



HB535
RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

February 3, 2015

9:00 a.m.

Room 309

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend to the Board of Trustees a position of **SUPPORT** for HB535. By allowing 12 weeks of partially-paid leave for employees with a newborn infant or who must care for a close relative, this measure would support family relationships and responsibilities consistent with Native Hawaiian concepts of ‘ohana. The employee-contribution nature of the trust fund established by this measure will also minimize costs to employers, who will also be better able to retain employees with valuable training and job-specific skills.

Every working family has at one time experienced the demands of caring for and nurturing a newborn child, or the impact of a sudden illness in the family, or the hardships of caring for elderly and incapacitated parents. Native Hawaiian and local ‘ohana values emphasize the need to support one’s family, particularly in such times of adversity. Unfortunately, often the only options for working families to do so are to either scrape together available sick or vacation leave, which is often inadequate, or leave their jobs.

For this reason, we appreciate the provisions in this measure, which will alleviate the economic hardship for Native Hawaiian and other families who may be facing some of the most difficult times of their lives. The wage replacement and job security provided in this measure will allow employees to better care for their newborn child or ailing parent or spouse, without sacrificing their financial security.

While this measure supports families, it is also a cost effective solution for employers. With the employee-funded provisions of the proposed trust fund, employers would not be required to contribute to the employee’s wage replacement income, similar to the Temporary Disability Insurance program currently maintained by the state. At the same time, paid family leave helps to retain good employees, reducing turnover costs. A 2011 study of California’s family leave program found that it would save employers \$89 million a year, by improving employee retention and avoiding the costs of hiring and training new employees.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB535. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature
Regular Session of 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
Rep. Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 309
Tuesday, February 3, 2015; 9:00 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 535
RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT**

The ILWU Local 142 supports the intent of H.B. 535, which requires twelve weeks of family leave, establishes a partial wage replacement for leave trust fund funded by employee wage withholdings, uses the trust fund to provide partial wage replacement for the weeks of family leave that are unpaid, and appropriates moneys to administer the trust fund.

This bill amends the Hawaii Family Leave Law with regard to eligibility and leave. We believe these changes are appropriate, given the importance of providing for family leave. In Hawaii, caring for family members is a part of our culture, which is why so many family caregivers are impacted by either having to take leave from work or quitting their jobs altogether.

One issue that this bill does not address is how family leave under the Hawaii Family Leave Law is applied. Instead of allowing an employee who is eligible for both the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Hawaii Family Leave Law (HFLL) to apply the leaves consecutively, employers apply the leaves concurrently—in effect, disallowing the use of HFLL leave. Not only is family leave unpaid, this quirk of application eliminates the effect of the state law.

The ILWU urges passage of H.B. 535 with these two considerations: (1) will employee contributions will be sufficient to pay benefits?; and (2) can the law be amended to require that HFLL leave be applied after FMLA is exhausted?

Thank you for considering our testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2015 8:51 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kstofocik@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB535 on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM

HB535

Submitted on: 1/29/2015

Testimony for LAB on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Stofocik	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Supporting paid family leave just makes sense. I am fully supportive of paid family leave in Hawaii because it will provide the hard-workers of Hawaii an opportunity to care for their family by being there and emotionally supporting their children or elder ly parents. If you believe families need to support their children, be there for their children, and take time to educate their children, then supporting paid family leave will help Hawaii's hard working families get this process started from the moment they bring their child home. Please show your commitment and support for every child and working family in Hawaii by providing paid family leave.

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: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 2:36 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: paulwfitzgerald@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB535 on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM

HB535

Submitted on: 1/30/2015

Testimony for LAB on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PAUL FITZGERALD	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This is an important step to ensure Hawai'i puts families first.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2015 4:45 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: cuyungl88@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB535 on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM*

HB535

Submitted on: 2/1/2015

Testimony for LAB on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cu Yung Lee	Planned Parenthood Young Leaders	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 8:12 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: kategering@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB535 on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM*

HB535

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for LAB on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
katelin hartgering	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 12:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: alemke@outlook.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB535 on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM

HB535

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for LAB on Feb 3, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aurora Lemke	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this bill. Working families need to be valued and this bill would help to show that value. Many families have to choose work over taking care of their families and that is not a good thing. I would contribute my taxes to this. Thank you.

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