

TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
ADMINISTRATOR, EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 2487

FEBRUARY 14, 2012

RELATING TO EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee,

H.B. 2487 proposes to amend sections 88-73, 88-74, 88-81, 88-335, and 88-338 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to correct typographical errors, to harmonize service retirement, ordinary disability retirement and ordinary death benefits for members of the Employees' Retirement System who become members of the ERS after June 30, 2012, and to restore parity with respect to age and service requirements for current members who become judges after June 30, 2012.

The ERS Board of Trustees supports this bill.

This bill makes the following amendments to clarify benefit changes made by Act 163, Session Laws of Hawaii 2011:

- Restores the age and service retirement requirements under sections 88-73(b) and 88-74(c) and (d) for current members who become judges after June 30, 2012 to the same age and service retirement requirements as other Contributory Plan members who became ERS members prior to July 1, 2012. Act 163 enacted more stringent retirement requirements for individuals who become members of the system after June 30, 2012, and for current members who become judges after June 30, 2012. As a result, current members who become judges after June 30, 2012 became subject to more stringent age and service requirements than other Contributory Plan members who became ERS members at the same time.
- Deletes from section 88-74(f) reference to water safety officers. Section 88-74(f) applies to individuals who join the ERS as contributory plan members after June 30, 2012. All water safety officers who became ERS members after June 30, 2012 are "Hybrid Plan" members. The category of water safety officers who are Contributory Plan members and who become members of the ERS after June 30, 2012 does not exist.
- Corrects errors in sections 88-74(i) and 88-81(a) and (f).
- Amends section 88-335 to apply the same benefit multiplier (1.75%) for service retirement benefits and ordinary

disability benefits for Hybrid Plan members who become ERS members after June 30, 2012. Although Act 163 provided for a lower benefit multiplier for Hybrid Plan members who become ERS members after June 30, 2012 than for current members, Act 163 did not make a corresponding change to the benefit multiplier for ordinary disability benefits.

- Amends section 88-338(a) to make the service requirement for payment of the Hybrid Plan hypothetical account balance as an ordinary death benefit for an individual who becomes a member after June 30, 2012 the same (10 years) as the service requirement for an inter vivos withdrawal by the member after the member has terminated service.

As noted, these changes and corrections are necessary to correct, clarify and harmonize the benefit changes made Act 163, Session Laws of Hawaii 2011. The ERS Board of Trustees strongly supports this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.