

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1719

February 13, 2009

RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Bill No. 1719 suspends State and county contributions to the Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund for State and county employees who elect to retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before reaching Medicare retirement age; resumes coverage upon reaching Medicare retirement age; and allows the retention of health coverage if the retiree pays the respective State or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

We support moving this bill forward to foster continued discussions. During these difficult times and considering the grave fiscal condition we are facing, all options must be kept open. While it is recognized that this bill may be unpopular, we will need to make difficult decisions to address our budget shortfall and ensure the fiscal health of our State.

It is estimated that this bill will generate savings of \$59,000,000 in FY 2010 and \$68,000,000 in FY 2011.

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



MARIE C. LADERTA  
DIRECTOR

CINDY S. INOUE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

February 12, 2009

TESTIMONY TO THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
For Hearing on Friday, February 13, 2009  
8:30 a.m., Conference Room 309

BY  
MARIE C. LADERTA, DIRECTOR

**House Bill No. 1719**  
**Relating to Public Employees**

TO CHAIRPERSON KARL RHOADS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

The purpose of H. B. No. 1719 is to suspend employer contributions to the employer-union health benefits trust fund (EUTF) for premiums of all state and county public employees who elect to retire after 7/1/09, and has not attained the medicare retirement age on the date of retirement and allows the employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of the premiums until the employee reaches the medicare retirement age.

The Department of Human Resources Development supports this measure as one of many options available for consideration in addressing the current budget shortfall.

The present and immediately foreseeable condition of our State's economy has been well-documented in recent months. If no action is taken, the State faces a substantial budget shortfall. To address this shortfall it is imperative that we consider any and all options, even if not popular, that can contain costs and help balance the State's budget. This bill is such a cost containment measure and we strongly recommend that it be kept alive for further discussion and consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy S. Inoue*  
for MARIE C. LADERTA  
Director

TESTIMONY BY JIM WILLIAMS  
ADMINISTRATOR, HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST  
FUND, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
ON  
HOUSE BILL 1719

8:30 A.M., February 13, 2009

RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Chairperson Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Williams, and I am Administrator of the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (also known as the EUTF). Thank you for this opportunity to present this testimony reporting that the Board of Trustees voted to take no position on House Bill 1719.

The EUTF provides health and life insurance benefits to approximately 92,000 public employees and retirees (55,000 actives and 37,000 retirees). EUTF is governed by a ten-member Board of Trustees.

This bill suspends employer contributions to the EUTF for retirees who retire after July 1, 2009 and resumes contributions when the affected retirees reach Medicare retirement age. It permits affected retirees to retain coverage by paying the full premium to the EUTF.

At its meeting on February 10, 2009, the EUTF Board of Trustees voted to take no position on this bill at this time and to monitor its progress. The Board currently is in the process of evaluating all available options to determine the benefit plans and corresponding rates to be offered to employees and retirees effective July 1, 2009. The

Board is mindful of its statutory obligation to provide health and other benefit plans “at a cost affordable to both the public employers and the public employees.” The Board also is cognizant of the upcoming Council on Revenues revised projections due in early March. The Board reserves its right to take a position on this bill at a later date.

Thank you for this opportunity to present this testimony. I will be pleased to answer any questions from members of the Committee.

# HAWAII COUNCIL OF MAYORS



Testimony of

**Hawaii Council of Mayors**

Bernard Carvalho, Jr., Mayor of Kauai

Mufi Hannemann, Mayor of Honolulu

Billy Kenoi, Mayor of Hawaii

Charmaine Tavares, Mayor of Maui

Before the

**House Committee on Labor and Public Employment**

February 13, 2009

**House Bill 1719: Relating to Public Employees**

The Hawaii Council of Mayors is very grateful to the House of Representatives, particularly the members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employment, for having the courage to confront the formidable economic and fiscal challenges facing our people. You have the difficult and unenviable task of crafting a budget during a time of great uncertainty, as do we, and we share your desire to balance frugality and prudence with fairness and compassion.

House Bill 1719 would suspend employer contributions for health benefits for employees who retire after July 1, 2009, until they reached Medicare age. We believe that the majority of employees who are eligible to retire and who are under age 65 will retire before the effective date of this bill to preserve their highly valued retiree medical benefits. For the City and County of Honolulu, as one example, about 1,045 employees are eligible to retire without penalty, of which 360 are veteran police officers, fire fighters, and other first-responders, and 27 are engineers and construction inspectors in difficult-to-fill positions. This is a predicament shared by all county governments.

The exodus of these experienced employees would be immediate, far-reaching, and long-term. The loss, coming during a difficult fiscal time for the counties, would make our situation all the more difficult.

In view of these circumstances, the Hawaii Council of Mayors opposes this measure.

Mahalo.



**Mayor Billy Kenoi**  
County of Hawaii  
25 Aupuni Street  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720



**Mayor Mufi Hannemann**  
City and County of Honolulu  
530 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



**Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr.**  
County of Kauai  
444 Rice Street  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766



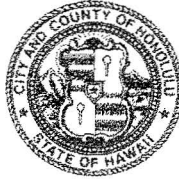
**Mayor Charmaine Tavares**  
County of Maui  
200 South High Street, 9th Floor  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

POLICE DEPARTMENT

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

601 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET · HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 529-3111 · INTERNET: www.honolulu.org

MUFI HANNEMANN  
MAYOR



BOISSE P. CORREA  
CHIEF

PAUL D. PUTZBLU  
KARL A. GODSEY  
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE

LD-CI/CSQ

February 13, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

Subject: House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees

I am Captain Letha DeCaires of the Legislative Liaison Office of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu. The HPD opposes House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees.

This bill would suspend state and county contributions to the Employer Union Trust Fund for all employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of the date of hire, years of service, or if the employee retires before his or her Medicare retirement age. Many employees throughout the City and State, who had no intention of retiring, will be forced to leave in order to protect health benefits for their families.

The passage of this bill may be disastrous to the safety of our communities. It may also jeopardize Hawaii's reputation as a safe vacation destination, which will be catastrophic to our already fragile economy.

Approximately 375 police officers and civilians who are eligible to retire from the HPD may have to make a tough decision to retire. If this measure passes, it has the potential to negatively impact public safety. The abrupt departure of so many employees will decimate many of our patrol and support elements. With fewer officers in the field, it will take longer for officers to respond to routine calls for service as well as to emergency situations.

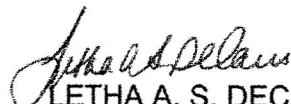
*Serving and Protecting With Aloha*

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
and Members  
Page 2  
February 13, 2009

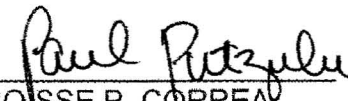
We realize that the Legislature is faced with a difficult responsibility during these trying economic times; however, we respectfully request that the Legislature be very cautious when implementing changes that will impact public safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

  
LETHA A. S. DECAIRES, Captain  
Legislative Liaison Office

APPROVED:

for:   
BOISSE P. CORREA  
Chief of Police

CHARMAINE TAVARES  
Mayor



LYNN G. KRIEG  
Director

LANCE T. HIROMOTO  
Deputy Director

COUNTY OF MAUI  
DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL SERVICES

200 SOUTH HIGH STREET • WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793-2155  
PHONE (808) 270-7850 • FAX (808) 270-7969

Website: [www.mauicounty.gov/departments/Personnel](http://www.mauicounty.gov/departments/Personnel) • Email: [personnel.services@mauicounty.gov](mailto:personnel.services@mauicounty.gov)

February 11, 2009

(Electronic Transmission)

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
State House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Conference Room 309  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representative Rhoads and Committee Members:

RE: H.B. 1719, RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

I am Lynn G. Krieg, Director of Personnel Services, County of Maui, writing in opposition of H.B. 1719.

The County of Maui currently has approximately 156 employees who would be affected by this bill. We anticipate that the actual number would be greater since this does not include current employees with other jurisdiction service or those who have military service credit. Should these employees decide to retire prior to July 1, 2009 because of this bill, the average age of those retiring would be 57 years old.

The effects on Maui County's work force would be devastating as we could lose 32 of our police officers, including our Chief and Deputy Chief, our three Assistant Chiefs, six of our Captains, and nine Lieutenants and nine Sergeants. Having all of these top-ranking officers leave within a short period of each other would leave us very little time to find qualified, experienced replacements. And this is only one area that would be affected. Our Fire Department could also lose 16 employees, including one Assistant Chief and 14 Captains.

Other difficult-to-fill job classes that could be affected include licensed Civil Engineer classes and Engineering Program Managers, top-level Planners and Planning Program Managers, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators, Water Service Supervisors and Waterworks Inspectors. Our public works projects would also suffer as we could lose several of our Highway Construction Maintenance Supervisors and Public Works District Supervisors. Recruiting and filling a sudden crush of vacancies would also be hampered by the fact that the Department of Personnel Services could lose 25% of its senior staff.



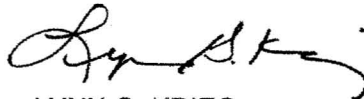
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Page 2  
February 11, 2009

Many of these employees were not planning to retire before July 1, 2009. They have worked for 25 to 30 years and planned for their retirement with consideration for benefits that were promised when they were hired. If they had a choice, the majority would stay well beyond July 1, 2009, but this bill asks for too great a sacrifice from many of them, especially those who were enticed into public safety professions with a promise of retirement after 25 years of service at any age. Some of these employees could be looking at paying for medical coverage for twenty years.

More importantly, is the State Employees' Retirement System prepared for a mass exodus? Recent reports of investment losses would appear to indicate that such an exodus could have a disastrous effect on the retirement system.

All of this leaves one wondering how much forethought went into this proposal. What does it seek to accomplish? Has consideration been given to its effects? We think not, and strongly oppose this piece of legislation.

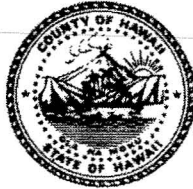
Sincerely,



LYNN G. KRIEG  
Director of Personnel Services

cc: Mayor Charmaine Tavares  
Justin Gruenstein

William P. Kenoi  
Mayor



Harry S. Kubojiri  
Police Chief

Paul K. Ferreira  
Deputy Police Chief

## County of Hawaii

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

349 Kapiolani Street • Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3998  
(808) 935-3311 • Fax (808) 961-8865

February 11, 2009

Representative Karl Rhoads  
Chairperson and Committee Members  
Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 309  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**Re: House Bill 1719, Relating To Employees**

Dear Representative Rhoads:

The Hawai'i Police Department strongly opposes the passage of House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees that intends to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after 7/1/09, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

The Hawai'i Police Department like other departments throughout the state over the course of the past five years have been struggling to fill vacant Police Officer positions and are only recently recovering due to an aggressive and costly recruitment campaign. During the most recent labor negotiations between the State of Hawai'i and the State of Hawai'i Organization of Police Officers (SHOPO), it was recognized that the salaries paid to police officers throughout the state were inadequate for the demands placed upon these men and women. Thus, the salaries were increased across the board, which aided greatly in both recruitment of new officers and retention of seasoned veterans.

This measure seeks to undo all that was accomplished during these past difficult years, by forcing veteran police officers who we sought to retain in the department to prematurely retire from service to preserve their retirement benefits. This will undoubtedly result in all of the police departments becoming abruptly and devastatingly understaffed, compromising both the safety of police officers and the community. The message being delivered to the police officers throughout the state by the Legislature in passing this measure would be, that the sacrifices they have made in the past and will be making in the future goes unappreciated or unrecognized.

Our department has at least thirty (30) police officers that are at this moment eligible to retire prior to the July 1, 2009 effective date of this legislation. Due to the lengthy process involved in

Representative Karl Rhoads  
Chairperson and Committee Members  
Page 2

**Re: House Bill 1719, Relating To Employees**

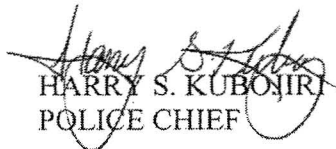
screening potential police officer candidates and the extensive training police recruits must undergo (a combination of about 18 months), it will take our department at least three to four years to recover from these retirements. This is provided that we are even able to recruit police officer candidates, given the fact that this legislation seeks to remove a benefit that would be considered an employment incentive.

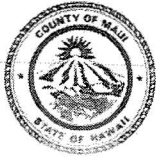
In addition, passage of this legislation will also undoubtedly impact our department's civilian support staffing, as those employees currently eligible to retire would also prematurely leave the service to preserve their benefits. Although on a much smaller scale in terms of numbers, this will adversely affect the services these valuable employees provide to not only the department, but also the community.

In terms of costs savings by passage of this measure, the legislature needs to consider the fiscal impacts this measure will have as employees retire, due to payments for vacation and overtime credits. Additionally, the high cost associated with the recruitment and training of new employees that will need to be hired.

For these reasons, we urge this committee to reject this legislation. Thank you for allowing the Hawai'i Police Department to provide comments relating to House Bill 1719.

Sincerely,

  
HARRY S. KUBOJIRI  
POLICE CHIEF



# POLICE DEPARTMENT COUNTY OF MAUI

**CHARMAINE TAVARES**  
MAYOR

OUR REFERENCE

YOUR REFERENCE

55 MAHALANI STREET  
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793  
(808) 244-6400  
FAX (808) 244-6411

**THOMAS M. PHILLIPS**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**GARY A. YABUTA**  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees**

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. This bill will allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

This bill in its attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and counties made a promise to these employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher salary jobs with the private sector.

Many will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service. Take a police officer for example, who started his career at the age of 23, would be required to work to the age of 55 (32 years of service) for his maximum retirement benefit. If this bill passes, he would be required to work another 10 years for his medical benefits.

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair

February 10, 2009

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Police officers don't contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part-time to secure some social security benefits. This legislation, if passed, will cause numerous retirements before July 2009, and will create an immediate impact on all State and county services. Department Directors, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all State and county sectors who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, we do not support House Bill No. 1719, Relating to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

  
THOMAS M. PHILLIPS  
Chief of Police



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

**Roger K. Takabayashi**  
President

**Wil Okabe**  
Vice President

**Karolyn Mossman**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Mike McCartney**  
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

**RE: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

February 13, 2009

**ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association opposes HB 1719, which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age, regardless of date of hire and years of service.

While we understand the need to balance the budget in these dire economic times, this bill will negatively impact all public employees whose promised retirement benefits will be renege upon. Many of these workers have charted the course of their financial future based on the terms under which they entered into employment with the state and which they were led to believe they could count on when they retired.

Public employees, which include public school teachers, are entitled to the benefits that were promised to them when they began their service to the State of Hawaii. This bill effectively denies public employees contractual benefits for their tenure in public service.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**From:** Justin Wong [wongj060@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:31 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB1719

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**  
**Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair**  
**Representative Kyle Yamashita**

**DATE:** Friday, February 13, 2009  
**TIME:** 8:30 a.m  
**PLACE:** Conference Room 309  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**RE: HB1719, Relating to Public Employees**

**Representative Rhoads and members of the Committee of Labor & Public Employment the Hawaii State Teachers Association - Retired (HSTA-R), consisting of 4,500 members statewide opposes HB1719.**

**When government workers begin working for the State and counties, they are promised a retirement pension and free medical benefits when they retire. As long as they qualify for retirement, they should receive both a pension and free medical coverage as all current retirees do now.**

**We believe that, what this bill seeks to do, is to punish government workers who retire in accordance with the law. The denial of free medical coverage is blatant attempt to force government workers to work until age 65 and/or have the State save money at the expense of the non medicare eligible retirees.**

**We think that this is bad public policy and sends the chilling message that State won't keep its promises to government employees.**

**Please oppose HB1719.**

**Justin Wong, President**  
**Hawaii State Teachers Association - Retired**



## HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

**RANDY PERREIRA**  
*Executive Director*  
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*Deputy Executive Director*  
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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association  
February 13, 2009

### H.B. 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association opposes H.B. 1719. This bill would suspend the respective state and county contributions to the EUTF for health care premiums of all public employees who retire after July 1, 2009 regardless of date of hire or years of service, and if they have not reached Medicare retirement age. Coverage would resume after the retired employee reached Medicare retirement age. It also allows for the employee to retain coverage through the EUTF by paying the state and county share of premiums during this period.

Current employees were promised as a condition of employment free or subsidized health insurance upon their retirement, depending on their date of hire and years of service. Moreover, active employees sacrificed wage increases in return for health benefits after retirement. Public employees who have dedicated their careers to serving and improving their communities deserve the retiree health care benefits they have rightfully earned and deserve.

This bill will create a disparity in benefits for employees who retire before and after the effective date, which is unfair, and it will create a significant financial hardship on those who planned to retire before age 65. Another consequence of H.B. 1719 is the real possibility of eligible employees retiring *en masse* to protect their retirement health benefits. This will cause many departments to lose some of their most experienced and valuable employees, especially those in highly specialized areas.

Once these employees retire, it will be extremely difficult to fill these positions, compromising the effectiveness of programs and creating additional workload for those remaining. It will also make recruiting and retaining new employees much harder. Benefits that attract and retain highly skilled employees to the public sector help build good government and good public policy.



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Hawaii State House of Representatives, Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Re: H.B. 1719 – Relating to Public Employees  
February 13, 2009  
Page 2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association  
February 13, 2009

H.B. 1725 – RELATING TO THE  
HAWAII EMPLOYER – UNION  
HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST  
FUND

Good morning Chair Rhoads and Members. My name is Frances Kagawa, HGEA Retirees Unit President. We represent over 9,000 retiree members statewide who strongly oppose passage of H.B. 1106, 1718, 1719, 1725, 1723, 1715, 1726 and 1727.

Before retiring, I was a public employee at UH and the Department of Parks & Recreation. Like most other retiree and active employees, I took a government job because of health and retirement benefits. I knew I wouldn't get rich working for the public sector but stayed knowing that when I retired in 1987 I wouldn't worry about medical, drug, dental and vision plans.

I take five different medications daily to stay well. I live alone on a fixed income and with rising costs in the utility and gas prices, if these bills pass it will become a choice of paying for food or medications. There are 3,167 statewide retirees 80 years of age and over in the Retirees Unit who will be in the same or more serious predicament then I am since their pensions are much smaller.

Retirees also support current and perspective employees who will negatively be affected by these bills. These active employees decided to work in government to have the same benefits that I have during their retirement. Please oppose these bills that affect all public servants and retirees.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

*Frances Kagawa*

Frances Kagawa



Randy Perreira  
President

# HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

320 Ward Avenue, Suite 209 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Telephone: (808) 597-1441  
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by  
Hawaii State AFL-CIO  
February 13, 2009

H.B. 1718 - RELATING TO EMPLOYER-  
UNION HEALTH BENEFITS

H.B. 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC  
EMPLOYEES

H.B. 1725 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII  
EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH  
BENEFITS TRUST FUND

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO **STRONGLY OPPOSES** H.B. 1718, H.B. 1719, and H.B. 1725.

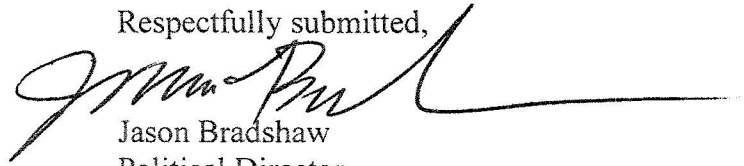
The current economic conditions are downright terrifying. Everyday, Americans are waking up to discouraging news and wondering when it will be their turn to lose their jobs. Nationwide, unemployment is at 7.6 percent, however, that number is likely to be much higher today. In addition, those that are employed have had their working hours reduced, resulting in very difficult financial situations. Many are being foreclosed on, or are already living on the streets. Many are having a very difficult time taking care of their children or their parents and see no relief in sight. With the economy the way it is, Hawaii must do all it can to improve the situation.

Therefore, Hawaii must protect as many benefits as possible, especially when people are struggling to make ends meet. Furthermore, many have worked for the state or county for decades, relying on many of these benefits when they retire, or while working. They have earned these benefits, and now is not the time to take them away. We must ensure during these difficult times that people have the proper health care and can sleep soundly at night knowing their benefits are safe. Let's not add additional stress, to an already stressful time.

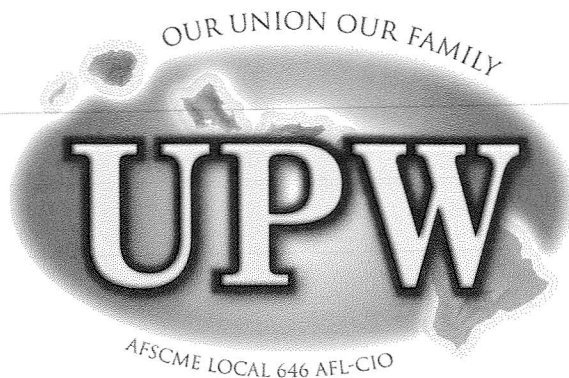
I ask that you think about the livelihood of those facing difficult times and oppose these horrible bills.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Bradshaw", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jason Bradshaw  
Political Director



The House of Representatives  
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009

Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 13, 2009  
TIME: 8:30 a.m.  
PLACE: House Conference Room 309  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY OF THE UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS, AFSCME, LOCAL 646,  
AFL-CIO ON H.B. 1719 RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua, and I am the state director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). As indicated in earlier testimony UPW represents more than 11,000 state and county employees in bargaining units 1 and 10 and approximately 3,000 retirees. UPW opposes House Bill No. 1719 which shifts the entire cost of providing health care to those employees who retire after July 1, 2009 before age 65 i.e., the medicare retirement age, under sections 87A-33, 87A-33.5, 87A-35, and 87A-36, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The measure eliminates state and county contributions to employees who retire after July 1, 2009 if they are not medicare eligible, and effectively requires them to pay for the entire cost of health benefit premiums prior to retirement age.

**HEADQUARTERS** - 1426 North School Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914 ♦ Phone: (808) 847-2631  
**HAWAII** - 362 East Lanikaula Street ♦ Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336 ♦ Phone: (808) 961-3424  
**KAUAI** - 4211 Rice Street ♦ Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1325 ♦ Phone: (808) 245-2412  
**MAUI** - 841 Kolu Street ♦ Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436 ♦ Phone: (808) 244-0815  
1-866-454-4166 (Toll Free, Molokai/Lanai only)

As you know, under Section 89-9 (e), HRS, the amount of contributions which State and counties are required to make under Sections 87A-32 through 87A-37, HRS, toward the payment of costs for health benefit plans is a mandatory subject of collective bargaining. The right to engage in collective bargaining is protected under Article XIII, Section 2 of the State Constitution for public employees. Where the legislature seeks to impose by statute the substantive terms of what should be negotiable constitutes a violation of the employee's right to engage in collective bargaining. See United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO v. Yogi, 101 Hawai'i 46, 62 P.3d 189 (2002). This measure interferes with the process of collective bargaining over fringe benefit costs and contributions which are core subjects of collective bargaining.

Since its adoption in 1970, Hawaii's public sector collective bargaining law mandates joint decision making as the modern way of administering government. As our Supreme Court held in Bd. of Education v. Haw. Pub. Emp. Rels. Bd., 56 Haw. 85, 528 P.2d 809 (1974):

The need for good faith bargaining or negotiations is fundamental in bringing to fruition the legislatively declared policy "to promote harmonious and cooperative relations between government and its employees and to protect the public by assuring effective and orderly operations of Government. (Emphasis added).

56 Haw. at 87, 528 P.2d at 811. As you know, during a period of economic recession the possibility of layoffs become apparent, and job security is a paramount concern for employees. One of the ways to reduce the number of layoffs is to encourage employees to retire early. However, measures like this one will create a disincentive for those who might otherwise be willing to apply for early retirement to save the jobs of others.

Finally, let me note that many union members these days express concern about why Democrats in Hawaii seem to be working in an opposite direction from the Obama administration which is committed to reducing health care costs by other means. This measure is more akin to what one might expect from the Bush administration. Perhaps this committee will help us assure our membership that voting for change makes a difference in America. Increasing the cost of survival does nothing to stimulate economic activity necessary for recovery. For all of the foregoing reasons we urge you not to pass this and other regressive measures relating to health care.

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** thirr33@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB1106 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1106

Conference room: 309  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Arvid Tadao Youngquist  
Organization: The Mestizo Association ('82)  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [thirr33@gmail.com](mailto:thirr33@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/10/2009

Comments:  
House Labor and Public Employment (LAB)  
Chair Karl Rhoads  
Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita  
Right Honorable Members of the House  
LAB Committee

This is a testimony in opposition to:

HB 1106  
HB 1718  
HB 1719  
HB 1725

This is purported as some "modest" efforts to help meet the fiscal crisis of the State of Hawaii.

However, all these bills are going to be perceived as yet another "King Ben Bill" after 9/11 and with the crisis visited upon the Nation mid-2008 (bail outs & economic stimulus packages), all measures appears to be on the table.

Unless the administration and the Capitol is willing to sacrifice not only their own pay-raises together with high-end "legathy" CIP and other spending in their respective district (i.e. Turtle Bay Resort, Molokai Ranch Resort, even Highways and Railways, the public sector workforce new hires, retirees, their beneficiaries and dependents should not be responsible for shouldering the heaviest fiscal burden. If one does not fight for one's own very own employees, who would one truly fight for?

Some of the proposals here at the Capitol have already led to my colleagues putting in their retirement applications before the maximum age for retirement is changed to 65, and the contributions, and coverage for prescriptions, dental and vision in the EUTF is nullified by fiat. A mass retirement payment for these new retirees will actually further drive south the Hawaii State Government budget.



Many of yourselves have taken care of elders on a fixed income, or are already a Kupuna. Do you think that these 4 bills are pono in regards to the Keiki and the Kupuna, not to mention all public sector employees?

Please consider defeating these four bills. Failing that, please consider affixing a defective effective date so that in 2013, or when the economy levels off, provisions can be repealed. Once a Union or any entity gives up any of the benefits of its membership, it hardly ever gets to recoup them in later years, even in times of plenty. Witness what happend to the Detroit automobile workforce that sacrificed benefits & pay, only to be exposed to CEO and management reward themselves with a bonus and a Golden Parachute.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to these four bills on your agenda.

"Peace be with you."  
(1 of 16,588 local voices)

February 11, 2009

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Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair  
And to the Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
House of Representatives  
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, 2009  
State of Hawaii

Cheryl Matthews  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
(808) 989-2186 or [cmatthew@hawaii.edu](mailto:cmatthew@hawaii.edu)

RE: Committee hearing on Friday, February 13 at 8:30 a.m. in Conference Room 309

IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1719

My name is Cheryl Matthews and I have committed myself to public service. Upon first hire, I accepted a reduction in salary based on the fact that the overall compensation package would, in the long run, be more of a benefit than alternative private-sector employment opportunities available within the state and county in which I reside. The fact that the overall compensation package includes a retirement health care benefit was the pivotal factor in my decision to pursue and accept public sector employment.

The proposal to eliminate a health benefit to retired personnel, who have dedicated their lives to serving the state, is unjustifiable. The current financial crises faced by our state must be managed and balanced without imposing reductions and/or elimination of benefits guaranteed by the employer at the time of hire, or in this case, at the time of retirement.

If the decision is made to eliminate the retirement health care benefit, the state will be faced with a sub-standard work force, as quality professionals will no longer desire to work for the government and will take their skills elsewhere. We have already begun to see that the cost of living has driven out many residents. Taking away basic health care from our retired public servant will promote the lack of political will to keep quality professionals in our state. Further, by eliminating the retirement health care benefit, the very citizens who need the health coverage will be forced to go without medical treatment as most are on fixed incomes and will be unable to afford to meet their basic needs in addition to the medical costs. There is serious concern that our seniors will be forced to go without medical prescriptions and that their quality of life will be further reduced as a direct result of the passage of this proposal.

The passage of this proposal is ill-conceived and I urge you to vote NO on HB 1719.

Mahalo nui loa,

Cheryl Matthews

**Department of Education Employees**  
**Submitting Written Testimony In Opposition to HB 1719**

	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>School or District</b>
1	Lili Ann	Sullivan	Waianae Intermediate School
2	Joanne	Shibuya	Kawananakoa Middle School
3	Daniel	Mew	Kawananakoa Middle School
4	Carly	Kanemaru	Iroquois Point Elementary School
5	Gwendolyn	Maeda	McKinley High School
6	Julie	Miyagawa	Wailuku Elementary School
7	Kim	Maunakea	Mililani Middle School
8	Jodie	Imai	Moanalua Elementary School
9	Jay	Nakasone	Moanalua Elementary School
10	Elizabeth W.	Poole	Iao Intemediate School
11	Laverne	Fernandez Moore	McKinley High School
12	Ken	Kozuma	Roosevelt High School
13	Debra	Chu	Mokapu Elementary School
14	Susan	Crowell	Information Resource Mgt Br., SIS
15	Don	Coloma	Waipahu High School
16	Patti	Laba	Dole Middle School
17	Pearl	Abernethy	Kainalu Elementary School
18	Curtiss	Ako	Dole Middle School
19	Ann	Uda	Salt Lake Elementary School
20	Deborah	Richards	Royal Elementary School
21	Roberta	Williams	Kauai District
22	Kimberly	Oh	Mililani Middle School
23	Kimberly	Sumida	Moanalua Elementary School
24	Maurice	Gushiken	King Kaumualii School
25	Gina	Saneishi	Leilehua High School
26	Cindy	Yoichisako	Waipahu High School
27	Flordelis	Oania	Waipahu High School
28	DaManna	Warman	Leilehua High School
29	Matthew J.	Hoag	Leilehua High School
30	Tumoana	Kenessey	James Campbell High School
31	Karen	Chan	Resource Teacher, State Office
32	Karen	Lee	Kaimuki Middle School
33	Jeanette	Farm	Waianae Intermediate School
34	Judith	Stambaugh	Kauai High School
35	Brandon	Respicio	Dept. of Education
36	Melvin H.	Nakagawa	Waianae Intermediate School
37	Patrick	Maher	Central District
38	Geri	O'Leary	McKinley Complex
39	Jessica	Palumbo	Radford Complex
40	Catherine	Ayabe	Kawananakoa Middle School
41	Darlani	Gaspar	Waianae High School
42	Arlene M. A.	Ogura	Leilehua High School
43	Michael	Yoshida	Kaimuki High School

44	Patriciajo	Peifer	Kea'au High School
45	Patricia	Louis	Aliamanu Elementary School
46	Sharon	Lau Aldueso	Alvah A. Scott Elementary School
47	Suzanne	Johnson	Aliamanu Elementary School
48	Michelle	Takenishi	Kahala Elementary School
49	Nadine	Icari	Kea'au High School
50	Carmelita	Samson	Kea'au High School
51	Debra-Ann	Kiyabu	Wailuku Elementary School
52	Donna	Fuji	Eleele School
53	Kathy	Miyasato	Waihee School
54	Julianna	Harman	Waianae Intermediate School
55	Warren	Kawano	Waipahu High School
56	Kathleen	Mckeon	Wailuku Elementary School
57	Darlene	Fujimoto	Central District
58	Jason Tate	Fong	Kaimuki High School
59	Dean	Watanabe	Kaimuki High School
60	Mona	Yamat	Lahaina Intermediate School
61	Lori	Lendio McKeown	Waiialua Elementary School
62	Ian S.	Nagao	Kea'au High School
63	Nikki	Takai	Pearl City High School
64	Lori	Cabacungan	Wailuku Elementary School
65	Candace	Fukuroku	Wailuku Elementary School
66	Haley	van Weemen van Noord	Lahaina Intermediate School
67	Karen	Chan	State Office
68	Kathlynn	Tabandera	Kea'au High School
69	Kaleo	Waiau	Maui High School
70	Clifton	Lum	McKinley High School
71	Kimberly	Tengan	Baldwin High School
72	Roxanne	Hayase	Wailuku Elementary School
73	Janice	Shimokawa	McKinley High School
74	Glenn	Mayeda, Jr.	Ilima Intermediate School
75	Wanette	Shirafuji	Kawanakoa Middle School
76	Holly	Nishimitsu	Kapa'a Elementary School
77	Shawn	Hanscam	Wailuku Elementary School
78	Cheryl	Sanford	Manoa Elementary School
79	Kellie	Young	Mililani High School
80	Lacey	Cabral	Kea'au High School
81	William Steve	Stinefelt	Pearl City High School
82	Linda	Moorehead	Windward District
83	Christine	Keahi	Lahaina Intermediate School
84	Irma	Kobayashi	Lincoln Elementary School
85	Chris	Nakagawa	McKinley High School
86	Kathy	Tanita Ohama	Pearl City High School
87	Cristine	Cox	Kauai High School
88	A. Iwalani	Harris	Kea'au Elementary School
89	Nora	Arakaki	Wailuku Elementary School
90	Darryl	Miyasato	Kauai High School

91	Erik	Jennings	Lahainaluna High School
92	Carol	Rosetta	Lahainaluna High School
93	Kaluna	Wong-Staszkow	Dept. of Education
94	Susan	Kelley	Pearl Ridge Elementary School
95	Jan	Mori	Hale Kula Elementary School
96	Hilary	Yaeger	Hana High & Elementary School
97	Lauri	Konishi	Dept. of Education
98	Jodi	Yamashiro	Manoa Elementary School
99	Kristine	Takekawa	Dept. of Education
100	Iramalee	Choo	Lunalilo Elementary School
101	Ellen	Scherr	Queen Kaahumanu Elementary School
102	Leslie-Ann	Chin	Wailuku Elementary School
103	Michael	Monette	Pearl City High School
104	Kristen	Woolever	Dept. of Education
105	Vicky	Mitsunaga	Lincoln Elementary School
106	Charles	Fulks	Kauai High School
107	Gail	Nishimura	Mililani High School
108	Elizabeth W.	Hueu	Aiea Elementary School
109	Tanya	Pacada	Honowai Elementary School
110	Linda	Estrella	Hana High & Elementary School
111	Krisan	Tamaye	Wailuku Elementary School
112	Naomi	Tamashiro	Kauai High School
113	Sue	Tuttle	Dept. of Education
114	Mary	Ancheta	Waipahu High School
115	Caron	Wilberts	Dept. of Education
116	Justin	Hughey	King Kamehameha III
117	Wendy	Lum	Pearl Ridge Elementary School
118	Darren	Nakayama	Queen Kaahumanu Elementary School
119	Terry	Pinyerd	Kea'au Elementary School
120	Mavis	Leong	Kaneohe Elementary
121	Julianne	Cross	Hilo Intermediate
122	Lianne	Dela Cruz	Lihikai Elementary School
123	Elverita	Toci	Hilo Union Elementary School
124	Marissa	Shibata	Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary
125	Sheldon		Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary
126	Laura	Brown	Pearl Ridge Elementary School
127	Jennifer	Rubel	Kauai High School
128	Carl	Bolding	Dept. of Education
129	Jenny	Niki	Pearl Ridge Elementary School

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Lili Ann Silva  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Lili Ann Silva and I am a teacher at Wai'anāe Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

For those who were planning to retire soon at age 55 after 30 years of service, it would seem that you will be punishing them for hard work, minimum use of medical services (because of good health), and for being health conscious.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW:

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Joanne\_Shibuya/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Joanne\_Shibuya/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:55 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:**

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Joanne Shibuya

**SUBJECT:** HB 1715,1718-23,1725,1727 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Joanne Shibuya and I am a teacher at Kawanakoa Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1715, 1718-23,1725,1727 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age.

Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age and increases the amount employee pays while decreasing the employer's contribution while employed.

If these bills should pass, they would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

In the schools, the state of Hawaii will experience a mass exodus of teachers similar to the year the early retirement package was offered which resulted in many unqualified teachers being hired and many retirees being rehired to fill the vacancies. In the schools, we saw and felt the negative effects of the last exodus. The major impact was having unqualified teachers filling vacant positions. How are we to continue striving for NCLB with unqualified and non-certificated teachers in the classroom?

Teaching is an extremely exhausting career, both mentally and physically. That is why there are very few teachers who teach after 60 years old. They know their limitations and care too much for the welfare of their students to continue at a diminished pace in the classroom. There are always the remarkable exceptions, but at least they have options after 60. We do not all age at the same rate, but these bills would require that

we do.

Another ill effect of these bills would be the state of health for many Hawaii seniors who would not receive health care if they were unable to continue as public employees until 65 years old. These bills would deteriorate the health of our state employees and our seniors and consequently, we would lose the value of a healthy senior population in Hawaii. Ultimately, the public services would experience an increase in demand from seniors between the ages of 60 to 65 resulting in additional state spending.

I understand the need for budget cuts, so why not propose **if needed** that we retain the medical coverage for retirees, but cut the coverage for beneficiaries/spouses. State employees should not be penalized for retiring before 65 years of age and for working for the state government.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Joanne K. Shibuya



TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Daniel Mew  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Daniel Mew and I am a teacher at Kawanānakoā Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which, *suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.*

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. Hence, increase the shortage of qualified teachers in Hawaii. It would be prudent to suspend this bill, at least until our Federal Government can offer us alternative Health Care. This bill strips us of the trust we have for our state leaders. Also, many teachers who have recently enrolled in the Hybrid Retirement System would be unfairly discriminated against if this bill is passed.

I, and many fellow educators, as well as community members, are appalled that this bill has even reached the senate. Educators should be the last group from whom anything is taken away as our future society relies so heavily on them.

I trust you will vote no and look for other creative ways to help the State of Hawaii. I believe your education would tell you so.

Aloha,

Daniel S.H. Mew  
25 years -String Orchestra/Drama Educator, State of Hawaii

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** berg1-Liz  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:44 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** berg1-Liz **On Behalf Of** EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:27 PM  
**To:** 'Carly Kanemaru'  
**Subject:** RE: HB1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Aloha,

Testimony for the Labor Committee should be emailed to: [labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov). I will forward your email.

Mahalo,

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Carly Kanemaru [<mailto:carlykanemaru@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:25 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Carly Kanemaru and I am a teacher at Iroquois Point Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:45 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Gwendolyn\_Maeda/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Gwendolyn\_Maeda/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:42 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Gwendolyn Maeda  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Gwendolyn Maeda and I am a teacher at McKinley High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I dedicated my life to teaching (30+ years). Many of my college classmates left teaching for more lucrative careers. They left teaching for more pay and no work after work (planning, grading, chaperoning, counseling, tutoring, etc.). Although I do enjoy my chosen profession, one of the reasons I chose to stay in teaching was the benefits of being a public school teacher. To yank the medical insurance benefit from workers who toiled with the state for their entire career for less pay is not right.

I was planning to teach until age 62 but if this bill goes through, I will consider taking an early retirement. I will not be 55 by July but I do have my 30 years of service. Has anyone considered how many teaching vacancies will have to be filled if all teachers with 30 years experience would retire? Yes, new teachers' salaries are less

but will they be highly qualified to teach in their subject areas? Our schools are already having a difficult time and to further jeopardize our students learning by hiring unqualified teachers is not a good thing for the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:45 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Julie\_Miyagawa/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Julie\_Miyagawa/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:33 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Julie Miyagawa  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Julie Miyagawa and I am a SASA at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**I am not near retirement age and had planned to finish my career with the Department of Education many years from now. We are currently paid less than our value for the amount of work and hours we must put in to be effective contributors to our schools. The only equitable trade for the salary has been the benefit package that the State provides including current medical and future retirement benefits. If this bill is passed into law, I will not be eligible for retirement this year as many others may to guarantee their benefits but I strongly feel that I will seek other employment in the future that offers a better compensation plan. I am confident that the State will be faced with a worsened recruitment and retention problem which will have adverse effects on the ability to serve the public. Please reconsider these bills that only penalize those of us who are working to serve our community as best possible.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:10 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony Against HB 1719  
  
**Importance:** High

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Kim\_Maunakea/MILMID/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Kim\_Maunakea/MILMID/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:05 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony Against HB 1719  
**Importance:** High

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Kim Maunakea  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kim Maunakea and I am a teacher at Mililani Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I would definitely retire on June 30th 2009 because I do not want to have to pay for my own medical coverage until I reach the age of 65. I feel that I have served the state faithfully and will suffer greatly if I lose my medical benefits.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:50 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: Do Not Pass Bill HB 1719

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Jodie\_Imai/MOANAE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Jodie\_Imai/MOANAE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:46 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Do Not Pass Bill HB 1719

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Jodie Imai  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jodie Imai and I am a teacher at Moanalua Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

I have concerns that if I should retire under the age of 65, that my family and I will have to pay 100% of our health benefits until I reach age 65. This does not take into consideration the number of years of service that someone has invested. Personally, I have dedicated approximately 20 years of faithful service to my teaching career and by age 65, I would be expected to work for approximately 40 years.

Currently, teachers need 25 years of service or age 55 to be eligible for retirement. Expecting someone to work additional years in order to maintain their family health benefits is unreasonable and an excessive hardship. Teaching that is a very physically, mentally, and emotionally challenging job and many would be unable to work those additional 10-15 years. The more unspeakable alternative would be to retire and have NO health benefits for yourself and family for 10-15 years.

This is not a good bill. I ask that you do not pass this bill.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June



30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## Example e-mail letter

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Jay Nakasone]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jay Nakasone and I am a teacher at Moanalua Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have been employed with the Department of Education for 11 years now, and am nowhere near the age of retirement. I oppose this bill, as it doesn't make fiscal sense. This bill would force State employees to retire earlier than they anticipated receiving their health benefits. This bill would save the State millions of dollars in the short term, as it would decrease the person's year of service by forcing them to retire earlier (i.e. by June 30, 2009). In the long term for younger employees, it would force us to work until age 65 to receive these health benefits. This would increase our years of service, which will increase the financial burden of the State in decades to come.

There are many teachers who are nearing or at the retirement age, yet they choose to continue to teach. They teach because this is their passion, and realize that the students are our future. If this bill passes, the DOE will possible lose a bunch of excellent teachers who meet the academic/social needs of the students of Hawaii. If this bill passes, it will speak volumes of how our government leaders value education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jay Nakasone

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** Elizabeth\_Poole/MAUIDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Monday, February 09, 2009 3:08 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 and HB1737

**Importance:** High

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing concerning two bills that are coming up in the legislation--HB 1719 and HB1737. Both bills would directly adversely impact my future and it is my hope that this letter will shed some light on why I would hope that my congressmen would vote NO on these two bills.

I am a School Based Behavioral Health Specialist at Iao School on the island of Maui. I worked with very high end needs children who have behavioral and emotional challenges that impact their ability to receive a quality education.. It is a very demanding job, and requires a lot of energy and knowledge to be able to do it well. I believe that my salary is fair, but I am certainly not going to be living in a wealthy way when I retire. I live simply and am not a big spender or consumer.

I have worked in the public sector for close to forty years. I plan to work awhile longer, at which time I am hoping to retire. I would like to be able to do this based on the work that I have contributed to the society to which I belong.

My understanding of these two bills is that the Governor would like to make changes to my retirement benefit package in an effort to trim the budget in the State of Hawaii.

I find this unconscionable and a travesty. After years of dedicated work, I believe that I should be able to retire in a comfortable way. To remove or significantly change my benefits in an effort to boost the current economy is not right. I have been working a long time to try to prepare for my future in an honest way. I will not be able to work forever, and I need to know that my retirement will be there for me when I need to access it. I need to know that I will have quality health care. Growing older takes its toll on a human being, and I need to know that I will be able to access the care that I will need to continue living in a healthy and productive way. To change the rules about how much that money will be, and to take away the health insurance contribution is akin to theft and abandonment. I did not create or contribute to the current financial crisis. For the Governor to think that she can short change me in an effort to balance her budget is not right or fair. There are echoes of Enron here. I have been working steadily and quietly with the intent that I am preparing well for my future in the event that I can no longer work as I do now.

Please vote NO on both of these resolutions. It is not right for the state to take away benefits from people who have dedicated their lives to making Hawaii a good place to live and work.

If you have any questions, or would wish to discuss this with me further, please do not hesitate to call me at 808-984-5610 ext. 258.

I feel fairly certain that I speak for many others such as myself and it is my hope that you take this testimony under consideration.

Mahalo for your time.

Elizabeth W. Poole, SBBH IV, Iao Intermediate School, Maui

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Monday, February 09, 2009 3:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB1719-Relating To Public Employees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**TO:** [LABtestimony@hawaii.capitol.hawaii](mailto:LABtestimony@hawaii.capitol.hawaii)

**FROM:** Laverne Fernandes Moore

**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

My name is Laverne Fernandes Moore and I am a teacher at McKinley High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I strongly believe this bill is unfair for I was teaching in Brighton, Colorado in 1969 and on a path to becoming a University Professor at the University of Northern Colorado. I was advised to return home to Hawaii

to teach for Hawaii just passed the Collective Bargaining Law and we had the third best retirement package in the Nation. I came home to teach and in my years here were offered numerous positions in the Federal Government and private practice. I stayed in teaching for the health benefits that I would receive upon my retirement. Now, to have the State of Hawaii pass such a punitive law is unjust to those of us who choose to work in State and county government. We entered into a contract believing that health benefits would be there for us upon retirement. This is in no way to treat government employees who have contributed to Hawaii's economy. I urge you to vote no on this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 7:18 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

My name is Ken Kozuma and I am a teacher at Roosevelt High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I am currently 27 years old and have 5 years of service. If I have to work till 65, I will have to teach for 43 years! Putting in 30 years of service isn't good enough anymore? It's almost a slap in my face.

I'm a math teacher with a bachelor's in math, and minors in physics, computer science and business, and a master's degree in secondary math education. I got into teaching to help the youth and to make a difference in kids' lives. You're punishing the people who finished college early and got into their professions as soon as possible. Aren't we the ones you should be helping, not hurting?

Please reconsider HB 1719.

Thank you very much for your time,  
-Ken Kozuma

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:00 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Debra Chu and I am a teacher at Mokapu School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. This allows an employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I do not support this bill. I would like to retire before 65 years of age and not have to pay for 100% of my medical as agreed upon at hiring. At the very least all state employees currently employed should be protected by the medical support agreed upon at the time of hire. Adopt this new bill for all new hires after July 1, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Debra Chu

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:11 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB1719 - Relating to Public Employees

My name is Susan Crowell and I am a Resource Teacher with the the Information Resource Management Branch, Student Information Systems.

I strongly oppose HB1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Further, it allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire before June 30, 2009.

There are many state employees who have been faithful and devoted workers with long state careers because of these anticipated benefits. Now, shortly before our planned retirements, these benefits will be taken away. Talented, valuable employees will cut their careers short because of this and other bills that affect our retirement situations. Our anticipated retirement pay will be extremely negatively impacted if we have to fund our medical premiums with no assistance from the retirement system.

There is much discussion going on and there are many people who will retire by June 30 just to preserve this benefit. People who will suddenly retire and not have time to train their replacements. People who will take retirement penalties to keep this benefit. People who will feel, at the end of their long careers, that the State did not look out for their best interest after all these years of faithful service.

I know, for one, that the Department of Education will have many retiring because of this. What will happen to the schools when there is a mass exodus of veteran, experienced, knowledgeable people? How will the students be serviced properly without Highly Qualified Teachers? How will the schools replace these valuable employees/teachers to fill these voids?

Yes, you need to find ways to balance the budget...but at what expense?

Thank you for your consideration of this request.  
Sincerely,  
Susan Crowell, Career DOE Teacher



**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Rep. Karl Rhoads  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

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**From:** Don Coloma [mailto:doncoloma@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:56 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** All Reps  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is **Don Coloma** and I am a teacher at **Waipahu High School**. I strongly oppose HB1719 which will suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It will only allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by that employee paying the respective state or county share of premiums until that employee reaches the Medicare retirement age of 65.

If this bill should pass, the effect on the working majority that are unable to retire before July 2009 will be immense. Our trust in our legislators will be broken and the repercussions will vibrate for a long time.

The benefit package that comes with this job was a major selling point when I signed on at the age of 30. Believe me when I say it was not the pay, my previous job paid more. I do understand the financial crisis that we are faced with, we face it daily; at the gas pump, at the grocery store and when mailing our ever increasing monthly bills. HB1719 will directly affect our pockets, it's like taking milk from a baby, how then, would you feed it? I feel like I am getting spanked and I can not turn in the abuser because he controls the system. Each and all of you are our caregivers in this family and as such you are threatening the children in the house. There are other alternatives, as caregivers, your task is to search elsewhere, keep the house intact. The burden that HB1719 places on our golden years will dull the shine and impact many lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** Patti Laba [pattilaba@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:08 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Patti Laba. I am a curriculum coordinator at Dole Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would be unfair to the current state and county employees. As a public school teacher for almost twenty-three years, I would like to work for seven more years and retire at age 60. With this bill, I would need to work 35 years to retain health benefits. This is not right. What about the younger teachers? Quality teacher retention is difficult because other professional positions have more appealing pay and benefits. Cutting benefits could be the last straw.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Patti Laba  
Dole Middle School Curriculum Coordinator

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Windows Live™: Keep your life in sync. [See how it works.](#)

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** PAbernethy [pmaber@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:47 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony opposing bills HB1719,1725

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb 13, 2009

Conference Room 309, 8:30a.m.

My name is Pearl Abernethy and I am Speech Pathologist at Kainalu Elementary School with Department of Education. I strongly oppose HB 1719, which suspends state and county contributions fo EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of dateof hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. I also oppose HB 1725 which prohibits health plans from providing prescription drug coverage.

If these bills pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have worked for the state for over 30 years as a Speech Pathologist, in special education, both areas of severe need. And yet, if these bills are passed I must now seriously consider retiring on June 30th. I must consider the very real possibility of health problems that might force me to retire prior to the medicare retirement age of 65 leaving me with limited and fixed income and little way to pay for the high cost of health insurance or drug coverage, just when I needed it the most. I have worked for many years in service to the state only to have health benefits be stripped as I approach the time when I am most likely to need it. It is not right that state and county employees are the ones to carry the weight of the State's financial difficulties. Calvin Say says he is willing to cut programs. At least, program cuts affect all in the state, not just the state workers who are now being threatened with changes that will affect their physical well-being.

Please do NOT support these bills.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. \_\_\_\_\_

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:59 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719: I am a public schooltchr. and object

Aloha, sent to EDN testimony by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Curtiss\_Ako/DOLE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Curtiss\_Ako/DOLE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 8:56 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719: I am a public schooltchr. and object

I object because this is a short-term measure to save money and does not address the long-term goal to provide adequate health coverage to State employees in public service. The economy goes up and down and fluctuates.

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:34 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES testimony

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with SprintSpeed

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**From:** Ann\_Uda/SALTLAKE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Date:** Tue, 10 Feb 2009 09:11:34 -1000  
**To:** <EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov>  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES testimony

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)

**FROM:** M. Ann Uda

**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Ann Uda and I am a teacher at Salt Lake Elementary School and I **strongly oppose HB 1719** which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**I feel it is unfair for you to change my health benefits midstream.**

**I have been teacher for 37, going on 38 years, faithfully and frequently putting in 12 hour work days at school and still taking work home to make classes relevant and interesting for my students. My daughters often ask me, "How come I have to spend so much time in school and at home working?"**

**I challenge you to teach everything from Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science, Art, PE, Music, Character Development, Ethics, Work Habits to 26 + students every single day.**

**One of the few benefits, from the very start of my career, has been the promise that both my and my spouse's medical be covered. I have been charged and paid every fee for my entire**

**working career and now you want me to pay even more, until I reach the age of 66?**

**Should this bill pass, I am prepared to retire on June 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ann Uda

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* Fw:

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with SprintSpeed

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**From:** Deborah\_Richards/ROYAL/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Date:** Tue, 10 Feb 2009 08:51:52 -1000  
**To:** <mmorita@hsta.\_org>  
**Subject:**

----- Forwarded by Deborah Richards/ROYAL/HIDOE on 02/10/09 08:50 AM -----

**Deborah  
Richards/ROYAL/HIDOE**      To: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
02/10/09 08:49 AM                      cc  
Subject

**I strongly oppose HB1719** which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009. **Please DO NOT pass this bill.**

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:29 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony against: HB 1719

Testimony emailed to EDN by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Roberta Williams [mailto:[bobbiewilli@gmail.com](mailto:bobbiewilli@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:22 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony against: HB 1719

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309; 8:30 am

My name is Roberta Williams and I am a School Social Worker with the Department of Education, Kauai District. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. This legislation provides for the resuming of coverage after medicare retirement age. It allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age. This would in essence means that the State and County employee would be required to pay 100% of their premiums until we reach the age of 65.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. We would lose the employees with the most to offer the state in terms of knowledge and experience.

I have been with the state as an loyal and committed employee for 27 years and had planned on retiring in 3 years. I feel extremely betrayed by this legislation. It makes me feel like I am being penalized for being a long term employee. When I began working for the state, I felt it was a secure and stable job and looked forward to having that same stability in my retirement years. Now, I feel like I am a second hand citizen and this legislation is being directed at the loyal state and County employee. This legislation would force me to continue working in order to maintain my benefits or retire early and take a huge penalty just to secure my medical premium coverage.



This is grossly unfair when you consider what we were promised upon starting our employment. In addition, both my husband and I are State DOE employees therefore we would be hit twice with this legislation. We are not in a financial situation which can withstand this type of punitive action. I can barely make my mortgage payment as it is. If you tack on the cost of our premiums for both my husband and myself, we may not be able to afford medical coverage when in our late 50's and 60's we need it the most. Please consider not supporting this legislation which would have far reaching and long term negative impacts on our State and County employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Roberta Williams  
PO Box 1036  
Hanapepe, HI 96716

--  
Roberta

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Kimberly Oh  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kimberly Oh and I am a teacher at Mililani Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

When I was hired, I signed a contract with the D.O.E (State of Hawaii) and in that contract there were certain understandings that I, as well and the D.O.E (State of Hawaii), agreed to. One of those agreements was that if I work for 30 years (minimum age 55) I can retire and my health coverage will also be taken care of. Most people plan for how much is needed for retirement. If this bill passes, it will seriously and maybe even, bankrupt those that do not take into account this major expense in their monthly budget. It may put many seniors in the welfare line or maybe in the streets. I don't want to be one of those that depend on State monies for support in my later years. Please do not pass this bill into law; it is unfair to those of us that put in many faithful years with the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kimberly Oh

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:47 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kimberly Sumida and I am a teacher at Moanalua Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age and allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Although the state envisions saving money by suspending state and county contributions, the state would be spending more on employee salaries. By keeping the veteran teachers and state workers, the state will be spending much more on salaries. Currently, a veteran teacher makes double the amount of a first year teacher.

As a public school teacher, I am concerned for the welfare of the children of Hawai'i. Children should be in classrooms taught by teachers who want to be there, not teachers who are forced to be there for health benefits. As an elementary school teacher, working with the students is a very physical job. Keeping the children engaged throughout the day requires both physical and mental stamina, which tends to diminish as the years go by. Teachers should not be required to teach past the age of 55.

Those are the reasons for my strong opposition to this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kimberly Sumida  
Gifted and Talented Teacher  
Moanalua Elementary School

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** Maurice\_Gushiken/KAUMUALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:52 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Opposing HB 1719

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Maurice Gushiken and I am a speech pathologist at King Kaumualii School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resume coverage after medicare retirement age. Allow employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state and county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 12:06 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Gina Saneishi and I am a teacher at Leilehua High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Cindy Yoichisako  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Cindy M Yoichisako and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Already working in a state that underpays their workers in a state where cost of living out weighs the money that is suppose to be for food, shelter, clothes, college tuition, family healthcare, and much much more. I shutter at the thought of how much I have to pinch and save just to get my kids to college, retirement and now the added stress of healthcare is absolulety absurd. What more can you take away from us! Why do we have to pay the high price of our own government who doesn't know how to take care of it's own people. It's sad to see families move to the mainland just because they can't afford the cost of living in our beautiful state of Hawaii. Now we will have more and more people move from our state because they can't afford the healthcare they need. ]

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Cindy Yoichiskao  
Business Department Chairperson  
Waipahu High School

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: FLORDELIS OANIA  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Flordelis Oania and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**As a teacher, I accepted lower pay for benefits when we retire. It is so unfair to change the 'rules' especially for those who are near retirement. Given the economic hardships today and the next 2 to 4 years, I simply can not afford to retire I had wanted to teach until the age 62 even though I will have put in more than 30 years. I have a lot to offer and I am good at what I do. To force me retire now just so I qualify for medical benefits is wrong.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:18 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Testimony emailed to EDN by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Danna\_Warman/LEILEHUA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Danna\_Warman/LEILEHUA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 1:48 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

**From:**  
Danna Warman, Special Education Teacher

**To:**  
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Danna Warman and I am a teacher at Leilehua High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

This bill would treat me and many other public servants unfairly by taking away our health benefits when we retire. I have been a Special Education Teacher in Hawaii for thirty years this June. I had not planned on retiring for three more years but this will force me to retire in June. With the difficulty in hiring new qualified teachers, I would think the emphasis would be on keeping the ones we have, not trying to force them out. One of the reasons young people decide to teach in this state is our benefit package. That is the reason my family did not move to the mainland to a place that pays better and where the cost of living is considerably less. We were looking ahead to retirement and the health benefits were important in our life planning. It will be



extremely difficult to keep teachers here now if you decide to reward hardworking, committed teachers by showing them they have little or no value to this state. I love teaching and would love to have the opportunity to continue to teach students with emotional difficulties for several more years. Please don't force me out!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Danna Warman

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----- Forwarded by Jan Turner/SOLOMON/HIDOE on 02/09/2009 05:12 PM -----

<[mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)>

02/09/2009 02:31 PM

To <[aanusewicz@aol.com](mailto:aanusewicz@aol.com)>, <[devispencer@hotmail.com](mailto:devispencer@hotmail.com)>, <[drcole51@yahoo.com](mailto:drcole51@yahoo.com)>, <[kealii82@yahoo.com](mailto:kealii82@yahoo.com)>, <[agestric@gmail.com](mailto:agestric@gmail.com)>, <[mhoy\\_9092@hotmail.com](mailto:mhoy_9092@hotmail.com)>, <[hughhey2000@aol.com](mailto:hughhey2000@aol.com)>, <[kkawaila2000@yahoo.com](mailto:kkawaila2000@yahoo.com)>, <[ack@netscape.com](mailto:ack@netscape.com)>, <[dniibu@hotmail.com](mailto:dniibu@hotmail.com)>, <[kknunn@hotmail.com](mailto:kknunn@hotmail.com)>, <[stephenono@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenono@hotmail.com)>, <[manuwaiipeters@gmail.com](mailto:manuwaiipeters@gmail.com)>, <[kim.springer@members.hsta.org](mailto:kim.springer@members.hsta.org)>, <[roderick.sumagit@members.hsta.org](mailto:roderick.sumagit@members.hsta.org)>, <[toni\\_reynolds@email.com](mailto:toni_reynolds@email.com)>, <[wwichman@hawaii.edu](mailto:wwichman@hawaii.edu)>, <[wwichman45@gmail.com](mailto:wwichman45@gmail.com)>, <[monita\\_brown@members.hsta.org](mailto:monita_brown@members.hsta.org)>, <[jessbabysigns@gmail.com](mailto:jessbabysigns@gmail.com)>, <[mraloha@clearwire.net](mailto:mraloha@clearwire.net)>, <[swiffturtle808@gmail.com](mailto:swiffturtle808@gmail.com)>, <[outreach\\_counselor@hotmail.com](mailto:outreach_counselor@hotmail.com)>, <[jefflief@gmail.com](mailto:jefflief@gmail.com)>, <[brianlynchjr@gmail.com](mailto:brianlynchjr@gmail.com)>, <[cleonitta@yahoo.com](mailto:cleonitta@yahoo.com)>, <[evelyn\\_say@members.hsta.org](mailto:evelyn_say@members.hsta.org)>, <[daschnegoff@yahoo.com](mailto:daschnegoff@yahoo.com)>, <[btaylor001@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:btaylor001@hawaii.rr.com)>, <[jteruva@earthlink.net](mailto:jteruva@earthlink.net)>, <[jrurbaniak@gmail.com](mailto:jrurbaniak@gmail.com)>, <[seanuwaine@gmail.com](mailto:seanuwaine@gmail.com)>

cc <[jbailey-yoshino@hsta.org](mailto:jbailey-yoshino@hsta.org)>, <[jbarroga@hsta.org](mailto:jbarroga@hsta.org)>, <[rcamacho@hsta.org](mailto:rcamacho@hsta.org)>, <[ipo71@yahoo.com](mailto:ipo71@yahoo.com)>, <[gkurashima@hsta.org](mailto:gkurashima@hsta.org)>, <[alee@hsta.org](mailto:alee@hsta.org)>, <[mmccartney@hsta.org](mailto:mmccartney@hsta.org)>, <[mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)>, <[rtakabayashi@hsta.org](mailto:rtakabayashi@hsta.org)>, <[ltanaka@hsta.org](mailto:ltanaka@hsta.org)>, <[John.Williamson@MWC-Anthology.com](mailto:John.Williamson@MWC-Anthology.com)>

Subject HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

## HB 1719 – Relating to Public Employees

This is the bill we have grave concerns about that begins from July 1, 2009, if a public employee retires under age 65, the public retiree will have to pay 100% of your health benefits until you reach age 65.

We need testimonies opposing this bill and below is an example of your testimony. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact Maurice at 225-0326 or email at [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)

You can email your testimony to [EDNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)

FROM: Matthew J. Hoag

BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)

SUBJECT: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

My name is Matthew J. Hoag and I am a teacher at Leilehua High

school \_\_\_\_\_ School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

***This paragraph should tell why you feel its unfair for them to change your health benefits; why you would retire on June 30<sup>th</sup>; and other reasons why this is a bad bill.***

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:27 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 Opposition Letter

Testimony sent to EDN by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Tumoana\_Kenessey/CAMPBELL/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Tumoana\_Kenessey/CAMPBELL/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:15 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 Opposition Letter

My oppositon to HB. Please read

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Tumoana Kenessey  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Mr. Tumoana Kenessey and I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I believe this is unfair to change my health benefits which would impact the financial health and safety of my family. I am a tax payer of this state and believe that you are trying to legislate a way to not pay what has been negotiated in good faith. If I get sick and am forced to retire after this bill is passed would mean I would have to pay for all of my medical care until I as 65, which is 24 years from now...That is not fair and wrong. Very Un ALOHA of this bill...and we call ourselves the Aloha state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Karen Chan

SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Karen Chan and I am a Resource teacher at the State office and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

I have served the State with more than 23 years of services. One of the reasons I decided to take a position with the State is for the retirement benefits. To have these benefits taken away just prior to my retirement is unfair.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. This would burden our pension fund, which posted a 2.95 billion lost in 2008.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Karen\_Lee/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:14 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

My name is Karen Lee and I am a psychological examiner at Kaimuki Middle School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Jeanette Farm

SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jeanette Farm and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**This is a bad bill because many state and county employees were hired with the guarantee of health benefits at retirement regardless of their age. There are many employees who are between the ages of 55-64 and close to retirement. These loyal employees will be penalized by losing their health benefits should they retire prior to age 65. There has to be other ways to balance the budget than taking away health benefits from retirees. This seems like a cruel underhanded tactic targeted at the very people who have supported the state and county governments throughout their many years of service.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Your Name]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Judith Stambaugh and I am a teacher at Kauai High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I understand the need for budget cuts but I believe that this is not the way to do it. I do not agree with the idea that the teacher retirement age should be tied to the Medicare retirement age. I believe that the current retirement requirements of at least 55 years of age and 20 years of service or 62 and 10+ should be adhered to.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Brandon Respicio [ainolikeu@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:14 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1723 HB 1715 HB 1726 HB 1727 HB 1719

Hi, my name is Brandon Respicio and I live in your district and voted for you. I work for the DOE and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Please vote appropriately against:

HB 1723

HB 1715

HB 1726

HB 1727

HB 1719

Thank you,  
Brandon Respicio

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

TO: [LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
FROM: Melvin H. Nakagawa  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Melvin H. Nakagawa and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage many state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. This could have a major impact on schools and other critical services that the state and county provide.

I have been planning for my retirement for at least 5-10 years. And now HB 1719 would negate all that I have been working for and planning for--a comfortable retirement. It would be a major cost to have to pay for my own medical and my family's medical premiums if I retire at age 62, at the end of this year. How can the Legislature pass HB 1719 and in 5 months take away all my medical benefits that I have been working for the past 29 years. It is unfair and unjust. This would force me to retire on June 30, 2009.

Please do the "right" thing and stop HB 1718.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Melvin H. Nakagawa

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Patrick Maher  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Patrick Maher and I am a Behavior Health Specialist in Central District on Oahu. At age 60 I am considering retirement and now with this proposed legislation I am forced to consider the financial viability of this decision. Given that I had numerous opportunities in the past to move into the private sector as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with a salary increase, I chose to remain as a public employee. While it may be easy to dismiss this as "well that was your choice" my decision was motivated by my enjoyment of my work and the long-term benefit of an assured retirement benefit in the public sector. It would seem that this bill, if passed, suggest that I may have miscalculated. Both for those that are currently employed in the public sector as well as those in the future, consider the message that would be perceived if this bill passes, i.e. we'll support our public employees until there are other needs and then we'll chip away at that support. To retain and attract quality employees the State should not consider eroding the support that was promised to them.

Therefore I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Patrick Maher

**From:** Geri\_O'Leary/HONDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:14 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony

February 11, 2009

To: The Honorable Representative Karl Rhoades  
Chair, House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

From: Geri O'Leary

RE: Opposed to passage of HB 1719  
Hearing Date: Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

My name is Geri O'Leary and I am a speech/language pathologist who works for Special Services, Honolulu District, McKinley Complex. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I feel that this bill:

- Targets and discriminates against senior employees; almost forcing them to retire by June 30, 2009. Passing this bill could possibly initiate a class action suit which would be most costly for the State.
- Could cost the State a loss in tax revenue. Currently, the State is taxing our salaries; if senior employees retire in mass, the State will lose this income at a time when it is badly needed. How will that affect the State budget?
- Will cause the State to lose valuable, experienced teachers, speech pathologists, police officers, firemen etc. In my position in the DOE, it is the experienced speech pathologists (SLP) that are called upon to go to hearings when there are parental/legal disputes. We are the ones asked to help train and prepare the younger and less experienced SLPs so that they can provide adequate services to the State's handicapped youngsters. Most of us have been members of diagnostic teams and are needed to train school personnel regarding the process to determine educational eligibility. If we are forced to choose between early retirement with benefits or wait until we are 65 to retire, the State will lose valuable workers. Also, what message is this sending to younger employees?

- Penalizes employees that have been faithful workers in the State for more than 25 years. We have put up with negotiated low salary increases, accepted lower percentages for retirement compensation (around 60% vs. 80% or greater in many other states) because of the medical and age provisions in the State's retirement package and to change it without even a year's warning for employees to prepare is unfair. It is disgusting way to treat your employees.
- Having to retire will cause a reduction in income for employees to spend in local businesses. This is not what is needed at this time. Economy needs to be stimulated for recovery.

It seems that HB 1719 is just what we don't need—something to add to the panic, depression and feeling of distrust. Has the State consulted with economists as to what will be the fallout if thousands of employees retire by July 2009? It seems that what the State should be doing is looking for ways to create jobs, provide tax cuts, encourage spending etc. to stimulate the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:14 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jessica Palumbo and I am a School Psychologist with Radford Complex and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jessica Palumbo  
School Psychologist  
office #: 421-4143  
cell #: 351-6586  
fax: 421-4145

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719, HB1723, HB 1725, HB 1727  
**Attachments:** pic15309.gif; pic20106.gif

**From:** Catherine\_Ayabe/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Catherine\_Ayabe/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:47 AM  
**To:** All Senators; EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
**Cc:** KMS\_All@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Subject:** HB 1719, HB1723, HB 1725, HB 1727

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Catherine Ayabe and I am a teacher at Kawanana-  
koa Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which, *suspends state  
and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county  
employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless  
of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires  
before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage  
after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health  
coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county  
share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.*

If this bill, as well as HB 1723, HB 1725, and HB1727, should  
pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on  
June 30, 2009. Hence, increase the shortage of qualified teachers  
in Hawaii. It would be prudent to suspend this bill, at least  
until our Federal Government can offer us alternative Health Care.  
This bill strips us of the trust we have for our state leaders.  
Also, many teachers who have recently enrolled in the Hybrid  
Retirement System would be unfairly discriminated against if this  
bill is passed.

I, and many fellow educators, as well as community members, are  
appalled that this bill has even reached the senate. Educators  
should be the last group from whom anything is taken away as our  
future society relies so heavily on them.  
I trust you will vote no and look for other creative ways to help  
the State of Hawaii. I believe your education would tell you so.

Aloha,

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Catherine Ayabe

26 years of service, State of Hawaii

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TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Darlani Gaspar]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Darlani Gaspar and I am a teacher at Waianae High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*[I do understand that our nation and our state is experiencing financial difficult times and so am I as an individual. Everyone in the nation is affected by the repression and I know that budget cuts need to be made. But many people work for the State Government because of the good health benefits that the state provides and for it now to be taken away is a burden on employees who so rely on the health benefits for their family and themselves. I myself with asthma rely a lot on the health benefits we receive as state workers. Also if my benefits are cut and also my husband's who is a City and County Worker then our family will have no medical benefits. We also have two school aged children that use our medical benefits frequently. I guess if these benefits get taken away from the government employees then the state should be prepared to receive many Quest Applications for HealthCare. Thank you. ]*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Arlene M.A. Ogura and I am a School Social Worker with the Central District, DOE, at Leilehua High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. This will allow an employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I believe that this bill is unfair and to change health care benefits for those who have dedicated their lives to servicing our communities is a "slap in the face". It reminds me of how injured/disabled veterans are sometimes mistreated and are not given the health care services they so deserve, especially after committing their lives to fight for our freedom. I understand that the bill is not eliminating the benefits but extending the age to match the Medicare benefit age, but I believe it's still not fair.

I began working for the State of Hawaii at 25 years old I have been looking forward to retirement at 55 with 30 years of service. At 55, I have planed to continue to use my skills as a Social Worker to do more volunteer work with the underprivileged children of Hawaii. However should this bill pass, I would no longer be afforded the ability to volunteer because of my medical needs. I would have to continue to work until age 65. As you can see, well I hope you all can see, that I am not trying to be selfish. In fact, my views are altruistic in nature.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Arlene Ogura, ACSW, LSW  
School Social Worker  
Leilehua High School  
1515 California Avenue

yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:29 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 12, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

TO: [LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

FROM: Michael Yoshida

BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)

SUBJECT: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

My name is Michael Yoshida and I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have stayed and worked over twenty years for the state, cuz of the retirement benefits provided in the state contract. I have struggled with low salary, pay freezes, pay raise strikes, in hope that the retirement benefits would justify a means to an end of the hardships I have faced as a teacher with the State of Hawaii. And now you want to take away the health benefits that I have longed work towards, HB 1719 is a terrible bill that will create a lower quality of life and hardships for the individuals and families. Please find other ways or means to balance the budget, like having legalized gambling to help boost tourism for Hawaii. Hawaii is one of the two states that do not offer any form of legalized gamble in the US, perhaps it time our leaders take an open mind approach to solving budget problems with legalized gambling. Keep Hawaii's money in Hawaii and not let it flow out to Las Vegas!!!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:51 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Patriciajo Peifer and I am a teacher at Kea'au High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. If this is your intention, I wonder how that will impact our deficit; 1500-2000 retirees who will immediately tap the medical and retirement system. I acknowledge tough decisions need to be made but I would expect your team to thoroughly examine all of the consequences of each plan. This plan does not seem to have been examined in the light of how individuals may react to losing something that has been an essential component of their retirement plans. You may have people who cannot afford to retire without their medical benefits intact. If their medical condition is severe enough to warrant retirement at an earlier age(60-65), then, without benefits their only option is to burden the state through Quest until medicare age. That does not save the state anything.

It is apparent that the consequences of this bill would reach farther than the DOE, but if a third of our teachers are preparing for retirement, this bill would put our students in classrooms with substitutes and other underqualified teachers because there are not enough qualified replacements in our state. Our keiki and our future economy deserve better. Our states dedicated teachers deserve to have the rules of retirement unchanged.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Patriciajo Peifer RR 2 Box 6269 Pahoehoe, HI 96778

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:59 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

My name is Patricia Louis and I am a teacher at Aliamanu Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. Although coverage resumes after Medicare retirement age the employee will have to pay the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, not only would it encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009 but it would also encourage employees, especially teachers to leave the public school system and transfer to the private schools.

Changing teacher health benefits so unilaterally through the passage of this bill is surely one way to eliminate your best and brightest teachers from our public schools. Most of our veteran teachers who are even close to retirement age will all leave the classrooms at the end of this school year. While many of our gifted and highly skilled younger teachers might wait out the current economic crisis, they too will leave the public schools for positions in the private sector. If this happens, who is going to be left teaching our children? How is the state going to be able to meet the federal requirements of NCLB if they can no longer recruit and retain highly qualified teachers?

One of the reasons why I choose to work in the public schools instead of one of the higher paying and better funded private schools is the retirement medical benefit provided to me by the state as a negotiated benefit of my HSTA teacher's contract. Throughout my years in the DOE although I have sometimes considered leaving and transferring to a private school, because of my retirement benefits as a state employee, I never gave it more than passing consideration. Now, if this bill passes, I will do more than consider it. I will do it and I won't be alone. Many of my colleagues will follow as well.

I understand that the state as is the rest of the country is facing severe economic problems and we all will be called on to make sacrifices if we are going to make it through this crisis. However, cutting employee health benefits should not be one of them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:00 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Sharon Lau Aldueso and I am a Behavior Health Specialist at Alvah A. Scott School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I feel the legislature should look at offering incentive packages that will encourage early retirement to a few instead of jeopardizing all employees' medical benefits, if cutting medical benefits is way to cut government spending. What happens if an employee takes early retirement due a medical condition - does his/her medical benefits stop immediately impeding the wellness of the employee? People will need to apply for Quest insurance for medical benefits. Maybe Mr. Say doesn't care because Quest insurance is funded by the federal government. My concern is that Mr. Say & those legislators who support HB 1719 have no compassion for the welfare of state and county employees. Should HB 1719 pass, let's hope that Mr. Say & supporters of this bill won't be affected by their decision on a personal level. Mr. Say really needs to look elsewhere to cut government spending instead of with state and county employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sharon Lau Aldueso  
Behavioral Health Specialist  
Alvah A. Scott Elementary School  
98-1230 Moanalua Road  
Aiea, HI 96701  
(808) 485-5136 ext. 259



**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:56 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Suzanne\_Johnson/ALIAMANU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Suzanne\_Johnson/ALIAMANU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:40 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719

My name is Suzanne Johnson & I teach @ Aliamanu Elem. Please reconsider having this bill go through. It is unfair, & will penalize those who retire after July 1, 2009. Should this become law, I'll strongly consider retiring much, much earlier than I had planned. Many of my same-aged cohorts will do the same. Then the State will be in dire straits for NCLB ratings, as a mass exodus of highly qualified teachers leaves the profession which is already at an all time shortage high. We teachers are our students' strongest advocates. We say that our State's future depends on you legislators making wise solutions to our economic problems, not seeing short-sighted, detrimental band-aid quick fixes. Thank you for your consideration of my vigorous opposition to this bill.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:57 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - suspension of state and county contribution to EUTF

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Michelle Takenishi and I am a teacher at Kahala Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**I have serious concerns about this bill. It would impact the state negatively, since the repercussions down the road would impact the state right back. Think about senior care????**

I am unable to retire at this time, as I have 27 years of service. When I do retire at 30 years of service, I will be under 60 years old. Without health benefits, I will be forced to either work longer, retain a new job, or forego health benefits. Now let's say, this doesn't matter to you since I'm just a peon in the large scheme of life.

I am currently taking care of my 86 year old mother. This may seem completely unimportant to you also, however, I can assure you, the impact of the passage of this bill is tremendous.

Let's say I decide to work until 65 because I must, due to this bill. My 86 year old mother would then need other types of health care. This means, that the state will be burdened with helping with the cost of her senior care. Right now, I do it FOR FREE.

Now, let's translate that by 10,000 state employees all forced to do the same. Their elderly senior parents would then be forced to find senior care and the state would then be forced to help finance this new problem. Seriously ... if you think about ... this is not a 'win win' for everyone.

I do understand the economy is tough, but you need to keep the large picture in mind. Taking away health benefits to 10,000 teachers, unless they work until 65 just exacerbates a larger problem. Financing the cost of senior care for all the seniors left unattended by the teachers being forced to work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

email: [Michelle.Takenishi@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Michelle.Takenishi@notes.k12.hi.us)

aloha - michelle

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Nadine\_Icari/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:49 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** House Bills That Affect HGEA/UPW Employees

RE: HB 1723  
HB 1715  
HB 1726  
HB 1727  
HB 1719  
HB 1725

Dear Elected Officials,

Hi, my name is Nadine Icari and I live in your district and voted for you. I work for Kea'au High School/DOE and am a member of HGEA/UPW

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

My spouse is currently unemployed and this will make things even more difficult for my family's financial situation.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Thank you,

Nadine Icari  
198 S. Wilder Rd.  
Hilo, HI. 96720  
808-934-0126

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:53 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: save

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Carma\_Samson/KEAAU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Carma\_Samson/KEAAU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:49 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** save

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: [Your Name]  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Carmelita Samson and I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

**This is an insult teachers** who have sacrificed years of service under dire circumstances each day of their teaching career. These are teachers who put their classroom students first before their families. These are teachers who took money out of their own pockets so students can have a decent education. These are teachers who are attending to their parents who have fixed incomes. These are teachers who do community service beyond the classroom. These are teachers that started in this career 23 years ago with substandard pay but practiced restraint from leaving teaching because teaching was a profession that could specifically create a better community.

I don't understand how educated elected officials cannot have common sense. We are talking about our dedicated teachers who have done what the trusted leaders have told us to do. Common sense and the culture says that we should take care of our elders. Why not take away medical coverage from the new, younger teachers who are making a starting salary that the veteran teachers never dreamed of making. How can you single out older teachers who are ready to retire and who need the medical coverage the most. You are basically stating that the elder teachers who are ready to retire do NOT need medical coverage and can AFFORD to pay it. You are not in touch with the real world where we are making much less and doing much more than the newer teachers are.

I hope you reconsider **SERIOUSLY** about what you are to do.

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:54 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW:

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Debbie\_Kiyabu/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Debbie\_Kiyabu/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 7:10 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:**

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Debra-Ann Kiyabu and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Debra-Ann R. Kiyabu

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:45 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Donna\_Fuji/ELEELE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Donna\_Fuji/ELEELE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:26 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 Relating to Public Employees

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Donna Fuji, SSC  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is \_Donna Fuji and I am a Student Service Coordinator at Eleele School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have worked for 31 years for the Department of Education and I am 56 years old. I was hoping to retire in two years after my last son graduates college in an Electrical Engineering degree. I personally oppose this bill. It's making teachers like me think about retiring this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Donna Fuji

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:45 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Kathy\_Miyasato/WAIHEE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Kathy\_Miyasato/WAIHEE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:24 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

My name is Kathy Miyasato and I am a teacher at Waihee School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I think it is unfair of you to do this for any employee and force people to retire when they enjoy what they are doing just to keep their medical benefits. I still have about 11 more years when I am of retirement age and I suffered an brain aneurysm back in 1995 and I am still teaching. If I retired 11 years from now and had to pay all of my medical it would be very hard to survive.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:57 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: tesitmony letter

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Julianna\_Harman/WAIANAIEI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:[Julianna\\_Harman/WAIANAIEI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Julianna_Harman/WAIANAIEI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:56 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** tesitmony letter

### **Example e-mail letter**

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Julianna Harman, [Julianna\\_harman@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Julianna_harman@notes.k12.hi.us)  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Julianna Harman and I am a teacher at Waianae Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Hawaii has such a difficult time finding teachers that are qualified and beneficial for our students. Passing such a law will encourage those who are able to retire early to do so and it also will not encourage new teachers (and future teachers) to come and stay in our islands. Can our schools really afford this kind of loss? NO.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Warren\_Kawano@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:02 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 1719

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

My name is Warren Kawano and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

This bill will adversely affect those who cannot afford health care when they retire.

Many people do not live much longer than the age of 65. This age is set so high, where majority of State retirees could not afford to retire, thus requiring them to put in 40+ years of service. This is unfair to State employees. State employees would be required to work through terminal illness just to be able to maintain their health benefits.

Would you like to have your mother or father, today, having to work through old age and illness because the State took away their benefits? Another negative effect this will have on our economy is that a huge amount of employees will retire before the June 30th deadline in order to avoid the affects of this bill. This will make it difficult for the State to provide quality service and will put a large amount of stress on an already fragile EUTF system. The economy will eventually turn around and see better times.

Why would you want to put extra stress on the EUTF system during these hard economic times.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Kathleen Mckeon]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is \_\_\_Kathleen Mckeon\_\_\_\_\_ and I am a teacher at \_\_\_Wailuku Elementary School\_\_\_\_\_ School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Hawaii already has the reputation of having one of the worst systems in the US. Many exemplary teachers with years of service will retire because of this bill and therefore leave our schools rife with NOT HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS. I have put 25 years of service into educating students of all walks of life, It is truly unfair to remove the benefits that I have worked so long and hard at. This is a bad bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## Example e-mail letter

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Your Name]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is **Darlene Fujimoto** and I am a teacher in the **Central District** and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. **When we were hired—in my case, 33 years ago—it was with the understanding of what my retirement plan entailed and it is one of the important reasons I remained a teacher to serve my community. To change policy or rules at this point in our career, in the legislature's "panic mode" due to poorly managed budgets, perhaps, and the national recession for sure, is simply too impactful with many ripple effects. As often happens in "desperate times," government leaders make rash, poorly planned decisions. Let me remind you of the teacher deficit not too long ago when teachers were encouraged to retire and did so...hence, the double-dipping administrators are doing now that they've earned their high 3 with the new 12-month contract. Perhaps if probationary workers & new hires in the state have this new 'law' at the time of hiring, changes can occur for them. To not "grandfather" us elders who have already contributing thousands and thousands of dollars to the retirement system is unethical and abominable!**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:52 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: testimony HB 1719

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Jason\_Fong/KAIMUKH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Jason\_Fong/KAIMUKH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:17 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** testimony HB 1719

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)

**FROM:** Jason Tate Fong

**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)

**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is \_\_\_ Jason Tate Fong \_\_\_ and I am a teacher at \_\_\_ Kaimuki High School \_\_\_ School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement

age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:53 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW:

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Dean\_Watanabe/KAIMUKH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Dean\_Watanabe/KAIMUKH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:32 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:**

My name is Dean Watanabe and I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:11 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Mona\_Yamat/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Mona\_Yamat/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:02 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Mona Yamat  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Mona Yamat and I am a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I would like the option of retiring at age 55. But most likely I would not retire because I love to teach. If I didn't have a choice I would definitely retire. The state would force my hand and lose a great teacher. It would not be fair to those who have been planning their future with this in mind. Health care benefits are a major concern to be changing that drastically. You can't dangle the carrot and then take it away.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Lori\_McKeown/WAIALUAE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Lori\_McKeown/WAIALUAE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:20 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

My name is Lori Lendio McKeown and I am a teacher at Waialua Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age and allows the employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I cannot imagine a shortage of quality teachers worse than it already is in Hawaii.

I have been having medical issues due to work-related stress and had to switch to a non-classroom position for a couple years in order to take care of my medical problems. My doctors diagnosed me with vertigo and migranes that were linked to stress in the classroom. I am back in the classroom due to the cuts in state positions, but I cannot see myself staying in the classroom if my medical issues do not clear up. I do not think it would be fair for someone like me who has put in 20 years of dedicated service to the state to have my medical benefits taken away. I am expecting to stay for as long as possible, but at what expense? My health?

I would probably find ways to pay for my medical costs, but what about people who couldn't find alternate ways? Would they seek medical attention when needed, or would they postpone seeing a doctor at the expense of their health?

Please re-consider your position on this bill, as you have the power to help people take care of their health first. We are all struggling to make ends meet, but we need to find other ways to cut expenses, not by short-changing people on their health benefits. In the long run, we would cause

more financial woes and more health issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Ian\_Nagao/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:[Ian\\_Nagao/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Ian_Nagao/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:18 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

----- Forwarded by Ian Nagao/KEAAUH/HIDOE on 02/11/2009 09:10 AM -----

**Ian Nagao/KEAAUH/HIDOE**

To [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)

cc

02/11/2009 09:09 AM

Subject HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Ian S. Nagao

SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Ian S. Nagao and I am a teacher at Keaau High School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. It will stop medical coverage for all retirees if they retire before the age of 65.

This will definitely affect me because I am not 65 years old nor am I ready to retire. Teachers are legally allowed to retire at the age of 55 or 25 years of service. If this bill passes, then teachers who retire at age 55 will not have medical coverage for 10 years. My generation is already losing social security by the time I retire. It would

be too costly for me if I had to pay for my own medical coverage. I understand that there is a recession and we are in an economic downfall but there has to be another way to save money instead of cutting our health benefits.

---

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Ian S. Nagao  
Keaau High School  
Biology Teacher

## yamashita2 - Kristen

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Nikki\_Takai/PCHIGH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Nikki\_Takai/PCHIGH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:17 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Nikki Takai  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Nikki Takai and I am a teacher at Pearl City High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**As we grow older our health is not the same as it was when we were younger. I am a Type 1 diabetic and if I retire after 25-30 years of service, I will be 50-55 years of age. This means that if something should happen to me after I retire, I would have to pay for my own medical coverage for 10-15 years. Being a diabetic, medical bills are very costly. I would not be able to afford to pay for my medical bills. I already struggle to get by with my medical bills now!**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## yamashita2 - Kristen

---

**From:** Lori\_Cabacungan/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:48 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Lori Cabacungan and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Lori Cabacungan

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

---

**From:** Candace Fukuroku/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:48 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Candace Fukuroku

**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Candace Fukuroku and I am a teacher at Wailuku School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:54 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Sandra\_Mulligan/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Sandra\_Mulligan/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:45 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Haley van Weemen van Noord  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Haley van Weemen van Noord and I am a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state = and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement = age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement = age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees = to retire on June 30, 2009.

Please reconsider this decision and think of the many hardworking teachers you are effecting with this action.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Karen Chan

SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Karen Chan and I am a Resource teacher at the State office and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

I have served the State with more than 23 years of services. One of the reasons I decided to take a position with the State is for the retirement benefits. To have these benefits taken away just prior to my retirement is unfair.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 1, 2009. This would further burden our pension fund, which posted a 2.95 billion lost in 2008.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Karen Chan

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Kathlynn Tabandera  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kathlynn Tabandera and I am a teacher at Keaau High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Please allow employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. What incentive do I have to stay another 10 years to teach Hawaii's youth? Then I would have invested 30 years in Hawaii's children. For what? To work a menial job just to have medical insurance for me until Medicare kicks in? I have BA degrees in Business, Economics, Psychology and Master's In Education, and certificates in natural science, paralegal, Teacher Education and Professional Certificate in Teaching. I am highly qualified in social studies and business. I am teaching in a hard to fill school. Who will you find equal to my qualifications to teach at this school? Is this how the state is going to treat their workers who invested their time for the better good of this state? You can't go change the rules of the game midway! That's unfair!

I teach my students current events and we will be watching what you are doing and who voted for this bill

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kathlynn Tabandera

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:17 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw:  
  
**Importance:** High

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with SprintSpeed

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**From:** Kaleo\_Waiiau/MAUIHS/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Date:** Wed, 11 Feb 2009 08:38:15 -1000  
**To:** <LABtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov>; <FINtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov>  
**Subject:**

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kaleo Waiiau and I am a teacher at Maui High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*Why you would I wish to retire on June 30th to preserve wqhat I have put into this career when I am barely half way through it? Why would I encourage my children to pursue a carerre in public service in the field of education when those who are proposing this bill and are supposed to "have their back" are so willing to offer up solutions to increase the burden they need to carry with this bill? These two reasons and upsoken more are reasons why this is a bad bill.*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

---

**From:** Clifton\_Lum/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:18 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Clifton Lum  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Clifton Lum and I am a teacher at McKinley High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:19 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with SprintSpeed

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**From:** Kimberly\_Tengan/BALDWIN/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Date:** Wed, 11 Feb 2009 07:49:27 -1000  
**To:** <EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov>  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kimberly Tengan and I am a teacher at H.P. Baldwin High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I do not favor this bill as it is unfair to state and county employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:52 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Roxanne Hayase and I am a special education teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age and allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I am several years away from retiring, but when I do retire, I want to be assured of medical coverage. I have worked hard for over 20 years, devoted to my students. It is a rewarding, but sometimes very stressful job. If I need to retire before age 62, please don't take away my medical coverage. I know these are tough economic times, but don't punish me or my colleagues. Don't betray our trust in government to do what is right.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Janice\_Shimokawa/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:21 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony; EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
**Cc:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

**Importance:** High

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Janice Shimokawa  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

I am a teacher at McKinley High School, Janice Shimokawa and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I love teaching and working my the students, but since I have more than 30 years of experience, I will definitely retire if this bill passes. I am wondering how the State will fill positions for Certified and Highly Qualified teachers if there is a mass exodus towards retirement? In a time where affordable health care is a primary concern for our President and the Nation, it is unthinkable that Hawaii will not support retirees 55-65 yr olds with medical coverage. It is shameful that you would consider pulling this benefit from under our feet in our sunset years, after we worked with commitment in our careers for our community.

Please reconsider and explore other options that do not target those that have invested their lives as public servants to the State.

Thank you,

Janice Shimokawa

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:25 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

-----Original Message-----

From: Glenn\_Mayeda@notes.k12.hi.us  
To: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
Subject: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees  
Sent: Feb 11, 2009 10:08 AM

Aloha,

My name is Glenn Mayeda Jr. and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Mahalo,

Glenn Mayeda jr.

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with SprintSpeed



**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Wanette\_Shirafuji/KAWANANAKOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:32 AM  
**To:** EDHtestimony@capitol.gov; LABtestimony; All Senators

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov, labtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov,  
sens@capitol.hawaii.gov  
FROM: Wanette Shirafui

SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Wanette Shirafuji and I am a teacher at Kawananakoa Middle School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which, *suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.*

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. Hence, increase the shortage of qualified teachers in Hawaii. It would be prudent to suspend this bill, at least until our Federal Government can offer us alternative Health Care. This bill strips us of the trust we have for our state leaders. Also, many teachers who have recently enrolled in the Hybrid Retirement System would be unfairly discriminated against if this bill is passed.

I, and many fellow educators, as well as community members, are appalled that this bill has even reached the senate. Educators should be the last group from whom anything is taken away as our future society relies so heavily on them.

I trust you will vote no and look for other creative ways to help the State of Hawaii. I believe your education would tell you so.

Aloha,

Wanette Shirafuji  
6th Grade PE Teacher  
Kawananakoa Middle School

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 11:18 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719

Sent to EDN by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Holly Nishimitsu [mailto:[hollynis@hotmail.com](mailto:hollynis@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:52 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309; 8:30 am

HB 1719 – Relating to Public Employees

My name is Holly Nishimitsu and I am a Speech-Language Pathologist at Kapa'a Elementary School on the island of Kaua'i. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Coverage resumes after medicare retirement age and the employee is allowed to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I would definitely be one of these retirees as I will have over 30 years of service and will have already attained the age of 55. It would make no fiscal sense for me to continue employment when I would have to pay for my health premiums and those of my spouse for ten years should I decide to continue to work past June 30, 2009. It is almost as if those who have invested their years in serving the state are now being penalized for having remained so long.

The State of Hawai'i is already facing a shortage of Speech-Language Pathologists. HB 1719 would ensure that qualified, experienced, and dedicated Speech-Language Pathologists will be even harder to find and retain. The students whom we serve would be negatively impacted due to the lack of qualified personnel to meet their needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Holly Nishimitsu

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## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** Shawn\_Hanscam/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

**TO:** [labtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:labtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Shawn Hanscam  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Shawn Hanscam and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

The State of Hawaii continually has difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. This bill, if allowed to be made law, would further discourage college students from entering the field of education over the long term. In the short term, it would likely result in a large scale exodus of our most veteran teachers on June 30, 2009. We need good teachers in the field. The long term economic health of our state is dependent on a well educated work force. This bill will have serious repercussions years to come. I ask you to consider the long term implications of this proposal and insure that this bill is defeated.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Cheryl\_Sanford/MANOAHIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:56 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Regarding:  
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Cheryl Sanford and I am a teacher at Manoa Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. Coverage resumes after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

When hired, teachers have the understanding that upon their retirement their health coverage would be supplied by the state. To revoke this coverage now means the state is not holding up its end of the bargain. My love for teaching children is my main reason for becoming a teacher; job security and health benefits are other very important reasons for my choice of career. In order to become a teacher, I accrued tremendous personal debt as I pursued both undergraduate and graduate degrees. My pay is not commensurate with my experience, so the least the state can do is guarantee my health coverage after retirement. Although I have many more years of service before I personally retire, I expect the benefits that were in place when I accepted my position to remain in place for me when it's my turn.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Cheryl Sanford

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:25 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Kellie Young and I am a teacher/counselor at Mililani High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

The passing of this bill would further cut the benefits relied upon by teachers and their families across the state. Years ago, the change was made to discontinue coverage for the spouse of a retired teacher. Now, you are proposing to cut coverage for any teacher who retires before 65. Educators are among the hardest working and underpaid/underappreciated professionals in our communities today. Many teachers are well under the age of 65 when they are ready to retire. Passing this bill would put additional unnecessary stress on a teacher of retirement age/years of service who will need to pay 100% for 10+ years until reaching the Medicare age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kellie Young  
2nd year counselor  
Can possibly retire at age 60

## yamashita1- Kathy

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - relating to public employees

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**From:** Lacey\_Cabral/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Lacey\_Cabral/KEAAUH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:53 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - relating to public employees

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Lacey Cabral and I am a counselor at Keaau High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Although I am not near retirement age, I strongly oppose this bill because it affects our benefits as a State employee. I do understand that our State is in a financial crisis like one never seen before, but there are other ways in which to help deal with this situation. Our elected officials should be looking into other avenues to address the deficit rather than always looking to cut benefits. Through the years, as State employees we have endured a number of measures that have affected our benefits and this is wrong. Many of us were hired or sought State jobs under the assumption that we'd be entitled to certain guarantees upon retirement, how can our leaders even think that it is acceptable to just make changes as drastic as this and affect so many lives. Rather than just focussing on the money, consideration needs to be made to those who have dedicated their whole careers to building a better State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is William Steve Stinefelt and I am a teacher at Pearl City High School. I am writing this letter to inform you of my strong opposition to HB 1719 for all government employees that retire after July 1, 2009. It is my understanding that if this bill passes, that I would have to pay for my own health insurance premiums until I reach the medicare retirement age.

I feel that if this bill passes, it would encourage state and county employees to retire just before the deadline. In the school system, this could cause an unwanted brain drain on the schools. If I were already of retirement age, I would certainly leave the DOE if this were to pass, as to not do so would cost me money. Is this what we want as our schools are struggling to meet the demands of the No Child Left Behind Act?

The benefit package that comes with this job was one of the main reasons I became a teacher at the age of 39. I actually took a pay cut to join the teaching profession. However, I felt that the health benefit offered helped to offset my loss of annual income. I feel that, with the ongoing shortage of qualified teachers in our state, that the state would come up with measures to make the profession a more financially rewarding choice. While I know that the current economic times are tough, you should really look somewhere else to make the cuts. Cutting teachers' benefits would probably have the effect of turning people away from our profession.

As a teacher, I am afraid that many dedicated and qualified teachers will opt to retire early in order to protect their personal interests. I am not of retirement age yet. However, if I were (and the bill passed), I would most certainly retire before the deadline if it meant extra money out of my pocket to stay. As a parent of public school children, I would hate to see teachers working up until their 65th birthday, and leaving the very next day. There is nothing more disruptive to a student's education than to trade out a qualified, experienced teacher halfway through the year and replacing him/her with a new teacher who may not be fully qualified and will, most certainly, not have the experience. As a parent, I would rather have my child's teacher retire at the end of a school year at age 64-and-a-half than to disrupt my kids' education at age 65.

As I still have a long teaching career ahead of me, I may choose to leave the D.O.E. if this bill passes and pursue teaching at a private school or a mainland school district where the resources are more plentiful and the class sizes are smaller. That would be a shame as I feel I am very good at reaching out to kids and helping them to achieve their goals. Please be aware that your choice WILL affect where I spend the rest of my teaching days. It is up to you to make the right choice.

Mahalo for giving me the chance to testify on this measure.

Steve Stinefelt  
Science Teacher - Pearl City High School

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

---

**From:** Linda\_Moorhead/WINDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Linda\_Moorhead/WINDO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:42 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
**Subject:** Re: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Linda Moorhead and I am a Peer Mentor with Windward District. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009.

When I remind new teachers who are so over worked and thinking about leaving the profession, due to lack of salary and/or support, about the wonderful benefits that they are earning I would like to know that they will not be pulled out from under them. I would also like to know that the benefits that I have accepted in lieu of salary are going to be there as presented when I was hired.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Chris\_Keahi/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Chris\_Keahi/LAHAINA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:59 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Christine M. Keahi  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Christine Keahi and I am a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I am opposed to having our health benefit changed as stated above. It is not fair. As a professional, I work very hard meeting the educational needs of a very diverse population of students. I spend an extremely large amount of my own time to ensure I am providing a sound education for each and every student. Knowing that I will be receiving medical coverage when I retire is reassuring. I have had to pay for medical coverage in the past out of my own pocket and am aware of the hardship this will cause.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Irma Kobayashi [[mailto:irma\\_kobayashi@hotmail.com](mailto:irma_kobayashi@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:06 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Irma Kobayashi and I am a teacher at Lincoln School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*[This paragraph should tell why you feel it's unfair for them to change your health benefits; why you would retire on June 30th; and other reasons why this is a bad bill.]*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: testimony

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Chris\_Nakagawa/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Chris\_Nakagawa/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:49 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** testimony

I am totally against Calvin Say's proposal- House Bill 1719!!!!!!!

Chris Nakagawa  
McKinley HS Special Education

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: Fw: Our Medical Coverage removed

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

---

**From:** Kathy\_Tanita\_Ohama/PCHIGH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
[mailto:Kathy\_Tanita\_Ohama/PCHIGH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:46 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: Our Medical Coverage removed

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Kathy Tanita Ohama  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is KATHY TANITA OHAMA and I am a teacher at Pearl City High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I think it is unfair for you to change our benefits now since I went into teaching under the premise that my health care coverage would last until I died...even if I did retire prior to being age 65. I was looking at the bigger picture back then and thought that this was a perfect deal. Now I am greatly concerned by your actions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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Kathy Tanita Ohama  
CORE Social Studies  
Pearl City High School  
(808) 453-6500

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**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Cristine\_Cox/KAUAIH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB1719

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

My name is Cristine Cox and I am a teacher at Kauai High School. I have been a teacher in the state of Hawaii for over 32 years. I am asking you to please vote against HB1719 because this bill is unfair. If this bill is passed, I will have to retire before July 1, even if I still want to teach. Most teachers teach for 25 or more years. Don't they deserve to have the free medical after devoting all those years to teaching in Hawaii?

Please do not vote for HB1719 because it is unfair and will affect a lot of teachers who are at the retiring age.

Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,  
Cristine Cox  
Kauai High School

## **yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Iwalani\_Harris/KEAAU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 1:21 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is A. Iwalani Harris and I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would affect ALL of us who are nowhere near retirement and that is unfair!

I began my career with the State right after graduating from college. I've raised my children as a single parent and continue to support their every need. I had hopes of retiring in 12 years with the assurance that I would have my medical secured. If this bill passes, I will be FORCED to work for what I was rightfully promised. There have been opportunities that have come my way to work in the private sector but I believe in public education and my mission to make a difference with the families and children who come through my door. For YEARS, teachers continue to pay out-of-pocket for our students and our classes. We come early and we leave late - with NO OVERTIME PAY. We take work home and go to work on the weekends. We pay for our own professional development/college degrees. Our families adjust when we have school-related activities to attend. Now this bill is going to continue to make us pay after we have given all of this?! What is fair about this bill? I see why retirees continue to work. The definition of retire is to leave a place, position, or way of life to go to a place of less activity. Hmmm, if this bill goes through I don't see many retirees relaxing any time soon. Please reconsider and RETIRE this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Nora\_Arakaki/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:50 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Nora Arakaki  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Nora Arakaki and I am a clerk at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** Darryl\_Miyasato/KAUAIH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:32 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Darryl Miyasato  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Darryl Miyasato and I am a teacher at Kauai High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Darryl Miyasato

## yamashita2 - Kristen

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**From:** Erik\_Jennings@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Monday, February 09, 2009 1:41 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** House Bills 1737 and 1719

Hello my name is Erik Jennings and I am a teacher here at Lahainaluna High School

I urge you not to pass House Bills 1737 and 1719.

These two bills will greatly effect many families who are planning to retire and have counted on this as part of their retirement.

I am far from retirement age myself, but these two bills would also greatly effect myself and my future families.

Please do not let these bills pass.

Thanks for listening

Erik Jennings

662-3979 ext. 255

**yamashita2 - Kristen**

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**From:** Carol\_Rosetta/LAHAINALUNA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Monday, February 09, 2009 3:24 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: Retirement funds

Kristen

Aloha I was referring to the house bills 1737 and 1719, I was going to call the numbers but found the email.

Carol Rosetta

Natural Resources

Lahainaluna High School

M.Ed. Secondary Education

M.Sc Oceanography

February 11, 2009

Aloha,

My name is Kaluna Wong-Staszko. I work for the Department of Education and have been an HGEA member for 14 years.

I am writing to ask you to oppose the following bills: HB 1718, 1719 and 1725.

These days we are all being asked to do more **with** less. Now we are being asked to do more **for** less. Representative Calvin Say is targeting public employees and having us bear the burden of the State's budget deficit. It is especially unfair, to those who are near retirement, to pass HB 1718 and 1719 at this point in time. It does not give them sufficient time to look into alternate options for their retirement years. Here are some ways the public will be negatively impacted by these bills:

- Mass exit of employees who will retire before July 1, 2009.
- State will lose many valuable employees in top critical positions.
- The state will not be able to effectively and efficiently serve the public.
- Morale will decrease, therefore affecting the quality of work in addition to the quantity.
- The State will not be able to offer a competitive salary and benefits package to successfully recruit highly qualified and effective employees in and outside the state of Hawai'i.
- We already have an overflow of social service cases. How many people could Dept. of Human Services potentially lose as a result of these bills passing? Would the remaining staff be able to handle the remainder of the caseloads?
- People will be sick more often and for longer periods because we can't afford to pay 100% of our drug coverage.

The public will ultimately suffer in the end. You need to ask yourselves if the State will honestly be able to effectively and efficiently serve the public. The long term effects could severely jeopardize the state as a whole and be more costly in the end. All of Rep. Say's bills take from us. There needs to be more balance.

Like everyone else, I do not want to have to give anything up. However, something has to give and there is no way around it. I personally, would rather agree to a pay freeze and a one day a month furlough, possibly two days a month, than to take across the board pay cuts and reduced benefits.

We are at a point and time where every citizen in this state needs to really dig down deep, be creative and think outside the box. **This is a statewide crisis, not a public employee crisis.** Everyone needs to make a contribution. Many people complain that State employees are lazy and take advantage of the system. That's not a good enough excuse because all offices, public and private have lazy, overpaid employees. I can agree to the

pay freeze and furlough. However, it would have to be a complete buy in from all unions or it won't work. There will be public employees that will disagree and claim that their positions are "essential". My response to that is: the roof over my head that protects and shelters me, the food that strengthens and nourishes my body and the clothes that keep me warm are essential to me as well. There are many people standing in the unemployment line that would be happy to have a job. Public service does not make you rich in your pocket book. It makes you rich in your heart knowing that you perform to the best of your ability everyday in providing a service to others and making our community a safe place to live. I quote President Barack Obama in his inauguration speech:

*"For as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job which sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child, that finally decides our fate."*

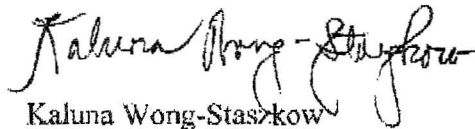
There is no one simple easy solution. Yet there is something that everyone can do, even if it's little. Every effort adds up. Why not challenge every citizen, business, organization and family in our state? Take our crisis and challenge ourselves to turn it into a positive. Go on a statewide campaign to encourage everyone to join in the effort to cut back where we can. Encourage businesses to offer specials and discounts for doing their part in conserving. Some businesses are already doing it. Times and Foodland reward their customers 5 cents for every recycled bag that customers bring in to bag their groceries. State offices with individual room air conditioning units should replace their air conditioners with energy saver units. In addition, instead of running those units for a full day, those offices with windows that can open could run their A/C units from 10:30am to 2:30pm, the warmest part of the day (subject to certain conditions). The rest of the day, they can open their windows. I admit that this suggestion may not be very popular amongst the majority. Many will complain about the inconvenience it will cause. However, a number of Dept. of Education Offices as well as a large number of classrooms operate and function daily without A/C and there are no immediate plans to furnish those offices and classrooms with A/C. What do you say to those people? My office is one of them. We have all learned to dress comfortably. Women have learned to keep a sweater, jacket or blazer at work to wear over camisole top on a warm day when a situation arises that calls for us to be out in the field or to go into a professional meeting, etc. Many offices have fish tanks and other electronic accessories that are not mandatory for running an office. Those items should be unplugged and taken home. This will help to cut down on the State's electric bill. Every classroom and grade level could incorporate conservation of resources, energy, money, etc. into their curriculum. The DOE could encourage their schools, teachers, students and families to join in the cause to conserve through contests by offering incentives and recognition of some sort. For businesses, private and public, the state could offer incentives by taking out a one page add in the newspaper advertising businesses that are offering discounts and specials for individuals and businesses whose electric bill shows a decrease of a specified number of

units of electricity for something like three consecutive months. Getting the private sector to join the campaign doesn't save the state money on their electric bill. What it does do is show support for the rest of our fellow citizens by joining in the effort to use our resources wisely. It sets a positive example for our children and lets them know that we are taking steps to take care of them and future generations to come. We can take this as an opportunity to show the rest of our country and the world what the aloha spirit is all about.

The solutions I have offered are not the only solutions and are not guaranteed to completely solve our State's deficit. Yet, I'm sure if we all try hard enough, we can think of many more. We have a lot more to gain in the long run by coming together for a common cause than just solving our deficit.

Now I challenge all of you to do what's right because it's the right thing to do and in the best interest of our state and citizens.

Sincerely,

  
Kaluna Wong-Stephano

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** Susan\_Kelley/PRIDGE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Susan Kelley and I am a teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. I am one of these employees who would strongly consider retiring and leaving the state until I am 55 to finish out my teaching career in order to keep my medical benefits.

This is my 24<sup>th</sup> year of service as a DOE employee. I have two master's degrees and have been employed as a preschool special education teacher. I have dedicated my career to the State of Hawaii, working loyally for the DOE school system with the trust, belief, and understanding that after 30 years of service or at age 55, I would have the choice of retiring with full medical coverage. One of the main reasons I started working for the state was that I had full trust in the state to follow through with the medical benefits promised to me as a state employee.

I have taught preschool special education students for the past 15 years. Most of my students come to me with severe delays. Some students demonstrate major behavioral difficulties when they start in my class. At times I need to physically restrain my students. Even though my students start out with severe delays, most of my students enter Kindergarten ready to learn. Many of my students only require minimal special education services after entering Kindergarten and some no longer require any special education services. My job not only requires me to work with physically challenging students, it also requires me to sit on the floor much of the day and when I am not on the



floor, I am sitting in little chairs. I am very concerned about being required to teach until I am 65 years old in this type of position. I would not feel comfortable working in a job where I would not be able to continue to make great gains with my students without risking my health. Even if I switched to a different special education position, my job still would most likely entail working with students with physical behavioral difficulties.

I was extremely upset when I heard about this bill yesterday. I understand that the state is in a financial crisis, but it is very unfair to put the entire burden on state workers. I have been a very loyal state worker. I have worked hard every day believing that I would be able to retire after 30 years of service with full medical benefits. I am not married and do not have any other means of medical insurance coverage other than what the state provides me. I will not be able to retire before age 65 if this bill passes and afford to pay for full medical coverage. I already will have to find a job to supplement my income when I retire. This would force me to find a job that also provides medical benefits. I cannot understand how this bill can strip away a benefit I have been promised for the past 24 years with only 4 months notice. This puts me in a very difficult position both emotionally and financially. The state needs to solve this financial crisis in a way that will not affect the future of thousands of loyal employees. This bill would not temporarily affect my personal situation. It will permanently affect my life no matter which path I choose. As a loyal special education teacher in the DOE, I beg you to please kill this bill and keep our current medical benefits as is.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Susan Kelley  
91-261V Hanapouli Circle  
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:10 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jan Mori and I am a teacher at Hale Kula Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have been a dedicated teacher for over 15 years. In my career I have taught at Maili, Kaleiopuu, Iroquois Point, and Hale Kula Elementary schools which have students with many high needs issues from homelessness, drug use, language barriers, to constant redeployment. I plan to continue working until retirement age and beyond. However, it is unreasonable to continue working at 65 years of age just to ensure I have medical coverage.

Though I cannot prove it, I am sure that my years at Maili (which was before air conditioning was finally granted) breathing in the tainted air from the egg and pig farms nearby have contributed to my current need for 3-4 allergy medications on a daily basis. I have also unfortunately inherited my family's predispositions for diabetes and have been monitored for 2 years with prediabetes, for which my doctor requires bloodwork several times a year.

I am turning 39 years of age this year. In 16 years, when I am 55, I will have met the requirements for retirement for dedicating over 30 years of service to my deserving, high needs students. If I choose to work beyond that, my reasons should be for my students and the good I can provide for them, not simply to ensure my medical coverage.

I hope that my testimony is helpful in your deliberations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jan Mori

**yamashita1- Kathy**

---

**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:10 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Hilary Yaeger and I am a teacher at Hana High & Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

Thank you, Hilary Yaeger

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice-Chair  
House Labor & Public Employment Committee

Friday, February 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 am

In opposition to:

HB 1718, EUTF; Medicare Part B Premiums  
HB 1719, EUTF; Retirement Prior to Medicare Age; Suspend Coverage  
HB 1725, Public Employee's Health Benefits Plan; Exclusion of  
Prescription Drug Coverage

Dear Representatives Rhoads and Yamashita,

I am a social worker with the Department of Education, and I am very concerned about proposed legislation that would take away benefits for public employees. HB 1718 would reimburse retired employees for Medicare Part B premiums only for employees retiring prior to 12/31/09. HB 1719 suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after 07/01/09, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. HB 1725 prohibits the health benefits plan of the EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage and would require employee-beneficiaries to pay for prescription drug benefits in its entirety.

I realize that these are difficult economic times, and that the legislature is faced with the challenging job of reducing the State's projected expenditures. However, doing so at the expense of the hard-working middle class is a short sighted answer with repercussions that will be deep and long-lasting. Many of us are having a hard enough time making ends meet as it is. Requiring public employees and retirees to pay more for medical and drug coverage is an additional cost that many simply cannot afford. Please also consider how the current benefits attract committed public employees, which also saves money on employee turnover expenses.

I urge the committee to vote in opposition to HB 1718, HB 1719, and HB 1725. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauri Konishi

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** Jodi\_Yamashiro/MANOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:32 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jodi Yamashiro and I am a teacher at Manoa Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Jodi Yamashiro

**From:** ellyfant@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB 1719

**DATE:** February 11, 2009  
**TO:** House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair  
**FROM:** Kristine M. Takekawa, AuD.  
1082 Maunawili Rd., Kailua, Hawaii  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Kristine Takekawa and I am a staff person in the public school system. I have worked for the state for over twenty years. My husband is also a public employee of over 30 years. Both of us are under the age of 55.

I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

It is difficult as an employee for over twenty years to accept as fair a cut in a benefit that I do not have the time left to save for. It takes a dedicated individual to stay in public service when pay is low. Part of the compensation has been the understanding that health care would be taken care of once we retired. It is hard to put enough away for retirement when you have children to put through college, and with home prices that have always been among the highest in the nation. But still we have chosen to work for Hawaii and her people.

I understand the need to reduce costs at this time. The state is in financial trouble and we each need to give up something. I am willing to support a furlough of government employees one or two days a month until the financial picture improves, and I will let my union know that.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:36 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: EDN TESTIMONY

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Irmalee\_Choos/LUNALILO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Irmalee\_Choos/LUNALILO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:47 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** EDN TESTIMONY

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Irmalee Choo  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Irmalee Choo and I am the librarian at Lunalilo School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*[This paragraph should tell why you feel it's unfair for them to change your health benefits; why you would retire on June 30th; and other reasons why this is a bad bill.]*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## Example e-mail letter

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Ellen Scherr  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Ellen Scherr and I am a teacher at Queen Kaahumanu School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

It is completely unfair to expect anyone to pay these premiums that are exorbitant if one does not make it to age 65 retirement. Years of service become worthless. One of our main benefits being taken away, why don't you lawmakers give up your medical benefits or how about your pay raise? This state needs more across the board fund raising like on a gallon of gas. Stop hitting up the teachers. I am still suffering from the payroll lag and a strike.



**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:37 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Leslie\_Ann\_Chin/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Leslie\_Ann\_Chin/WAILUKU/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:18 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Leslie-Ann Chin and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

To change our health benefits so drastically is completely unfair. If I had known that I would have to teach for over 42 years if I wanted to have continuing medical coverage in my retirement up to age 65, I would have seriously considered another career. If this bill goes through, I may stay in this profession until I have taught for 10 years (only 3 years from now) and leave once I am vested with the State. Or is that something that will change down the road, too??? Is this how the state takes care of the people who have prepared Hawaii's future generations?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Leslie-Ann Chin

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: [Your Name]  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Michael Monette and I am a teacher at Pearl City High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

The reason why I strongly oppose this bill is because I was recruited to teach at a time in my life when I was ready to enter medical school. I gave up a lot to become a teacher and sacrificed my life for my students. I come from a long line of physicians and could have become one. I was recruited because the Department of Education was short of teachers and was promised certain benefits that would make it more appealing to me if I considered working for the Department of Education. One of those benefits was our retirement pension. Now some of our legislators that we have helped to educate now want to eliminate this benefit.

For years now I have felt abused and taken advantaged. This is just the frosting on the cake. When I first started working I was making more in salary than my wife. Now she is making far more money than me. What happened? The State of Hawaii has not kept pace with salaries. In addition, after several years of being hired, the State manipulated the retirement pensions of newly hired teachers. They will earn fall less by the time they retire. It has been a constant struggle to maintain what little benefits we have. But here my words: We the good teachers will leave and you will be left with no talent. What kind of educational system will you end up with then? How will you attract and keep teachers when our legislators keep trying to take away benefits? What will you have to offer when your salary is so low compared to other professions?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Michael Monette  
Science Instructor  
Pearl City High

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Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice-Chair  
House Labor & Public Employment Committee

Friday, February 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 am

In opposition to:

HB 1718, EUTF; Medicare Part B Premiums  
HB 1719, EUTF; Retirement Prior to Medicare Age; Suspend Coverage  
HB 1725, Public Employee's Health Benefits Plan; Exclusion of  
Prescription Drug Coverage

Dear Representatives Rhoads and Yamashita,

I am a social worker with the Department of Education, and I am very concerned about proposed legislation that would take away benefits for public employees. HB 1718 would reimburse retired employees for Medicare Part B premiums only for employees retiring prior to 12/31/09. HB 1719 suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after 07/01/09, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. HB 1725 prohibits the health benefits plan of the EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage and would require employee-beneficiaries to pay for prescription drug benefits in its entirety.

I too am concerned about the difficult economic times upon us and I realize the legislature is faced with the challenging job of reducing the State's projected expenditures. However, it is my hope that the legislature be creative in considering various options to address this crisis and seriously consider the potentially grave expense to state business if the health care support of our state work force is to be affected.

This approach to addressing the budget crisis may be shortsighted and have repercussions that will be deep and long-lasting. The affect on our workforce and future retirees may bear out the most serious of implications for dedicated employees in the long run. Health care benefit is one of the most important benefits.

Many already have a difficult time making health care ends meet. Requiring public employees and retirees to pay more for medical and drug coverage is an additional cost that many simply cannot afford. Indeed, the health care crisis industry will likely already result in all individuals having to pay more for their care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Sincerely, Kristen Woolever, MSW

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 4:37 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18th District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Vicky Mitsunaga [mailto:[v.mitsunaga@yahoo.com](mailto:v.mitsunaga@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 2:25 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Vicky Mitsunaga and I am a teacher at Lincoln Elementary School. I strongly oppose HP 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement are. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009. The biggest perk I get working for the state is the medical benefits after retirement. To require me to work until my medicare retirement age is unfair as I was lead to believe otherwise. Such a big change in our employee benefits without adequate notice is disappointing to say the least.

Please do not allow this bill to go through.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## yamashita3-Chelsea

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**From:** chuck fulks [hewhosurfs@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 7:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - relating to public employees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309

My name is Charles Fulks and I am a counselor at Kauai High School. I am very disappointed that HB 1719 and other related bills would even be submitted. As an HSTA member, I have a master's degree and am already underpaid. Further cutting our benefits is completely unfair. I wonder if it is legal! How can it possibly be fair to cut our retirement package after we were already hired; stipulating certain retirement specifications, such as health care coverage? Furthermore, part of the reason we need health care coverage is because our retirement is so measly to begin with.

I've worked hard and saved every penny I have in order to live in my basic house, in my basic subdivision. I have been planning for my retirement for quite some time. To change the rules at this stage of the game is completely absurd. The net effect of this legislation is to say that I will have to work at least 41 years for the Department of Education before I can think about retiring. Then perhaps I can rest for 2/3 years before I kick the bucket. Thank you very much Calvin Say.

If this bill passes, I will likely retire early and finish out another ten years of work on the mainland. In that way, i would at least save my health benefits so i can retire at a reasonable age.

I understand that Gov. Lingle is spending billions of dollars on construction projects and on a "recreational renaissance." Why not postpone those projects since we obviously don't have the money to pay for them! Please consider doing the right thing and do not cut existing employees benefits/retirement.

charles fulks  
Lihue, Hawaii  
---\_alternative 0001459E0A25755B\_  
Content-Type: text/html; charset="US-ASCII"

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">House Committee on Labor and Public Employment</font>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">Friday, Feb. 13, 2009</font>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">Conference Room 309</font>

<br>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">My name is Charles Fulks and I am a counselor at Kauai High School. &nbsp;I am very disappointed that HB 1719 and other related bills would even be submitted. &nbsp;As an HSTA member, &nbsp;I have a master's degree and am already underpaid. Further cutting our benefits is completely unfair. &nbsp;I wonder if it is legal! &nbsp;How

can it possibly be fair to cut our retirement package after were already hired; stipulating certain retirement specifications, &nbsp;such as health care coverage? &nbsp;Furthermore, part of the reason we need health care coverage is because our retirement is so measly to begin with. &nbsp;

<br>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">I've worked hard and saved every penny I have in order to live in my basic &nbsp;house, in my basic subdivision. &nbsp; I have been planning for my retirement for quite some time. &nbsp; To change the rules at this stage of the game is completely absurd. &nbsp;The net effect of this legislation is to say that I will have to work at least 41 years for the Department of Education before I can think about retiring. &nbsp;Then perhaps I can rest for 2/3 years before I kick the bucket. &nbsp;Thank you very much Calvin Say.</font>

<br>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">If this bill passes, I will likely retire early and finish out another ten years of work on the mainland. &nbsp;In that way, i would at least save my health benefits so i can retire at a reasonable age.</font>

<br>

<br><font size=2 face="sans-serif">I understand that Gov. Lingle is spending billions of dollars on cons

--Message Truncated--

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This email was scanned by the MessageLabs Security System contracted by the Hawaii Dept Of Education. If you receive suspicious/phish email, forward a copy to [spamreport@k12.hi.us](mailto:spamreport@k12.hi.us) This helps us monitor suspicious/phish email getting thru. You will not receive a response from us, but rest assured the information received will help to build additional protection. For info about this service please visit <http://www.message-labs.com/email>

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**From:** Gail Nishimura [nishimurt002@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:35 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fwd: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [Gail Nishimura/MILILANH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Gail_Nishimura/MILILANH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us)  
**Date:** February 11, 2009 5:00:01 PM HST  
**To:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Friday, February 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

I would like to submit testimonial on the following House Bill: HB#1719, Title: Relating to Public Employees

My name is Gail Nishimura and I am a teacher and Student Activities Coordinator at Mililani High School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill does pass, I'm sure that there are many others who really don't want to retire but will have to in order to keep their medical benefits. This will also cause workplaces to be in crisis with the mass retirements of employees. I also feel it is unfair for employees to lose these benefits after putting in many years of service to the state or county. It is something employees have counted on in planning their futures after retirement.

I would think very seriously about retiring early even if it means I may have to take a penalty because I will need the coverage of my medical as well as prescription drugs, vision and dental. I feel it would be a hardship on myself and all others who are the sole support of their family or themselves. The additional cost would cut into our already shrinking retirement payments and may cause some people to apply for state and county assistance for subsistence.

Thank you very much for taking time to read this testimony.

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**From:** Elizabeth Hueu [ehueu22@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 9:11 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

TO:

[LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:LABtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

FROM: Elizabeth W. Hueu

SUBJECT: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is

**Elizabeth W. Hueu**, and I am a teacher at 'Aiea Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age. Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**I have been teaching for almost 16 years. I have been planning to retire at age 62 because of the stresses of the work. I will not be eligible to retire on June 30 due to insufficient years of service, but I very well may have to consider pursuing retirement under a medical disability if this bill passes.**

**This is a very bad bill because faithful State and county employees have been led to believe that future benefits, including the payment of medical premiums during retirement, would outweigh the present low pay for civil service. This certainly has been a point brought to our attention during negotiations. We have settled for increases much below the private sector raises because we believed that our legislators would certainly not**

**disrespect us in our old age.**

**There are many programs, including support to immigrants, to the homeless, even to private industry, that should be cut before legislators consider cutting benefits to public**

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**servants. This bill discourages young people committing themselves, their careers, to service. And it punishes the people who did make the commitment.**

**We will not go quietly into the night. We deserve better treatment than this.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Elizabeth W. Hueu  
2114 Atherton Road  
Honolulu, HI 96822

**From:** tanyaahes@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 12:25 AM  
**To:** Rep. Jon Karamatsu; Rep. Henry J.C. Aquino; Rep. Rida Cabanilla; LABtestimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara  
**Subject:** SUBJECT: HB 1719 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES & other Bills

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Tanya Pacada and I am a Clerk Typist at Honowai Elementary School, in Waipahu.

I strongly oppose HB-1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's medicare retirement age.

Resumes coverage after medicare retirement age.

Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I also oppose the other bills that would adversely impact our (state & county) benefits: HB-1722, HB-1725 and HB-1727.

**I have been a state employee for over 14 years and have put my heart and soul into my job.**

**As an American and citizen, I feel it is my right to voice my displeasure about the above bills.**

**We as state workers have worked so hard for our benefits (whether someone is near retirement age - or is halfway there).**

**It is morally and ethically wrong to even think of taking these very important benefits away from us.**

**Please vote 'NO', in regards to the aforementioned bills and think of other ways that the state can deal with what is going on with the economy.**

**I have faith in all of you, to do the right thing and help protect our benefits.**

**Thank you for your time and your vote of 'NO'.**

**Have a great day in knowing your helping the faithful public servant, in doing their job, to the best of their ability.**

**yamashita1- Kathy**

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**From:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:11 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Linda Estrella  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Linda Estrella and I am a teacher at Hana High & Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. It allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Krisan Tamaye  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Krisan Tamaye and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## Example e-mail letter

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Naomi Tamashiro  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Naomi Tamashiro and I am a teacher at Kauai High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*[This paragraph should tell why you feel it's unfair for them to change your health benefits; why you would retire on June 30th; and other reasons why this is a bad bill.]*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** Sue Tuttle [tuttlej002@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 6:46 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** reconsider HD 1719  
**Attachments:** "AVG certification"

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

What in the world....?

Is the purpose of this bill to encourage those higher paid 62+ employees to retire on or before June 30th? It seems like it will create the opposite effect.

I am a school employee who will be 62 this month. I certainly will not be pushed into retirement by threats of removing my health care coverage!

In the current economy I will work until age 65 unless the State offers some positive incentive to leave sooner.

With passage of this bill the State will be obligated to pay my much higher salary for three more years rather than hiring a younger person who would start at the lower end of the salary scale. The higher salary I will receive will more than offset the savings on the cost of health care coverage for the next three years.

Please vote against HB 1719. The State needs to provide positive incentives for those who have spent so many years providing public service in the State of Hawaii to retire with dignity.

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** berg1-Liz on behalf of EDNtestimony  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 10:00 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

Testimony emailed to EDN by mistake...

Liz Labby  
Committee Clerk  
Representative Lyla Berg, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Phone: (808) 586-6510  
Fax: (808) 586-6511  
Email: [repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repberg@capitol.hawaii.gov)

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**From:** Mary\_Ancheta/WAIPAHH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Mary\_Ancheta/WAIPAHH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 9:54 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

TO: [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
FROM: Mary Ancheta  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Mary Ancheta and I am a counselor at Waipahu High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I personally do not plan to retire until the age of 60; that would amount to 30 years of service. I do not feel that it is fair for me to retire and not have the retirement medical benefit promised me when I was first employed. I truly think that 30 years of service educating the youth of Hawaii should merit the medical benefits promised. I cannot foresee my future, but the thought of paying for medical insurance out of pocket would cause financial hardship.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony for the House of Representatives Committee on Labor & Public  
Employment Notice of Hearing Friday February 13, 2009 8:30 am Conference room  
309 State Capital. Fax#586-6331**

**From:**

**Caron M. Wilberts  
Department of Education Clerk Typist**

Please accept testimony on the following Bills:

**HB1106: In favor of this Bill.** Please protect the rights of your public workers. Referring to SB 372 that refers to state workers as, "whose base salaries often are already quite low". For those that are on the lower echelon of the pay scales, our benefits are all that we have. Most of us cannot afford a home, car or even the simple pleasure of going on a trip. But, we have our benefits, without our benefits we literally will have nothing. We have traded not being paid anywhere close to living wage but know that if we get sick we have our medical. If we need medication we can get that, or if we require dental or vision care we do have access to that. We your constituents who voted for you and would like to vote for you again, have faith in you that you will do the right thing and protect the rights of your public workers. We are not the problem.

**HB 1725: Not in favor of this Bill.** Prescription Drug Coverage is literally a life and death issue for hundreds and possibly even thousands of your public workers. This is not an issue that can be bartered away. People's lives are at stake here, and really think of what you are doing. By taking away the prescription drug coverage from the state workers, people will die. I am not saying that to create drama, this will be a fact. Because we are paid such low wages, people will not be able to afford the drugs that they literally need to live. Think about it, by taking away this most essential need you will literally have contributed to the demise of these state workers, whose only crime was to work hard for the state that they love and grew up in. Please do the right thing so that future generations of state workers can look up to you as their elected officials and that you will be able to serve us in years to come.

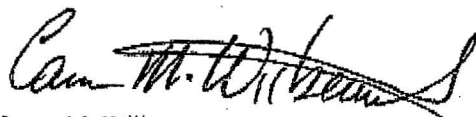
**HB 1536: In favor of this Bill.** Our higher paid officials that we have elected need to set this example. If the state workers are willing not to have a pay increase in these hard times then our much higher paid elected officials most certainly need to do the same thing. It's just the right & moral thing to do.

**HB 1718: Not in favor of this Bill.** Every single retiree that I have spoken to said that the part B reimbursements really helps. They are having such a hard time making ends meet. Please do not take this away.

**HB 1719: Not in favor of this Bill:** As a state worker you may work your whole adult life for the state. Once you have worked for all the years that are required one should be allowed to retire and enjoy what is left of their lives. Instead on punishing the state workers you as our elected officials should be looking for other avenues to better the lives of these workers who do work so hard. So you all are expecting someone who has worked for the state 25 years or more and say retires at age 55 to go without Health Insurance until they reach Medicare age, and they will probably have to because they will not be able to afford your "Carrier" that will provide the premium. Myself and everyone I know would be in that situation, so why retire. All you would be doing is just working so you can have medical, and that is no way to approach your job. Our jobs are so hard as it is already.

Please members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment do the right and just thing by protecting the right of your public workers. We literally are the backbone of the state. We serve the public who demands a lot of services and we do it to the best of our ability. All we have are our benefits, please do not take those away from us, for many it is a life and death situation.

I would like to ask all the members of this committee to have the insight and leadership to bring Hawaii into the 21<sup>st</sup> century on how we deal with fiscal matters in looking into generating new revenue for the state so this situation of trying to break the public workers never happens again. There have been discussions on having a state lottery and it is about time. We could call it the "Rainbow Lottery", and it would be run by the state. Just think of the money that could be generated for the state. I'm personally not in favor of gambling but it is high time that we have the lottery to help pay for all those services that the public demands. The state also needs to put a stop to people coming right off the plane and applying for services, that also has to come to an end. Punishing your hardworking state workers is not the answer. We work for low wages and provide all the services that the public demands, please do not take away what little we have. Thank you for your time.



Caron M. Wilberts  
State of Hawaii Clerk Typist

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** hughey2000@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:08 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

· HB 1719

**FROM:** Justin Hughey  
421 Ilikahi St  
Lahaina HI 96761

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

Conference Room 309

8:30 a.m.

My name is Justin Hughey and I am a teacher at King Kamehameha III School and I strongly oppose HB 1719. I believe the idea here is to force the teachers who are making the most money to retire. Thus the state will save on hiring new teachers and having the teachers who make the most money will not be in the system. I know we have to balance the budget but what I am warning you that a teaching career in Hawaii is a full time career that does not pay a living wage. The more benefits you take away the less likely you are to fill a vacant position. The DOE spends over 20 million dollars a year to train and recruit teachers to come to Hawaii. The majority leave in the first three years. This is because Hawaii sounds great but then they realize they can not pay the rent for an apartment without a spouse or another job. The DOE will no longer have the money to be training and recruiting teachers to come to Hawaii. I foresee major job vacancies. We are on the cusp of the second republican great depression. The teachers who can move home and be closer to their family's will. Before cutting our benefits, think of your kids not having teachers.

Mahalo.

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** Wendy\_Lum/PRIDGE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Wendy Lum and I am a teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School, I am strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

I love teaching and working my the students. As teachers, we dedicate so much of ourselves to help educate Hawaii's future. As far as pay goes, we don't make a whole lot, compared to other professionals. It is an insult to present a bill like this that will punish teachers and other state workers. I am wondering how the State will fill positions for Certified and Highly Qualified teachers if there is a mass exodus towards retirement? In a time where affordable health care is a primary concern for President Obama, it is unthinkable that Hawaii will not support retirees 55-65 yr olds with medical coverage. It is shameful that you would consider pulling this benefit from under our feet in our sunset years, after we worked with commitment in our careers for our community.

Please reconsider and explore other options that do not target those that have invested their lives as public servants to the State.

Thank you,

Wendy Lum

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Darren Nakayama  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Darren and I am a teacher at Queen Ka'ahumanu Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Whenever there is some type of problem with the economy, we teachers are the first to lose benefits, raises etc. We put with these problems not only because we love our keiki, but also because we know that we have good retirement benefits. Almost every teacher puts up with high stress levels, as well as children who come to school even though they are ill. These are factors that contribute to teachers' immune levels being lower than other workers and now, on top of test scores, AYP and restructuring, we have the extra added stress of worrying about how we're going to be able to pay for our medical expenses??? I say, enough is enough. Everyone screams for quality education, but so few are willing to adequately compensate those who provide this tremendously difficult service.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## yamashita3-Chelsea

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**From:** terry pinyerd [kaloli@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:02 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** kaloli@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Medical benefits

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Terry L. Pinyerd  
**BCC:** mmorita@hsta.org  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Terry L. Pinyerd and I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I feel this is unfair legislation as I have been planning my retirement based on existing regulations and procedures. The rules should not be changed mid-stream.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**From:** Mavis\_Leong/KANEOHE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:52 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** mmorita@hsta.org

My name is Mavis Leong and I am a teacher at Kaneohe Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Julianne Cross  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Julianne Cross and I am a teacher at Hilo Intermediate School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

**This is a bad bill because I would not be able to pay out of pocket the money I would need to cover my medical expenses. It is unfair to change health benefits like this and highly unfair to those who can take early retirement. You are using our retirement to pay for the debt that you have unwisely incurred. How is this fair? I cannot retire on June 30 and pay this. This is ludicrous.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Julianne Cross

## Example e-mail letter

TO: [EDNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
FROM: [lianne\\_dela\\_cruz@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:lianne_dela_cruz@notes.k12.hi.us)  
BCC: [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Lianne and I am a teacher at Lihikai Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

*[This paragraph should tell why you feel it's unfair for them to change your health benefits; why you would retire on June 30th; and other reasons why this is a bad bill.]*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Elverita Toci  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Elverita Toci and I am a teacher at Hilo Union Elementary School on the island of Hawaii. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I have been teaching for over 20 years. My husband was recently diagnosed with Epilepsy. I am the sole provider for our family. I would become another name on the welfare rolls if this bill passes. This is not a good way to save money. It is another good way to penalize teachers who have given their lives to the children of this state. What are you thinking about? What would the state be like if there was a teacher shortage because teachers had to retire early just to have medical coverage?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Elverita Toci  
Box 1459  
Keaau, HI 96749

TO: EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov  
FROM: Marissa Shibata  
BCC: mmorita@hsta.org  
SUBJECT: HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Marissa Shibata and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

I accepted a position with the state assuming that the state would fulfill its obligation to provide medical care upon retirement. I would be extremely disappointed with the legislators, should they decide to unfairly take such an action.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** Sheldon [keahea@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 11:31 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** ryamanaka@hsta.org  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

I have been a teacher with the Department of Education for 27 years. I currently teach at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Allows employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

When I became a public school teacher 27 years ago, it was my understanding that at a certain age, I would be entitled to medical benefits. Though the salaries were extremely low, teachers have dedicated their careers to educate the children of Hawaii thinking that we would be eligible for medical benefits after we retire. This legislation would definitely affect those state employees who were planning to retire in the near future. My fellow teachers have kept our end of the bargain and it is not right that the government break its part of the bargain. I would not change the years I have dedicated in the profession, but I feel betrayed and uncertain about my financial future. It is not fair to those of us who have dedicated our lives to government service.

Sincerely,

First Grade Teacher

## yamashita3-Chelsea

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**From:** lauramyb005@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:20 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 Conference Room 309 8:30 a.m.

My name is Laura Brown and I am a teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School. I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

I love teaching and working with my students. As teachers, we dedicate so much of ourselves to help educate Hawaii's future. As far as pay goes, we don't make a whole lot, compared to other professionals. It is an insult to present a bill like this that will punish teachers and other state workers. I am wondering how the State will fill positions for Certified and Highly Qualified teachers if there is a mass exodus towards retirement? In a time where affordable health care is a primary concern for President Obama, it is unthinkable that Hawaii will not support retirees 55-65 yr olds with medical coverage. It is shameful that you would consider pulling this benefit from under our feet in our sunset years, after we worked with commitment in our careers for our community.

Please reconsider and explore other options that do not target those that have invested their lives as public servants to the State.

Thank you,

Laura Brown

**yamashita3-Chelsea**

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**From:** Jennifer\_Rubel/KAUAIH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:11 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719 - Relating to Public Employees

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**TO:** [EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov](mailto:EDNtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov)  
**FROM:** Jennifer Rubel  
**BCC:** [mmorita@hsta.org](mailto:mmorita@hsta.org)  
**SUBJECT:** HB 1719 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jennifer Rubel and I am a teacher at Kauai High School and I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age. It resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. Please allow employees to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state or county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

If this bill should pass, it would encourage state and county employees to retire on June 30, 2009.

Teachers are invaluable. They hold the future generations in their hands. We already have a teacher shortage and they are hard to retain. This bill would further encourage future teachers to look at another profession, myself included. If I am not valued as an educator, why should I put forth the effort, if this state does not feel I deserve medical benefits for retiring after 25 years of service. Have you ever tried to teach for 25 years- it is a large task. I feel some of those that are trying to enforce these laws should come and teach for a year. Maybe then you will see what a difficult task it can be.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jennifer Rubel

## yamashita3-Chelsea

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**From:** Carl Bolding [cbolding@k12.hi.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:13 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Submitting Testimony on the House Bills Listed Below

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

HB 1106 - Furloughing employees  
HB1718 - Halt reimbursement for Medicare part B premiums for employees retiring after 12/31/09  
HB1719 - Stop employer contribution for health benefits for those retiring after 7/1/09  
HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF

HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable;  
HB1715 - Increase, for new employees, the age and service time requirement to retire;  
HB 1726 - Curtail EUTF payment for life insurance benefits;  
HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage.

Hi, my name is Carl Bolding. I work for the Department of Education and am a member of HGEA.

I'm also a taxpayer. I spend money at local businesses every day to buy food, clothing and other needs.

I don't believe it's fair for the House to be looking at ways to balance the budget on the backs of public employees. I work hard at my job and things are even harder now since vacancies have been frozen and demands for services have increased. I've made a career in public service knowing that my pay may not be as good as in the private sector but I could rely on retirement and health benefits for myself and my family.

I think it's wrong for representatives to take these benefits away from me.

Please look for other ways to balance the budget. Raising the excise tax would be a fairer way to address the state's revenue problem. Everyone paying a little more will mean sharing the burden during these tough times.

Mahalo for you time and assistance.

**From:** Jenny\_Niki/PRIDGE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:53 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB1719 (reponding to)

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009  
Conference Room 309  
8:30 a.m.

My name is Jenny Niki and I am a teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School, I strongly oppose HB 1719 which suspends state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employees-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if the employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age.

I love teaching and working my the students. As teachers, we dedicate so much of ourselves to help educate Hawaii's future. As far as pay goes, we don't make a whole lot, compared to other professionals. It is an insult to present a bill like this that will punish teachers and other state workers. I am wondering how the State will fill positions for Certified and Highly Qualified teachers if there is a mass exodus towards retirement? In a time where affordable health care is a primary concern for President Obama, it is unthinkable that Hawaii will not support retirees 55-65 yr olds with medical coverage. It is shameful that you would consider pulling this benefit from under our feet in our sunset years, after we worked with commitment in our careers for our community.

Please reconsider and explore other options that do not target those that have invested their lives as public servants to the State.

Thank you,

Jenny Niki

**Police Department Employees****Submitting Written Opposition to HB 1719**

	First Name	Last Name	Rank/Position	County
1	Jody	Singsank	Captain	Maui
2	Stephen	Orikasa	Sergeant	Maui
3	Edith	Quinter	Officer	Maui
4	Mark	Hada	Officer	Maui
5	Timothy	Hodgens		Maui
6	Ricky	Uedoi	Sergeant	Maui
7	Kapena	Wilson	Officer	Kauai
8	Kimberly	Masse	Officer	Maui
9	Ryan	Rodrigues	Officer	Maui
10	Samuel	Gasmen		Maui
11	Audra	Sellers	Officer	Maui
12	Dennis	Lee		Maui
13	William	Hankins	Sergeant	Maui
14	Charles	Hirata		Maui
15	Bradley	Rezentes	Lieutenant	Maui
16	Terry	Jones	Secretary II	Maui
17	Derrick	Lopez		Maui
18	Helen	Kanae		Maui
19	Cheryl	Rapoza	Sr. Clerk Typist	Honolulu
20	Arthur	Dadez	Lieutenant	Maui
21	Allison	Ishikawa		Maui
22	Keith	Moniz		Maui
23	John	Sang	Officer	Maui



## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** Jody K.M. Singsank [Jody.Singsank@mpd.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:28 PM  
**To:** Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki; LABtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 1719, HB1725

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members,

I oppose HB 1719 and request that you do NOT pass this bill.

I was a single female when I joined the Maui Police Department in 1986. The two main reasons I joined were: to serve my community and be self-sufficient. The starting pay was not great so I learned to live frugally, within my means, knowing that the real benefits would come at the end of my 25 year career. Now that I am near the end, it is disheartening to learn that I will be required to pay for these hard earned benefits. In my case, after retiring, I would have to continue to pay medical premiums for 17 years before I earn the "benefit" that I was promised when I started.

I also oppose HB 1725. The idea of revoking employer-paid benefits relating to prescription drugs, vision and dental plans that were promised to us, and on such short notice, is unreasonable.

Please consider the short and long-term impacts that these types of bills and actions have on your constituents. State and county workers are the backbone of the communities that you represent and are here for the long run. Taking such extreme financial measures on such short notice will take a drastic toll on the people that you most depend on in times of crisis. Please do not let your loyal public servants down.

Thank you for your time.

Captain Jody K.M. Singsank  
Maui Police Department  
Patrol Division-Molokai District  
110 Ainoa Street  
Kaunakakai, HI 96748  
(808)553-5355

**From:** Stephen T. Orikasa [Stephen.Orikasa@mpd.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:22 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees

February 10, 2009

Dear Chair and Members:

**SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees**

The purpose of this bill is to suspend state and county contributions to the EUTF for all state and county employee-beneficiaries who retire after July 1, 2009, regardless of date of hire and years of service, if an employee retires before the employee's Medicare retirement age and resumes coverage after Medicare retirement age. This bill will allow an employee to retain health coverage through the EUTF by paying the respective state and county share of premiums until Medicare retirement age.

This bill is an attempt to solve the economic downturn and financial crisis facing the State of Hawaii and its respective Counties will hurt the very people who will be instrumental in turning this crisis around. Public employees have always been the most dedicated people in Hawaii; most have given up larger salaries because they truly believed in civil service. The State and Counties made a promise to us employees on the date of their hire, insuring a good retirement system, which included health coverage. This promise kept many intelligent leaders of which the State and Counties have benefited from over these vast years, from seeking higher compensating jobs with the private sector.

Many will need to work much past their maximum years of service for retirement date in order to retain medical coverage and with no benefit to their retirement, as their pension compensation percentage would be locked with their years of service. A police officer for example, who started his career at the age of 23, would be required to work the age of 55 (32 years of service) for his maximum retirement benefit. With this bill, he would be required to work another 10 years for his medical benefits.

Police officers do not contribute to Social Security; therefore, officers who retire with 32 years of service often work part time to secure some Social Security benefits. If passed, this legislation will cause numerous retirements before July, 2009 and will create an immediate impact on all State and County services. Department Heads, Police and Fire Chiefs, upper management from all sectors of the State and County who have the time to retire will retire to preserve their benefits.

In passing legislation such as this, you will lose the trust of the people you employ and who serve our communities. You will renege on a promise made to all State and County employees at their time of hire, which is not how it's done in Hawaii.

Therefore, I do not support House Bill No. 1719, related to Public Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN T. ORIKASA  
Sergeant  
Maui County Police Department

*Stephen T. Orikasa*

**Maui County Police Department  
Administrative Sergeant-Wailuku Patrol Division  
55 Mahalani Street  
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii 96793  
Office : (808) 270-6534  
Cellular : (808) 264-0037  
Facsimile : (808) 244-6453**

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
And members  
Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members:

**SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1719, Related to Public Employees.**

I am writing to you today regarding my concerns on the proposed bills. I have been a sworn County Police Officer since 2001. I understand the crisis that our economy is in and strongly feel by passing bills will not help our economy but devastate those public employee(s) and their families.

When I joined the Department there was a feeling of security and stability for myself and my family(s) future. Something that I did not need to worry about besides coming to work everyday and going home at the end of my shift unharmed. This proposed bill(s) has only increased the stress level during this economic hardship.

We as public/State/County employee(s) are dedicated to our jobs and community. For a lot of us who are still climbing up that 25 year service ladder it becomes and never ending ladder. We as Officer(s) do not contribute to Social Security and therefore depend on our retirements, our own monies that is automatically taken out each pay period with that mind set that when we do reach that 25 years of service we can finally enjoy life and our families comfortably with no 9-5 jobs.

If these bills were to pass there would be a drastic increase in retirements which I am sure the State/Counties would not be able to handle. I know that the Departments State wide would see an extreme change that would cause Departments to lose their experience leaders all at once causing the Department to start from scratch which would in turn cause the community to suffer. Having experienced and devoted employee(s) to be forced to retire is unfair as if they are being punished for being dedicated community servants.

I understand the need for change in order for the State to get out from under the rock, but seriously making change to just Public/State/County employee(s) will only be a nudge. Everyone in this State contributes to how successful our economy is, so why can't we share that burden. Passing these bills will only create a landslide that will hurt our entire community and families. Basically it will come down to both parents working two jobs and leaving kids at home alone to fend for themselves, with both working till 80 years old. It might sound drastic but anything can happen when suddenly your faced with your future stability may not be there.

Can you imagine if the bill(s) pass the max retirement would occur State wide with Public/County/State departments would be short staff thus causing services to our communities at a minimum, increased in over time, and the rebuilding of each department. My family and I strongly ask that you highly consider opposing these 'BILLS' that would cause MASS CHAOS in the working class.

My family and I THANKYOU for your time and hopeful consideration.

Officer Edith N. T. QUINTERO

Maui Police Department  
55 Mahalani Street  
Wailuku, HI, 96793  
808-244-6400  
Fax 808-244-6453

## yamashita1- Kathy

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**From:** Mark T. Hada [Mark.Hada@mpd.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 1:22 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Joseph Souki  
**Subject:** House Bill 1719; RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Mr. Karl RHOADS, Chair  
All Members  
COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Chair RHOADS and Members,

I am writing against House Bill #1719; RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES. I am a Police Officer with the Maui County Police Department and have been employed since 1997.

In considering a career in Law Enforcement prior to being hired by the Maui County Police Department, I took into consideration several factors, one of the most important being health care benefits. With the proposal of House Bill #1719, this proposed bill jeopardizes one of the main reasons I decided to enter Public Service to serve and protect others.

Although Police Officers are not the best paid employees and do not have the luxury of a regular schedule to enjoy - as well as having to deal with more stresses and dangers than most other jobs or careers - I enjoy my job and would not change it for the world. However, its frustrating when all that we work hard for is easily considered being taken away from us without hesitation or consideration. Just the mere proposal of this House Bill is insulting and degrading.

Furthermore, Police Officers do not contribute to the Social Security system and rely heavily on this benefit after retirement.

Another factor that I hope you and your Committee will take into consideration is that Police Officers are considered **Essential Employees**, thus we do not have the luxury of striking. As **Essential Employees**, I feel Police Officers should be afforded 100% subsidized medical/health insurance while employed, not to mention after retirement. At this time, we are still required to contribute monthly to our medical coverage, although as Police Officers, we are prone and exposed to more chances of injuries, illnesses and even death than a large number of other Government employees. We have already previously been forced to change our medical coverage from a lower rate health insurance through our Union, to the higher rate State policy - for the same coverage! This definitely does not help our finances and definitely affects our paychecks and morale.

In addition to the previously stated reasons, passage of this House Bill will result in a number of retirements, including a large amount of Senior Staff Members and will have a direct impact on most, if not all, Government services. I am again asking that House Bill #1719 be rejected.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark HADA  
Police Officer  
Maui County Police Department