



The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii
The Voice of Business in Hawaii

LATE

**Testimony to the House Committees on Economic Revitalization & Business
and Labor & Public Employment
Friday, February 4, 2011
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
State Capitol - Conference Room 309**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 884 RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE

Chairs Rhoads and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Yamashita and Choy, and members of the committees:

My name is Jim Tollefson and I am the President and CEO of The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber does not support House Bill No. 884, relating to Family Leave at this time.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,100 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

House Bill 884 amends the family leave requirement to permit an employee to utilize family leave time to care for a sibling.

The term, "sibling," could cover a broad-base of individuals. Does it mean only full, half, or step sibling, hanai or adopted sibling. Also, due to the current state of the economy, many employers are operating with minimum resources and requiring them to extend leave for additional reasons would further impact employers, some of whom are just barely making ends meet.

The Chamber respectfully requests that the committees take this into consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

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HB884 (Including Siblings into Family Leave)
LABOR/FINANCE Committees

HB884 – LABOR Hearing

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding HB 884 (Inclusion of Siblings in Family Leave). I appreciate your time and attention.

Here in Hawaii, when we speak of family, most assume that family is everyone within one's OHANA. Currently, the family leave requirement allows leave to care for the employee's child, spouse or reciprocal beneficiary, or parent with a serious health condition. Siblings, however, are excluded from "Family Leave."

If we are considering "Domestic Partners" to be added for Family Leave and Funeral Leave, should we not include siblings? After all, it does not matter if the family member is related by blood or became a member of the OHANA by the traditional Hawaiian way, HANAI. They are family.

Please consider; if parents or elders of the family are no longer with us, but there are siblings that need assistance, family members, such as Brothers and Sisters, usually advocate on their behalf. Currently, FUNERAL LEAVE includes siblings (brothers and sisters), therefore, siblings should be included in FAMILY LEAVE. Funeral Leave and Family Leave relate to the same type of circumstance, caring for and advocating for one's OHANA. Siblings should be afforded the same recognition in FAMILY LEAVE as they have in FUNERAL LEAVE.

Thank you and please consider adding siblings to FAMILY LEAVE.

Helen H Hamada



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Committee on Economic Revitalization and Business

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 4, 2011

H.B. 884 – RELATING TO
FAMILY LEAVE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 884, which amends the family leave requirement to allow an employee to use Family Leave to care for a sibling.

Currently, Chapter 398-3 HRS allows for an employee to use four weeks of Family Leave upon the birth or adoption of a child, to care for a child, spouse, reciprocal beneficiary, or parent with a serious health condition, but does not include care of a sibling. In some cases, an individual may only have a sibling who can provide care during illness. Further, our collective bargaining agreements allow for employees to use Funeral Leave upon the passing of their immediate family, which includes siblings. We support legislation that would allow employees the ability to utilize Family Leave to care for their family members – parents, spouses, children and siblings.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 884.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora Nomura
Deputy Executive Director

