

LATE TESTIMONY

Twenty-Seventh Legislature
Regular Session of 2013

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference 308
Wednesday, February 13, 2013; 2:00 p.m.

STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 918 RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FUND

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 918, which allows Employment and Training Fund moneys collected for the purpose of paying interest assessments on loans to the Unemployment Trust Fund to be used for a period of one year for costs to administer, manage, report, and oversee Workforce Investment Act programs.

In anticipation of the need to borrow from the federal government to pay for unemployment benefits when the State's Trust Fund was depleted, the Legislature authorized assessments to cover interest payments that may have been required. However, only a small portion of the amount collected was used for that purpose.

In the meantime, the federal government severely reduced Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding for administration of WIA programs in Hawaii. These programs assist dislocated workers laid off due to plant closures and downsizing and low-income individuals who need employment. WIA services include occupational training, basic education, pre-employment workshops, information on the job market, job placement, and a host of other activities for jobseekers. In addition, WIA programs also assist employers seeking qualified employees. Furthermore, federal WIA funds facilitate partnerships among public and private agencies to provide services and foster collaboration.

However, federal funding requires monitoring, reporting, coordination, and accountability yet funding for administrative functions were slashed. H.B. 918 proposes to use surplus funds in the Employment and Training Fund on a temporary basis to pay for those administrative services.

The ILWU believes this is a prudent use of resources and urges passage of H.B. 918. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.