



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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LATE TESTIMONY

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
March 15, 2016

H.B. 2353, H.D. 2 – RELATING TO EXEMPTIONS
FROM CIVIL SERVICE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes the purpose and intent of H.B. 2353, H.D. 2, which is to expand the number of positions exempt from civil service in various state departments. The expansion of exempt positions in state government is in direct conflict with Article XVI, Section 1 of the Hawaii State Constitution and Chapter 76, HRS, which establishes a merit-based civil service system free from coercive political influences.

The use of exempt employees, which are considered "at will" by the state, is completely contrary to the principles of civil service. Exempt employees do not have the same rights and benefits of civil service employees and that is inherently unfair. For over a decade, we have consistently opposed the creation of more exempt positions in state government, while simultaneously advocating for civil service reform. Exempt employees should not be "at will" and we recommend that the Legislature end this practice.

According to the most recent report submitted to the Legislature by DHRD, there are 2,796 exempt positions in state government. We estimate that about 18% of all positions in the personnel system administered by DHRD are exempt. That is almost one out of every five positions, and that ratio is even higher in Bargaining Unit 13. California, which has more than 200,000 state employees in 21 bargaining units, limits their exempt employee count to one-half of one percent of its workforce.

Instead of establishing more exempt positions, the civil service system must become more flexible and competitive. For example, the HGEA is now working with DHRD to negotiate a separate salary schedule in Unit 13 for clinical psychologists, physicians, psychiatrists. Doing so is not difficult and other states have successfully incorporated these classes within civil service. Surely, Hawaii can do the same. The answer to the challenges faced by these state departments is not the creation of more exempt employees, but substantive reform of the state's civil service system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of H.B. 2353, H.D. 2. We respectfully request that the Committee defer this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



LATE TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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Cc:
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HB2353

Submitted on: 3/15/2016

Testimony for JDL on Mar 15, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jim Hayden	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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