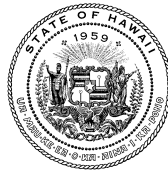


SB 831

EDT



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING
AND GENERAL SERVICES
P.O. BOX 119
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

TESTIMONY
OF
RUSS K. SAITO, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
ON
February 6, 2009

S.B. 831

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES

Chair Fukunaga and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 831.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) supports this bill. It proposes to establish two permanent exempt positions to enable DAGS to secure employees with highly specialized technology skills and knowledge. These positions are essential to our continuing efforts to plan and apply technology as a strategic tool that improves the efficiency and productivity of government.

DAGS' Information and Communication Service Division (DAGS/ICSD) presently uses temporary exempt positions that it can fill for only one year at a time, without any assurance that they will not be extended. This makes it difficult to recruit and retain professionals who prefer the stability of longer-term employment beyond a single year. This bill will give DAGS/ICSD the flexibility it needs to customize its permanent exempt positions to meet emerging short- and long-term requirements, to find the best candidates

available, and to negotiate competitive salaries. The salary scales for civil service information specialist positions, even above the minimum starting steps, are far too low to attract candidates with the required combinations of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required.

These exempt positions supplement and complement the skills of our civil service staff and contribute to DAGS/ICSD and the State in several significant ways:

- Plan, develop architecture for, and apply new and appropriate technologies to government processes that improve service, efficiency, information sharing, and communications with the public and among the State's employee communities;
- Improve management of projects with advanced technologies;
- Share experiences, techniques, and management expertise with other departments and agencies as part of DAGS/ICSD's continuous learning and knowledge-sharing environment; and
- Create strategic approaches, processes, and cooperative activities across multiple departments and agencies;
- Develop partnerships and collaborations that lead to securing external funding and cost sharing opportunities with other jurisdictions.

DAGS requests that this Committee approve S.B. 831 and permit DAGS/ICSD to continue using these exempt positions to improve our productivity and effectiveness.

These needs are critical in these times of economic uncertainty and beyond.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.