

**TESTIMONY**

**SB 1568**

**SD1**

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR



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February 13, 2009

To: The Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine, Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor

Date: February 17, 2009

Time: 2:45 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 224, State Capitol

From: Darwin L.D. Ching, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

**Testimony in Strong Support**

**of**

**S.B. 1568 S.D.1 - Relating to Unemployment Insurance**

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

S.B. 1568 S.D. 1 proposes to amend Chapter 383, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) to add new sections to extend unemployment benefits to individuals seeking part-time work and to workers separated from employment for a compelling family reason.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Currently, there is no comparable section on part-time benefits or separation for compelling family reasons. Under section 12-5-47, Administrative Rules, Chapter 5, Title 12, good cause is provided if for leaving employment where there is a change in the individual's marital or domestic status.

**III. SENATE BILL**

The Department strongly supports this measure that intends to allow benefits to individuals who seek part-time work only and to those who separate due to compelling family reasons. By policy and practice, the Department has applied the law consistent

with the provisions in this measure. However, this measure will serve to codify and affirm our current practice in conformity with provisions of The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009

THE SENATE  
Committee on Labor  
Sen. Dwight Y. Takamine, Chair  
Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 224  
Tuesday, February 17, 2009; 2:45 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 1568, SD1  
RELATING TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 1568, SD1, which extends unemployment benefits to individuals seeking part-time work and to workers separated from employment for a compelling family reason. Our comments are focused on the first part of the bill that would extend unemployment benefits to those seeking part-time work.

Currently, UI rules specify that those receiving benefits must seek full-time work. Although part-time employment may be accepted, the worker must still fulfill his or her obligation to seek full-time employment.

S.B. 1568, SD1 will allow those who worked part-time for the majority of their base period to seek part-time employment. We think this is fair. Since the weekly unemployment benefit is calculated based on the worker's earnings during the base period, the benefit will reflect part-time earnings.

In these difficult economic times when jobs are scarce, we should encourage workers to take whatever employment that will suit their needs, even if it is part-time. In addition, a part-time job may lead to a full-time job. Allowing the unemployment insurance system to be more flexible will also benefit the Department by reducing the number of denials and appeals.

The ILWU urges passage of S.B. 1568, SD1. Thank you for considering our testimony on this matter.



## 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  
February 17, 2009

S.B. 1568, S.D. 1 – RELATING  
TO UNEMPLOYMENT  
INSURANCE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 1568, S.D. 1 which extends unemployment benefits to individuals seeking part-time work and to workers separated from employment for a compelling family reason.

Providing benefits to an unemployed part-time worker seeking part-time work is fair and particularly significant during these tough economic times. Extending coverage to workers that separate from employment due to difficult family situations such as domestic violence, serious family illness or disability, or a spouse's job relocation is a change that will greatly benefit families. On both counts, the bill will benefit our whole community at a time when such support is truly needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 1568, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora A. Nomura

Deputy Executive Director