

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 152

Honolulu, Hawaii
Feb 10, 2009

RE: H.B. No. 442

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2009
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Labor & Public Employment, to which was referred H.B. No. 442 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS APPEALS BOARD,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to increase the efficiency of the Labor and Industrial Relations Appeals Board (LIRAB) and expedite hearings on certain workers' compensation cases by allowing LIRAB to use hearings officers who may propose a decision and order for review and approval by the full appeals board.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) and LIRAB testified in support of this bill.

LIRAB is tasked with deciding appeals from decisions and orders rendered by the Director of DLIR that are issued under the Hawaii's Workers' Compensation Law. While the number of cases has decreased over the last several years, a backlog continues to exist due in part to the length of time many appeals take. As a result, the determination of the reasonableness and necessity of a particular treatment plan may not be made until a year after the plan was recommended. This leads to delays in the treatment of a patient. By allowing a hearings officer to conduct certain types of cases, the process can be made more efficient resulting in a win-win situation for all parties.



As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Labor & Public Employment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 442 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Labor & Public
Employment,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



