



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2014

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
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NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, April 01, 2014
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

From: Diana Benningfield

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1 Relating to leaves of absence

My name is Diana Benningfield. I am a non-directed living kidney donor employed with the National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii. I am passionate about the need for organ donation and especially for the need for living donors. Approximately 90% of all people awaiting a transplant are waiting for kidneys. As a member of the Hawaii Organ Transplant Council, Hawaii Coalition on Donation and the Hawaii Living Donor Council, I see the results a transplant can have in the life of the transplant recipient and in the members of their family. Transplantation does not lead to people merely surviving. Rather, the gift of transplantation results in lives filled with health, gratitude and most often, a meaningful contribution to their communities and families.

I strongly support SB 1233 HD1 which requires certain private employers to allow employees to take paid leaves of absence for organ, bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cell donation. The National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii already has a policy for leave for this purpose and I was fortunate that I never had to address the fear of not receiving a paycheck. With the many considerations a donor must face, it is comforting not to have to think about that issue. As an administrator, I fully understand the Employers need to keep costs in line, but I believe it is imperative to give assistance

to someone willing to donate an organ to save someone's life. I cannot tell you how many times someone has called me for information or assistance to help pay their bills while they were out of work after donating an organ to their child, family member or friend. It is heart breaking to have to tell them there is not an avenue to pursue. I have seen several transplants fail to take place because the donor could not afford to take 30 days off for recovery.

I urge the committee to pass SB 1233. It is an important step toward removing another barrier to organ and tissue donation and saving lives in Hawaii.

Thank you for your serious and thoughtful consideration of the bill and submitted testimony. I can be reached at 589-5961 or Diana@kidneyhi.org for additional information or questions.

Sincerely,

Diana Benningfield
Director of Organizational Planning and Operations
National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii

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DATE: Tuesday, April 01, 2014
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 308
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415 South Beretania Street

Date: March 31, 2014

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1

Relating to leaves of absence

Submitted By: Roy Yonashiro

My name is Roy Yonashiro. I am employed by the Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry and my position here is that of Recruitment Specialist.

I am writing to register my support for **S1233**, HD1. I strongly feel that this bill will greatly benefit those volunteer donors of bone marrow, blood stem cells and living organs such as kidney. This bill will require certain private employers to grant paid time off for those employees who selflessly donate to save the lives of others in need.

Often, most donors must use their own personal vacation time or sick leave time off to donate. It puts a huge burden on the donor and if they cannot afford to take the time off of work, they are forced not to donate. In these difficult economic times, everyone is faced with financial obligations that limit their altruistic ways. More and more non-profit organizations such as the Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry, The National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii and The Legacy of Life depend on the public to support our mission of saving lives. This bill will help encourage so many people to become donors by eliminating that fear of losing income in order to help another person.

Based on my experience working with donors and patients, I know this bill will help so many people in need.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony. I can be reached at 808-741-1163 or roy.yonashiro@hbmdr.org for additional information or questions.

Sincerely,

Roy Yonashiro
Recruitment Specialist
Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry

finance1

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2014 11:14 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: kamakane73@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB1233 on Apr 1, 2014 14:00PM*

SB1233

Submitted on: 3/31/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 1, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kama Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1

Relating to leaves of absence

Submitted by: Karen S. Ochiai

I am writing to register my support for SB 1233, authored by Senator Glenn Wakai. SB 1233 will greatly support and allow volunteer donors of bone marrow, blood stem cells and living organs to do so with minimal financial constraints. This bill will require certain private employers to grant paid time off for those employees who donate to save the life of their fellow human being.

I donated my bone marrow on February 10, 2010 and was able to do so without worrying about my financial obligations because my employer fully supported me by allowing me the time off with pay. I do understand that most donors must use their own personal vacation time or sick leave time off to donate. It really puts a huge burden on the donor, and if they are not allowed to take time off with pay, they may be forced not to donate and save a life.

I believe that we need public support in helping such fine non-profit organizations as the Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry, The National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii and the Legacy of Life with their mission of saving lives. When a barrier such as the loss of essential income is eliminated, more donors would be able to help other persons in need of life-saving procedures.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen S. Ochiai
Bone Marrow Donor
Cell: 808-352-5000

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NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, April 01, 2014
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PLACE: Conference Room 308
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415 South Beretania Street

From: Sandy Webster

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1 Relating to leaves of absence

Date: March 31, 2014

Comments: Aloha -I am writing in support of SB1233 – leave of absence for organ, bone marrow and stem cell donation. I am the recipient of 2 kidney transplants from living donors, my first in 1977 from my father and 1995 from my husband. Both my donors had quick and unremarkable recoveries and I’m still living life to the fullest. After we moved to Hawaii in 1999, we became involved with promoting organ donation. It was immediately apparent to us that there are organ donation challenges unlike the rest of the mainland. The best opportunity for any man, woman or child in Hawaii in need of a Gift of Life donation is to find a living donor. Unfortunately, I've heard potential donors express their concerns regarding no income while away from work recovering. No potential living donor should stress over deciding how to weigh the options of “missing work vs. saving a life.” I have met countless living donors and they all say that donating was the most rewarding life event and the decision should be easy without having to second guess being away from work. Passage of SB1233 will help ease the decision to become a living organ donor and offer the Gift of Life to family members, friends, and who knows ... maybe even the person from the coffee shop! With the Gift of Life, recipients can live normal, long, productive lives ... I am proof of that. Mahalo -
Sandy Webster

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Date: March 31, 2014

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1
Relating to leaves of absence

From: David I Yamada
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: **Roy Yonashiro** roy.yonashiro@hbmdr.org

Testimony for HTH

Employment; Leave of Absence; Organ, Bone Marrow, or Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Donation

Aloha, my name is David I. Yamada and I am a two (2)-time Bone Marrow donor. I was fortunate and extremely lucky to have been a match for an unrelated recipient in 1999. The Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry contacted me after my potential match was discovered in the San Francisco Bay Area AADP (joined the Asian American Donor Program 4 years earlier) shortly after my relocation back to Hawaii. I had just buried my father at the Punchbowl after succumbing from Multiple Myeloma Bone Marrow Cancer! I was his caregiver that could not save him nor comfort him from his devastating disease.

Alas, my redemption was granted before me in this miracle to serve someone else. It would be a travesty for a recipient to lose their struggle due to a company not supporting or allowing their employee to take the time off without the worry of pay or retribution from work.

Upon the initial meeting and introduction of the process and examination with the HBMDR, there were times where it was necessary to leave work to complete the critical time sensitive procedure promptly. As a Store Manager at the time, it was very difficult to leave work. However, through special personal concessions I made with employer and owners of the company I was able to proceed with all the requirements to donate.

If I may stress the need to understand that a human life is at stake, the potential donors must and should have the understanding and the support of their employer and community at large.

It is imperative that you reconsider this measure to help save lives. I beseech your empathy on behalf of all the families who have endured this wretched chapter in their once peaceful existence.

My recipient and her family have been blessed with a healthy recovery and live a full life! I was granted the gift of meeting her and her Ohana from around the world a few years after her transplant here in Hawaii. I now have a daughter!

If I may be so bold as to challenge anyone of you who have any doubts as to whether this Bill 1233 is worth the trouble or validity, please attend a first time meeting of a donor and recipient. There were no dry eyes in the room! My heart is full....

I appreciate your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

David I. Yamada-2 time donor

Pharmacy Technician



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2014 4:14 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: Mespinda@queens.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1233 on Apr 1, 2014 14:00PM

SB1233

Submitted on: 3/31/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 1, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Malia Espinda	The Queens Health Systems	Comments Only	No

Comments: Queen's takes no position on the bill. Since reopening the Transplant Center in 2012 to 2014/current, there have been 103 organ transplants.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: Dr. Whitney Limm

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1233 HD1 Relating to leaves of absence

My name is Whitney Limm. I am a physician at Queens Medical Center. I have been affiliated with the transplant team in Hawaii for many years and I appreciate the steps that the Legislature has taken to insure that transplantation continues to be an option for the people of Hawaii.

Over 400 people are waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Most are dependent on deceased donor organs. The average waiting time is based on blood type. For blood type B, a common type among Asians, the wait time is 10 years. That means over 1500 dialysis sessions while waiting.

The complication rates for donations are extremely low and the requested time off will allow donors to have a full recovery.

Since the State adopted the policy, less than a handful of employees, to my knowledge, have used the benefit. At most, 40 to 50 people will be donating (split between kidney and bone marrow) annually, and not all donors are employed. **I strongly support SB 1233, HD1** which requires certain private employers to allow employees to take paid leaves of absence for organ, bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cell donation.

I urge the committee to pass SB 1233, HD1. It is an important step toward removing another barrier to organ & tissue donation and saving lives in Hawaii.

Thank you for your serious and thoughtful consideration of the bill and submitted testimony. I can be reached at 808-691-7715 or limm@queens.org for additional information or questions.

Sincerely,

Whitney Limm, MD



LATE

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1233, HD 1
RELATING TO LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

by

Stephen A. Kula, Ph.D., NHA
President and CEO
Legacy of Life Hawaii

House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Representative Aaron Ling Johansen, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 1, 2014; 2 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johansen, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of Legacy of Life Hawaii in strong support of SB 1233, HD 1, requiring private employers to allow employees to take leaves of absence for organ, bone marrow, or blood stem cell donation. Legacy of Life Hawaii also supports the requirement that restores employees returning from leave to the same or equivalent position and the employees' right of action to seek enforcement of these provisions.

For 25 years Legacy of Life Hawaii has been saving lives through the generosity of organ and tissue donors who have given the Gift of Life so others may live. Ultimately this measure will encourage more people to serve as donors and help save the lives of too many critically ill patients in need of transplants.

I, therefore, urge this committee to give SB 1233, HD 1 your favorable consideration. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of Legacy of Life Hawaii in strong support.

405 N. Kuakini Street, Suite 810 Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: (808) 599-7630 Toll Free: (877) 855-0603 Fax: (808) 599-7631

legacyoflifehawaii.org

