

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



SUNSHINE P.W. TOPPING
INTERIM DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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February 7, 2011

TESTIMONY TO THE

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

For Hearing on Tuesday, February 8, 2011
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 016

BY

SUNSHINE P.W. TOPPING
INTERIM DIRECTOR

Senate Bill No. 936
Relating to Aging

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TO CHAIRPERSON SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The purpose of SB 936 is to establish a Department of Aging to consolidate publicly-funded program and services that would appropriately fall within the jurisdiction of a new Department of Aging.

The Department of Human Resources Development has **comments** on the proposed transfer. To protect the rights and benefits of the employees to be transferred, we prefer the following proposed transfer language be used in place of the third and fourth paragraphs of Section 7 of the bill:

"All employees who occupy civil service positions
and whose functions are transferred to the department of

Aging by this Act shall retain their civil service status (permanent or temporary). Employees shall be transferred without loss of salary, seniority, retention points, prior service credit, any vacation and sick leave credits previously earned, and other rights, benefits, and privileges, in accordance with state personnel laws and this Act, provided that the employees possess the minimum qualifications and public employment requirements for the class and/or position to which transferred or appointed, as applicable, provided further that subsequent changes in status may be made pursuant to applicable civil service and compensation laws.

Any employee who, prior to this Act, is exempt from civil service and is transferred as a consequence of this Act, may continue to retain the employee's exempt status, but shall not be appointed to a civil service position because of this Act. An exempt employee who is transferred by this Act shall not suffer any loss of prior service credit, any vacation and sick leave credits previously earned, or other employee benefits or privileges as a consequence of this Act, provided that the employees possess legal and public employment requirements for the position to which transferred or appointed, as applicable; provided that subsequent changes in status may be made pursuant to applicable employment and compensation laws. The director of department of aging may prescribe the duties and qualifications of such employees and fix their salaries without regard to chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes."

Thank you for opportunity to offer comments on this measure.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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Committee on Human Services

SB936, RELATING TO AGING

Testimony of Wes Lum
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to Department of Health

Tuesday, February 8, 2011

2:00 p.m.

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), while supporting the intent of this
2 measure, requests that this bill be held. Instead, EOA recommends that a concurrent resolution be
3 introduced that studies the feasibility of establishing a Department of Aging and Disability.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** The Abercrombie Administration's priority, as articulated in "A
5 New Day in Hawaii," is to reinvigorate the EOA. While we recognize that the population
6 projections by the year 2030 will have a truly significant impact on Hawaii's current physical
7 infrastructure and systems of service, and a Department of Aging may be the appropriate
8 governmental agency to address the magnitude of issues facing an aging society, EOA believes
9 that the first step is to improve the current state of aging policy development, evaluation, and
10 development of community partnerships.

11 We believe that reinvigorating EOA to become the key leader solely responsible for the
12 performance, development, and control of programs, policies, and activities on behalf of elders is a
13 necessary first step toward departmental-level attention.

1 Therefore, EOA requests that this measure be held, and that a concurrent resolution be
2 drafted to study the feasibility of establishing a Department of Aging and Disability. This would
3 enable EOA and other stakeholders to continue the discussion on this very important issue.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

#The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2011

THE SENATE
Committee on Human Services
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Suzanne Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 016
Tuesday, February 8, 2011; 2:00 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 936
RELATING TO AGING**

The ILWU Local 142 supports the intent of S.B. 936, which establishes a Department of Aging to consolidate publicly-funded programs and services that would appropriate fall within the jurisdiction of a new Department of Aging.

As the oldest "baby boomers" reach age 65 this year, Hawaii needs to be prepared for what has been termed a "tsunami of aging." With more older folks in Hawaii, there will be greater need for more services and programs to address their needs and concerns. Coordination will be critical to avoid duplication and wasted effort. Establishment of a Department of Aging will demonstrate that the State recognizes the problem and is seeking to address it.

However, we fully recognize the State's budgetary constraints (even as it considers taxing pensions) and understand that establishing a Department of Aging may not be in the cards for this year. We are confident, though, that the Executive Office of Aging under the new Administration will do its best to link up and coordinate with other agencies.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Before there were such laws governing adoption here in Hawaii, there was the practice of hanai, whereby everything was out in the open. Children never lost access to their information. Birth parents could watch their children grow and answer all their questions and adoptive parents would have that same access to information and support. I've come to believe from my own experiences and that of others, the Hawaiian people had it right.

So to acknowledge the sacrifices and honor the worth of all adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents who understand that only with truth and full disclosure, we can all be set free, I am determined to continue to work towards helping others to heal and find their own truths.

Mahalo nui loa for taking the time to read my testimony and I hope you will support this bill.

ChunOakland2 - Tyrell

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 07, 2011 3:59 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: manis1350@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB936 on 2/8/2011 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for HMS 2/8/2011 2:00:00 PM SB936

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: comments only
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: LAURA MANIS
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Submitted on: 2/7/2011

Comments:

HARA (Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans) understands that the State of Hawaii cannot afford to raise levels of administrators. However, we wish to go on record as stating the value of this bill in raising the awareness that the elderly population of Hawaii is growing and requiring more services. In a better year, the Executive Office on Aging should have a more direct and stronger voice in policy decisions affecting the elderly. This bill takes the first step in the right direction.

February 7, 2010

Committee on Human Services

Strong Support for Senate Bill No. 936- Establish a Department of Aging

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice-Chair Ihara and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Kamida and I am a student at the University of Hawaii, School of Social Work. Also, I am currently an intern with the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). Based on the experiences working in the office, I am in strong favor of this bill, designed to consolidate programs and services for older adults under the Department of Aging.

The elder population is continuously increasing. It is projected that in 2030, people 65 years and older will increase by 81 percent. In addition, currently it is estimated that there is one older adult for every four people in Hawaii. In the year 2030, it is projected that there will be one older adult for every two people.

This bill will make an impact on the growing elder population in the state of Hawaii for the better. If resources, programs and services are consolidated under one department, members of the community can locate these services more efficiently. In the year 2000, the EOA reported older adults “tend to spend more than they save and expect to rely at least partially on entitlement programs to survive their old age.” With this known trend, this department would provide individuals and families to receive quicker services and lessening the percentage of people being referred from one agency to another. Although cost is a factor in the consideration of this bill, we will head for greater disaster if we do not prepare for the aging tsunami that has only begun. The elder population will only continue to grow and is living longer.

With my experiences working in the EOA, I have observed many difficulties when one tries pursuing elder agendas conflicting with the mission of the Department of Health. Having a Department of Aging will enable workers total autonomy from any hindrances in advocating for the elderly. This will only benefit the elder population who often cannot advocate for themselves. A department for the aging will provide the state with a plethora of knowledgeable workers about aging and workers who are concerned about the welfare of our Kupuna. In creating a Department of Aging, opportunities will arise benefiting this population, support for caregivers, and preparation for the future of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of S.B. No. 936.