

JUDtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2011 11:40 AM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: atg.legcoordinator@hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for HB1001 on 2/11/2011 2:00:00 PM
Attachments: HB1001_ATG_02-11-11_JUD.pdf

Testimony for JUD 2/11/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1001

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Joshua Wisch
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Submitted on: 2/10/2011

Comments:

Caron Inagaki, Deputy Attorney General, will be present at the hearing to testify.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE, 2011**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1001, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CLAIMS AGAINST
THE STATE, ITS OFFICERS, OR ITS EMPLOYEES.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Friday, February 11, 2011 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): David M. Louie, Attorney General, or
Caron M. Inagaki, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to satisfy claims against the State, its officers, or its employees, including claims for legislative relief, judgments against the State, settlements, and miscellaneous claims.

The bill in its present form contains nine claims that total \$1,461,253.71. Seven claims are general fund appropriation requests and two claims are appropriation requests from departmental funds. Attachment A provides a brief description of each claim in the bill.

Since the bill was introduced, one new claim has been resolved for an additional \$250,000.00. The new claim is a general fund appropriation request. Attachment B provides a brief description of the claim in the bill. We request that the Committee amend the bill to appropriate funds to satisfy the new claim.

Including the new claims, the appropriation requests total \$1,711,253.71 allocated among ten claims. Of this total, \$581,253.71 consists of general fund appropriation requests and

\$1,130,000.00 consists of appropriation requests from departmental funds.

The Department has had a longstanding policy of advising agencies as to how to avoid claims such as those in this bill. The Department has also complied with section 37-77.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which requires the Attorney General to develop and implement a procedure for advising our client agencies on how to avoid future claims.

We respectfully request passage of this measure.

ATTACHMENT "A"

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

Arasato v. State of Hawaii, et al. \$ 33,518.32 (General Fund)
Civil No. 07-1-2107-11, First Circuit Judgment

A boy was injured during an industrial arts and crafts class at Kailua Intermediate School. He injured his left thumb while using the electric buffing machine. The boy alleges that his injury was a direct and proximate result of State of Hawaii's lack of appropriate instruction, supervision, and failure to properly control the conduct of the students. The State of Hawaii denied any liability or wrongdoing. The case proceeded to trial. The court found the State 70% negligent and awarded Plaintiff \$32,457.90 plus costs of \$43.11. The amount requested includes post-judgment interest.

McCauley v. Inouye, et al. \$ 135,000.00 (General Fund)
Civil No. 07-01-206K, Third Circuit Settlement

A student at Konawaena High School injured his eye in the auto shop class. The teacher was removing a metal cap of a universal joint from an automobile drive shaft with the use of an air powered wrench. The metal cap broke and a portion of the metal cap was propelled into the student's eye. The student was not wearing any eye protection. The student sustained a lacerated cornea which, to date, has required two surgeries and three laser procedures. Although a corneal transplant may theoretically be available to treat the scar in the middle of the student's field of vision, the recovery period after surgical implantation is two years and its outcome is uncertain. The student has incurred medical bills of \$27,000. The case proceeded to the Court Annexed Arbitration Program, and the arbitrator awarded the student \$168,750.00. The case later settled for \$135,000.00

HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION:

United Public Workers AFSCME, Local 646, \$ 10,524.01 (General Fund)
AFL-CIO and State of Hawaii, et al. Judgment
S.P. No. 09-1-0305, First Circuit

In 2009, the United Public Workers (UPW) and several public employers were in negotiations regarding the terms of the collective bargaining agreement for Bargaining Unit 10 beginning

July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011. The public employers were the State of Hawaii, the Judiciary, the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, and the City and County of Honolulu. When an impasse in the negotiations was reached, the parties proceeded to an interest arbitration to resolve the disputes regarding the terms of the successor agreement pursuant to H.R.S. Chapter 89. In November 2009, the interest arbitration was completed. On January 14, 2010, the interest arbitration award was issued to the parties.

On February 19, 2010, the UPW filed motion for an order confirming the interest arbitration award and for entry of judgment in the First Circuit Court. This department opposed the motion because under HRS § 89-11(g) the award is final and binding on the parties and the statute contemplates that the Legislature retains the power to approve any cost items contained in the award. On April 14, 2010, a hearing was held on the motion. At the hearing, the Court granted the motion and allowed the UPW to later file motion for fees and costs as the prevailing party on its motion.

On May 11, 2010, the UPW filed its motion for fees and costs. On September 13, 2010, the Court filed Order Granting Motion for Allowance of Costs and Attorney's Fees. The Court awarded \$417.69 in costs and \$9,748.69 in attorney's fees. The amount requested includes post-judgment interest.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY:

Tenney v. State of Hawaii , et al.	\$ 149,500.00 (General Fund)
Civil No. 09-1-0190-01, First Circuit	Settlement

An inmate at Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) was a passenger in a State van driven by a State employee. The State employee was traveling on Dillingham Boulevard when he claims that the vehicle in front of him suddenly stopped, causing the van to rear end the vehicle. The inmate alleges that the State had a duty to take reasonable steps to safely transport him back to OCCC. The inmate was not wearing a seatbelt and was handcuffed to a belly waist chain. His ankles were also shackled. As a result of the motor vehicle accident, the inmate underwent surgery for a three disc cervical discectomies and foraminotomies. Settlement was reached in the amount of \$149,500.00.

MISCELLANEOUS CLAIMS:

Tom Ishigo \$ 1,852.64 (General Fund)

Claimant requests reissuance of outdated checks that were misplaced. The checks when found were outdated and could no longer be cashed. The legislative claim was filed with the Attorney General within six years from the date on which the claim for payment matured, within the period specified by section 37-77, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Nicole T. Kelley \$ 394.74 (General Fund)

Claimant requests reissuance of an outdated check that was misplaced. The check when found was outdated and could no longer be cashed. The legislative claim was filed with the Attorney General within six years from the date on which the claim for payment matured, within the period specified by section 37-77, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Paulette Yoshida \$ 464.00 (General Fund)

Claimant requests reissuance of an outdated check that was misplaced. The check when found was outdated and could no longer be cashed. The legislative claim was filed with the Attorney General within six years from the date on which the claim for payment matured, within the period specified by section 37-77, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, HIGHWAYS DIVISION:

Labinia v. State of Hawaii, et al. \$ 900,000.00 (Department
Civil No. 07-1-0075-01, First Circuit Settlement Appropriation)

A man operating a moped was injured when a State Department of Transportation dump truck driver made a U-turn in order to pick up a dead animal along Fort Weaver Road in Ewa Beach. The moped driver suffered significant injuries, including a closed head injury, pelvic fracture, a comminuted right femur fracture that was set with a permanent rod, cervical and lumbar injuries, and post-concussion syndrome. The moped driver was certified as being medically disabled from work from the date of the accident to present. Three economists estimated his future wage loss to be between \$356,000.00 to \$481,144.00, future medical costs/life care plans at \$786,570.00 to \$1,195,579.00, and loss of household services at \$233,000 - \$342,905. His past medical special damages total \$84,413.19. This case proceeded to

mediation. The mediator recommended settlement of \$1.2 to \$1.5 million. The case settled for \$900,000.00.

Requelman v. State of Hawaii, et al. Civil No. 06-1-0366, Third Circuit	\$ 230,000.00 (Department Settlement Appropriation)
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A man was driving on Route 19 on the Big Island before dawn, and his vehicle hit a tree that was growing in the State's right of way but had fallen across Route 19. The Department of Transportation had inspected these trees the year prior and, despite noting that they needed to be trimmed or cut, failed to cut these trees. The man sustained a compression fracture of his L-3 vertebrae with permanent residual symptoms and disabilities. This case proceeded to mediation, and the mediator recommended settlement in the amount of \$230,000.00.

ATTACHMENT "B"

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

Jemwai v. Keau, et al.	\$ 250,000.00 (General Fund)
Civil No. 09-1-0095-01, First Circuit	Settlement

An educational assistant physically and sexually assaulted a special education student various times between March 1, 2007 and May 6, 2008 while attending McKinley High School. The assaults occurred on McKinley High School premises. The special education student and the State of Hawaii have both filed suit against the educational assistant and obtained an entry of default against him. This case proceeded to mediation which resulted in settlement.