

Hawai'i Construction Alliance

LATE TESTIMONY

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March 13, 2017

The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
and members

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: Strong Support for HB1208 HD2, Relating to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members:

The Hawai'i Construction Alliance is comprised of the Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters; the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 368; the Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' Union, Local 630; International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, Local 1; and the Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 3. Together, the member unions of the Hawai'i Construction Alliance represent 15,000 working men and women in the basic crafts of Hawai'i's construction industry.

We strongly support HB1208 HD2, which would appropriate funds for some number of full-time equivalent enforcement specialist IV positions to be primarily responsible for the enforcement of Hawaii's workers' compensation, temporary disability insurance, and prepaid health care laws.

The Hawai'i Construction Alliance has been extremely concerned by the increasing problem of unscrupulous employers not following laws designed to protect the health and safety of Hawai'i workers.

As you know, it is far too common for employers in Hawai'i — particularly in the construction industry — to not provide employees with temporary disability insurance, workers' compensation coverage, or prepaid healthcare. Often, this is due to employers fraudulently misclassifying workers as "independent contractors" or willfully neglecting to provide such coverage in an attempt to cut costs and retain profits. This sort of behavior is unacceptable and actively harms Hawai'i workers and families.

Additional enforcement specialist positions would help DLIR to more efficiently process claims; to ensure timely provision of medical services and payment of benefits to injured workers; employer compliance with workers' compensation, temporary disability insurance, and prepaid health care insurance coverage requirements; and to monitor health plans to ensure employees are provided with the benefits that are required under the prepaid health care law.

Therefore, we strongly ask for your committee's favorable action on HB1208 HD2.

Mahalo,



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam
Executive Director