



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY)

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

DoD-State Liaison Office

Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, PBM Committee
February 1, 2012

Testimony of
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Quality of Life Regional Liaison
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Community & Family Policy
DoD-State Liaison Office

HB 2257 Relating to Professional and Vocational Licensing for Military Spouses

The Department of Defense State Liaison Office operates under the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Community and Family Policy. Our mission is to be a resource to state policymakers as they work to address quality of life issues of military families.

Testimony

Chair Aquino and members of the House Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee, on behalf of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today on HB 2257, a bill relating Professional and Vocational Licensing for Military Spouses. My name is Laurie Crehan. I am with the Dept of Defense State Liaison Office which operates under the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. One of our top priority issues is military spouse career portability. The policies in HB 2257 will certainly help level the playing field for military spouses in quickly finding work as they move from assignment to assignment accompanying their Service member spouse.

One of our primary objectives is retention of Service members and its impact on military readiness. We know that most decisions to stay in the military are made around the kitchen table and not in the personnel office. To retain our trained and experienced military, we must retain the family. The Defense Manpower Data Center reported in a survey of active duty Service members that 59% of our military are married. Additionally, that percentage increases to 72% for non-commissioned officers and 73% for officers. As you know, these two groups possess the critical experience necessary for our professional armed forces. Sixty-eight percent of married Service members reported their spouse's ability to maintain a career impacts their decision to remain in the military by a large or moderate extent.

Over 70% of their spouses say they want to work or need to work. Military families are not unlike their civilian counterparts; they depend on two incomes, and like anyone else, want to achieve their goals and aspirations. Military spouses relocate on average every 2-3 years. The

Improving the Lives of Military Members and their Families

annual percent of the military spouse population that moves across state lines is 14.5% - compared to 1.1% for civilian spouses.

In 2007, the RAND Corporation published a study; "Working Around the Military," in which they indicated that military spouses had more education than their civilian 'look alike' counterparts, yet on average are employed at lower rates and earn less. This result is indicative of a mobile lifestyle, which does not support military spouses expediting the transfer of their professional licenses and often leads them into taking lower paying positions below their training and certifications.

The Defense State Liaison Office conducted an informal study to identify some of the barriers hindering military spouses from attaining licenses following a military move. In a review of twenty states, using the top five highest demand professions according to the US Department of Labor, the licensing timeline was delayed up to 6 months due to the exam process, application process, or requirement for background checks. This delay in licensing means military spouses have little time left in their assignment to find a job and employers are less likely to hire military spouses because they will have less time in the position before being transferred out of State.

The policies, as proposed in HB 2257, would provide an opportunity for military spouses to quickly enter the workforce and continue their careers when moving to Hawaii, without hindering the family's financial well-being.

In closing, let me say that we are grateful for the tremendous effort that Hawaii has historically given in supporting our service members and their families. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony. I am prepared to answer any questions you might have.

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**PRESENTATION OF THE
PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL LICENSING DIVISION**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2012

Thursday, February 2, 2012
9:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2257, RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL AND
VOCATIONAL LICENSING.**

TO THE HONORABLE HENRY J. C. AQUINO, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Celia Suzuki, Licensing Administrator for the Professional and Vocational Licensing Division ("PVLD"), Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department appreciates the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill No. 2257, Relating to Professional and Vocational Licensing.

The purpose of House Bill No. 2257 is to require professional and vocational licensing boards to allow applicants to demonstrate competency in lieu of work experience required, and to establish procedures to expedite the issuance of licenses, certifications, or permits to military spouses.

The PVLD currently oversees the regulation of forty-seven (47) boards, commissions and programs. Each licensing area has specific requirements for licensure and its own statutes and rules.

House Bill No. 2257 adds two new sections to PVLD's Model Act, Chapter 436B, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS"). The first section provides for licensure by endorsement by allowing applicants to demonstrate competency in a specific occupation or profession in lieu of any experience requirement. We question the need for this provision, as each licensing authority has the ability to determine its specific requirements, including accepting licensure by endorsement. To insert this language in Chapter 436B, HRS, implies that all licensing authorities should promulgate rules to implement this section. This may be problematic, as each licensing authority has requirements unique to its own profession and vocation, and mandating that it waive its specific experience requirement and consider "competency" may not be appropriate for every licensing authority. Therefore, we cannot support this amendment.

The second proposed section requires every licensing authority to establish rules and procedures to expedite a license, certificate, or permit to an out-of-state licensee whose spouse is a member of the armed forces, and who left employment to accompany the spouse to Hawaii. The procedure must include issuing the individual a license, certificate, or permit if the other state's license requirement is at least equivalent to our own, or issue the individual a temporary permit until our license requirements are met. We are in strong opposition to this amendment.

While we fully support all military service members and their families, mandating that all licensing authorities establish special procedures for military spouses is unwarranted. Generally, determining the equivalency of license requirements of other states is not a simple process, and the licensing authority often does not have the time or resources to research the matter and evaluate whether a particular course or type of training is equivalent to another. It would take an inordinate amount of time to make this kind of determination, and may ultimately delay the processing time rather than expedite it.

Furthermore, we have serious concerns about requiring the licensing authority to issue a temporary permit until the license requirements are met. This process would allow an individual to offer unsupervised services to the public without the required education, training, or experience, and is contrary to PVLD's mission of protecting the public. Also, expediting the license process for this particular class of person over all other applicants is not consistent with our policy of treating all applicants fairly and equally.

With so many different professions and vocations under our jurisdictions, these across-the-board mandates are not appropriate. Currently, each licensing authority establishes its own requirements for licensure, and nothing prevents an authority from providing accommodations for a military dependent or out-of-state licensee. However, these matters should be left for each authority to consider, and not required of all professions and vocations.

For these reasons, we oppose this bill and respectfully requests that it be held.

**Testimony to the House Committee on Public Safety
and Military Affairs**

Thursday, February 2, 2012

9:00 AM

Conference Room 309

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2257, RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL AND
VOCATIONAL LICENSING**

Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the committee.

My name is Charles Ota and I am the Vice President for Military Affairs at The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (The Chamber). I am here to state The Chamber's strong support of House Bill No. 2409; Relating to Consumer Protection.

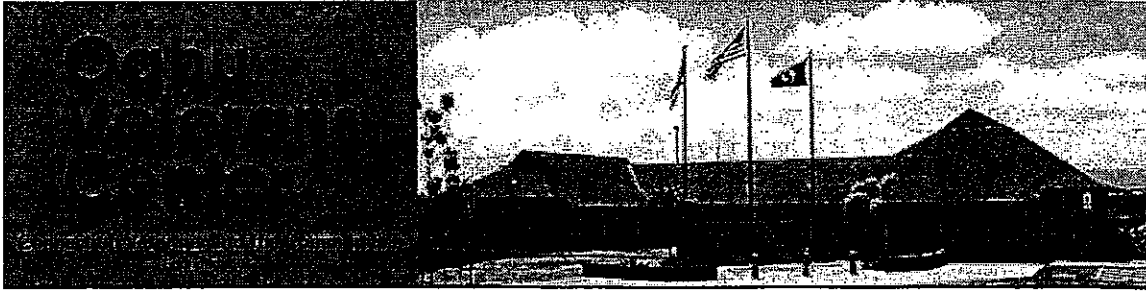
The measure proposes to require licensing boards to allow applicants to demonstrate competency in lieu of work experience required, and to establish procedures to expedite the issuance of licenses, certifications, or permits to military spouses.

The Chamber's Military Affairs Council has served as the liaison for the state in matters relating to the military since 1985. The employment of military spouses is one of the priority quality of life issues cited by the US Secretary of Defense.

This measure proposes to facilitate the employment of qualified military spouses. This is consistent with ongoing efforts by the US Department of Defense and the First Lady, Mrs. Michelle Obama, encouraging states and employers to provide gainful employment opportunities for military spouses, many of whom are highly qualified to fill vacancies in the local workforce.

In light of the above, we recommend the proposal be approved for further discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



January 31, 2012

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2257
RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL LICENSING
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
HEARING ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND, AT 11:15AM, IN CONFERENCE
ROOM 309**

Aloha Chair Aquino: The Oahu Veterans Council's delegates, are honored to represent the interests of our veterans and their families. Our Legislative Committee voted unanimously to support House Bill 2257.

We sincerely appreciate your efforts to require our licensing boards to:

- allow applicants to demonstrate competency in lieu of work experience required and
- establish procedures to expedite the issuance of licenses, certifications, or permits to military spouses.

The Oahu Veterans Council respectfully urges your committee to consider passing House Bill 2257 as written; mahalo, for allowing us to testify, regarding this extremely important issue.

Dennis Egge

Dennis Egge; Chairman, Legislative Committee



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