

TESTIMONY

HB2919 HD1

TESTIMONY BY DAVID SHIMABUKURO
ADMINISTRATOR, EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 2919, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

MARCH 9, 2010

Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

The ERS Board of Trustees opposes H.B. 2919, H.D. 1 since it will increase the ERS' \$6.2 billion unfunded actuarial accrued liability. This Bill expands the definition of "sewer worker" to include several supervisory positions and enable these supervisors to qualify for an early retirement benefits.

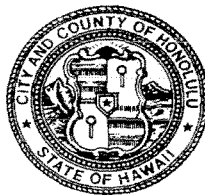
The ERS' Actuary has previously advised us that it would be prudent to defer any retirement benefit enhancement proposal until a future year when the outlook for the ERS' funded position is more stable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



NOEL T. ONO
DIRECTOR

March 9, 2010

Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Labor
The Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Takamine and Members:

Subject: House Bill 2919, HD 1
Relating to the Employee's Retirement System

The City and County of Honolulu's Department of Human Resources supports House Bill (HB) 2919, HD 1 relating to the Employee's Retirement System.

HB 2919, HD 1 would change the definition of "sewer worker" to include sewer maintenance working supervisors, wastewater collection system inspection supervisors, wastewater collection system district supervisors, and wastewater collection system field services supervisors. It also allows for coverage of substantially similar classifications under different class titles so that the definition does not need to be amended every time a different title is created or amended.

As these positions supervise employees covered by the "sewer worker" definition and come from the same ranks, coverage under the same twenty-five year retirement benefit is fair and appropriate.

We request your support of HB 2919, HD 1 relating to the Employee's Retirement System, to provide retirement benefits to positions in the affected classes.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Noel T. Ono".

Noel T. Ono
Director

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU1000 ULUOHIA STREET, SUITE 308, KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
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MAYOR

March 5, 2010

TIMOTHY E. STEINBERGER, P.E.
DIRECTORMANUEL S. LANUEVO, P.E., LEED AP
DEPUTY DIRECTORROSS S. TANIMOTO, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTORIN REPLY REFER TO:
WAS 10-64

The Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Labor
State Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Takamine and Members:

Subject: **House Bill 2919, HD 1, Relating to the Employees' Retirement System**

The City and County of Honolulu's Department of Environmental Services supports House Bill (HB) 2919, HD 1, relating to the Employees' Retirement System.

HB 2919, HD 1, would change the definition of "sewer worker" to include sewer maintenance working supervisors, wastewater collection system inspection supervisors, wastewater collection system district supervisors, and wastewater collection system field services supervisors. This corrects an error and inequity that has occurred with the introduction of new classifications within the wastewater collection system maintenance function within the City and County of Honolulu over time.

As with the staff of "sewer workers" these positions supervise, employees in these positions are, as a requirement of their jobs, exposed to the same hazards as their subordinates including gases, wastewater, and other materials as they are on site for the maintenance and repair of sewer pipes. In addition, many possible good candidates for these supervisory positions can be reluctant to pursue the promotions because they would lose the option of the 25 year retirement. It is important that we have the opportunity to get the best candidates in our supervisory positions who are essential in protecting the public health and the environment. This change applies to less than ten positions in the Department of Environmental Services. Retirement contributions for these employees are made from the City's Sewer Fund funded from sewer service charges and not from General Funds.

We request your support of HB 2919, HD 1, relating to the Employees' Retirement System, to provide retirement equity to all those directly involved in the maintenance and repair of the wastewater (sewer) collection system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy E. Steinberger".

Timothy E. Steinberger, P.E.
Director



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
March 9, 2010

H.B. 2919, H.D. 1 – RELATING
TO THE EMPLOYEES’
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The Hawaii Government Employees’ Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 2919, H.D. 1, which expands the definition of “sewer worker” under Section 88-21, HRS, to include certain bargaining unit 02 classes that are currently excluded from enhanced retirement benefits. The expanded definition includes sewer maintenance working supervisors, wastewater collection system inspection supervisors, wastewater collection district supervisors and wastewater collection system field services supervisors. These employees are represented by the HGEA.

These employee classes were created after the last amendment to Section 88-21, HRS, although they are exposed to many of the same hazards as those already included in this statute. Correcting this inequity is important and the employees deserve to be covered by Section 88-21, HRS.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2919, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director