

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. 415
RELATING TO HOME CARE AGENCIES**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 415, which requires the Department of Health to license home care agencies. Sunsets 6/30/14.

As more elderly and disabled individuals desiring to stay in their own homes require home care provided by professionals and paraprofessionals, the home care industry is expanding and the need exists for monitoring of the agencies and individuals providing care to the elderly and disabled in their homes. Currently, many families using the services of home care agencies no doubt think that the industry is already regulated, but it is not. S.B. 415 provides for a temporary program to require the Department of Health to license home care agencies.

We believe such licensing and monitoring should be a permanent program, but we can understand current budgetary constraints. We also believe that any information about home care agencies, including reports on licensing and monitoring, should be prominently posted on a website and made available in written form to anyone inquiring about home care.

The ILWU urges passage of S.B. 415. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



LATE

To: Senate Committee on Health
Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice-Chair

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator David Y. Ige, Vice Chair

Date: February 10, 2009 - Conference Room 229 – 8:30 am

Re: **SB 415, RELATING TO HOME CARE AGENCIES**

Chairs Ige and Baker and Committee Members:

My name is Barbara Kim Stanton, State Director of AARP Hawaii. AARP is a membership organization of people 50 and older with nearly 160,000 members in Hawaii. We are committed to championing access to affordable, quality health care for all generations, providing the tools needed to save for retirement, and serving as a reliable information source on issues critical to Americans age 50+.

The purpose of SB 415 is to protect consumers of home care services by requiring home care agencies to be licensed by the Department of Health and to appropriate funds for a position in the Department of Health to assist with licensure and monitoring of home care agencies.

AARP supports SB 415. We believe federal and state governments have a strong role in enforcing laws and regulations for nursing homes and services in home-and community-based settings. By licensing home care agencies, the State takes a further step in protecting health and safety, and assuring quality standards for clients who receive personal care assistance, homemaker assistance and respite care support.

Many elderly in Hawaii today receive home care from family members. As their condition worsens, their families look to supplementary options for respite and relief, such as paying out-of-pocket for home care services. The demand for these services is likely to increase as the baby boom population ages. We need to insure that adequate standards of quality and safety are met.

SB 415 addresses just one small gap in Hawai'i's long-term care system. Hawai' i's population is aging rapidly. Within the next two decades, the number of people needing care will nearly double and there will be only a slight increase in the number of people traditionally have cared for them.

To prepare for the challenges ahead, AARP believes four fundamental strategies must be undertaken:

1. Broaden the perspective of policymakers, providers and consumers about long-term care to include more than nursing homes.

2. Train a workforce of qualified professionals who can provide appropriate services in home settings.
3. Provide people with clear and consistent information about their long-term care options.
4. Create a comprehensive plan to allow individuals, families and the state to prepare for the future needs of our aging population. Act 224 created the Long-Term Care Commission for this purpose.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 415.

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