

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNORJonathan J. Chun  
Chair

LATE

STATE OF HAWAII  
**State Rehabilitation Council**  
1901 Bachelot St.  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

March 15, 2012

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
Conference Room 16  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Hearing Date: March 15, 2012  
Conference Room 016  
3:00 p.m.

Re: HB 2415, HD 2

Dear Chair Chun Oakland:

I am writing to express the strong support of Hawaii's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to include the provisions of SB 126 SD 2 HD 2 into HB 2415, HD 2. SB 126 SD 2 HD2 was proposed by members of the Deaf & Blind Task Force, the University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies, and other members of the disability community. Presently, we have some state programs and policies that are designed to support the employment of persons with disabilities. Unfortunately, other policies, like those in our Medicaid program, create disincentives for persons with disabilities to become employed, to maintain employment, or to further their employment goals.

Through national and state research, the following has been determined:

- A Medicaid Buy-In in Hawaii could generate up to \$300,000 fiscal benefit in its first year of implementation and \$2.5 million fiscal benefit over 5 years.
- National experience has shown that *Medicaid users who work cost 30% less than those who do not work*, approximately.
- *Forty-five states have Medicaid Buy-Ins for working people with disabilities.*
- *Approximately 70%-75% of those enrolling in a Medicaid Buy-Ins are already receiving Medicaid*, but in Hawaii, are now sitting at home and not working, because they cannot do without health coverage. A buy-in will enable them to pay taxes, and contribute to the cost of their Medicaid benefit!

**LATE**

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Page 2  
March 15, 2012

The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid has funded a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant at the Center on Disability Studies to assist Hawaii to develop a Medicaid Buy-In program, and members of our SRC have participated in this grant for many years to participate in Hawaii having a buy-in.

We support the creation of a task force to develop and implement a Medicaid Buy-In for working people with disabilities in 2014, and we recommend that this task force include people facing these healthcare challenges as well as the agencies serving them. The buy-in program could be launched as part of the larger healthcare transformation currently underway through the Affordable Care Act in 2014.

Please do not let Hawaii become the last state of the nation without a Medicaid Buy-In! We thank you for your kind attention and consideration to including the language of SB 126 SD2, HD2 into HB 2415.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Chun, Chair  
Hawaii State Rehabilitation Council