker &  
EDT Members:

My name is David Arakawa and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Leeward Oahu Transportation Management Association (“LOTMA”) in **support** of SB 256 relating to telework and establishing a task force that will help develop a plan for promotion of telework.

**Background.** LOTMA was incorporated in 1990, in an effort to collaboratively unite all of the major Leeward and Central Oahu region’s landowners and developers to address mobility issues and accommodate the increasing transportation needs of this rapidly growing region. LOTMA’s mission is to advocate, develop, and implement, in cooperation with government and the community, a coherent program aimed at improving mobility in Leeward and Central regions of Oahu; and to promote and facilitate the development and use of alternative transportation opportunities that would maximize the use of existing and proposed transportation systems in the Leeward/Central region.

**SB 256.** This bill establishes a task force to do the following:

- (1) Develop a comprehensive plan to encourage and expand telework opportunities in both the public and private sectors that will help to alleviate the high transportation-related expenses of commuting, reduce Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuel, reduce traffic congestion on Hawaii's roadways, and provide the workers of Hawaii with an opportunity to spend more time either working from home or with their families, rather than in traffic;
- (2) Establish subcommittees within the task force that address issues specific to public sector and private sector employees;
- (3) Develop a public awareness campaign plan; and
- (4) Address any other matters deemed relevant by the task force.

**LOTMA’s Position.** LOTMA’s priorities include finding ways to reduce traffic from Leeward and Central Oahu and a telework initiative would address this issue.

Other states such as Arizona, California, and Oregon have all been successful in implementing policies to encourage workplace flexibility for their state employees. There also have been studies showing that these programs increase employee productivity and motivation, increases employee efficiency, improves quality of life, and reduces pollution and energy consumption.

For residents of West Oahu, they know first hand how bad traffic is, when traffic is compared to school days when college students are on vacation. The workplace flexibility options listed in SB 256 would have a similar positive effect on residents' commutes, except it would be year-round.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support** of SB 256.



Via Capitol Website

February 6, 2009

**Senate Committee on Economic Development and Technology  
Hearing Date: Friday, February 6, 2009, 1:15 p.m. in CR 016**

**Testimony in Support of SB 256 – Relating to Telework**  
(Establishes telework task force to develop plan to encourage telework opportunities.)

The Honorable Chair Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair Rosalyn Baker &  
EDT Members:

My name is David Arakawa, and I am the Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

LURF is writing **in support** of **SB 256**, which will create a telework task force to develop a comprehensive plan that will encourage and expand telework opportunities in Hawaii while reducing harmful environmental impacts, traffic congestion, the dependence on fossil fuels, and encourage a better quality of life for people who commute to work in Hawaii.

LURF and its members understand that Hawaii is a very unique place and because of its unique island culture, preservation of the environment is important. LURF and its members agree that we must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and that we must start to employ other clean and efficient sources of energy for our residences and get our residents out of their cars, which would allow them to spend more time with their families and doing things they enjoy. As such, LURF members support telework initiatives that will improve the quality of life for our island community and families.

**SB 256.** The purpose of this bill is to establish a temporary telework task force. The task force shall develop a comprehensive plan to encourage and expand telework opportunities in both the public and private sectors that will help to alleviate the high transportation-related expenses of commuting, reduce Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuel, reduce traffic congestion on Hawaii's roadways, and provide the workers of Hawaii

with an opportunity to spend more time either working from home or with their families, rather than in traffic.

The bill establishes a telework task force to be comprised of:

- (1) Two members appointed by the president of the senate, one of which shall be from the public sector and one of which shall be from the private business sector;
- (2) Two members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, one of which shall be from the public sector and one of which shall be from the private business sector;
- (3) The director of business, economic development, and tourism, or the director's designee, who shall co-chair the task force;
- (4) The director of human resources development, or the director's designee, who shall co-chair the task force;
- (5) The president of the University of Hawaii, or the president's designee;
- (6) A member from the Hawaii government employees association appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- (7) A member from a local business organization appointed by the president of the senate.

The duties of the task force will be to:

- (1) Develop a comprehensive plan to encourage and expand telework opportunities in both the public and private sectors that will help to alleviate the high transportation-related expenses of commuting, reduce Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuel, reduce traffic congestion on Hawaii's roadways, and provide the workers of Hawaii with an opportunity to spend more time either working from home or with their families, rather than in traffic;
- (2) Establish subcommittees within the task force that address issues specific to public sector and private sector employees;
- (3) Develop a public awareness campaign plan; and
- (4) Address any other matters deemed relevant by the task force.

**LURF's Position.** Those that reside west of Honolulu know first hand how traffic is dramatically affected when college students are on vacation.

A task force is the best approach to determine whether teleworking would be feasible in Hawaii's island state. Other states such as Arizona, California, and Oregon have all been successful in implementing policies to encourage workplace flexibility for their state employees. Studies show that these programs increase employee productivity and motivation, increases employee efficiency, improves quality of life, and reduces pollution and energy consumption. The growth of telecommuting is partly attributable to the greater availability of broadband technology, employees placing a greater emphasis on work-life balance, rising office rents, and improvements in internet security. A workforce combined with traditional employees and telecommuting employees will significantly reduce the number of cars on the road, reduce emissions and also reduce employer overheads.

We would respectfully request that an amendment be drafted that would add Land Use Research Foundation as a member of the task force.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of SB 256.