



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

LATE

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 25, 2011

S.B. 1269, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO THE DEFINITION OF
COMPENSATION FOR PURPOSES OF THE
EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes S.B. 1269, S.D. 1, which changes the definition of "compensation" when calculating employee retirement benefits by providing a graduated step-down calculation for current members and eliminates all additional compensation when calculating retirement benefits for new members.

Per the Personal Rights and Representation article in our Collective Bargaining Agreements, "the Employee shall have the right to refuse for good cause as determined by the Employer to work overtime" [emphasis added]. Per contract, although an employee can refuse overtime, it is the Employer's prerogative to determine if the refusal is for good cause. In some cases, our members are not afforded the option to refuse overtime, and are required to work half-shifts prior to or after their regular shift. In other cases, Employees are required to work back-to-back double shifts due to staff shortages or for health and safety reasons. Our members provide critical services to the community and should be adequately compensated; both immediately in compensatory time off or overtime pay, and also in retirement benefit calculations that accurately reflect the Employee's work.

While we realize and understand the need for comprehensive reform to address the Employees' Retirement System's unfunded liability, it is incongruous to force an individual to work overtime and not count the overtime hours toward their final retirement calculation. We respectfully urge the committee to defer this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong opposition of S.B. 1269, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

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Executive Director