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THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2013
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Testimony by
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

S.B. No. 885 RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.

My name is Robert H. Lee and I am the President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO. HFFA represents the 3,100 active and retired professional fire fighters throughout the State. HFFA supports S.B. No. 885, which amends section 89-9, HRS, to allow disputes over contributions to the Hawaii employer-union health benefits trust fund to be settled by way of arbitration as provided in section 89-11, HRS.

HFFA believes that this bill encourages more meaningful discussion and possible settlement during the negotiation process relating to employer contributions to the EUTF. Furthermore, this bill provides the arbitration panel the ability to decide on the employer contributions to the EUTF inclusive in the total award.

We respectfully request the Committee pass S.B. No. 885. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Friday, February 1, 2013
10:30 a.m.

By
Dr. Linda K. Johnsrud
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost
University of Hawai'i

SB 885 RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chair Hee and Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, I am submitting written testimony on behalf of the University of Hawai'i regarding Senate Bill 885 – Relating to Collective Bargaining which proposes to amend HRS, Chapter 89, by making housekeeping amendments regarding the scope of negotiations and transfers the authority from the Legislature to an arbitration panel to decide upon the amount of employer contributions toward the Hawai'i Employer-Union Benefit Trust Fund (EUTF) in cases of disputes or impasses to bargaining units subject to interest arbitration.

The University of Hawai'i has reservations regarding the impact, intended or otherwise, of the proposed legislation if enacted.

The University of Hawai'i has covered employees in Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Units 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 are all subject to interest arbitration while Unit 1 and 7 have the right to strike to resolve disputes or impasses over bargaining over successor contracts. Unit 7 and 8 consists of employees who work only for the University of Hawai'i system, and thus, we are considered their only employer.

Currently, the Legislature has the sole authority to decide upon the amount of employer contributions made to the EUTF if the parties are unable to resolve this issue during interest arbitration. This allows the Legislature to consider and take into account the amount of employer EUTF contributions that are being made or are going to be made to other bargaining units, as well as, its priority in the overall budget. The Legislature's decision is final and binding and these interest arbitration units cannot participate in a strike over the issue of employer EUTF contributions. The proposed legislation, if enacted, will allow an arbitration panel to decide on these amounts during the interest arbitration proceedings as a cost item subject to Legislative funding. With six bargaining units within the University subject to interest arbitration, it could be a possibility that all six will be subject to different arbitration panels. That outcome could lead to having all six arbitration decisions on employer EUTF contributions differ or vary from one bargaining unit to the next. This would be an administrative nightmare that