

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2697 HD2, RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN, JR.  
DIRECTOR OF STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

April 4, 2018  
10:30 a.m.

Good morning, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services. I appreciate this opportunity to provide written testimony **in support** of the concepts in House Bill 2697 HD2.

This measure requires the Office of Veterans' Services to organize, coordinate, and conduct a biennial State of Hawaii Veterans Summit. During the State Veterans Summit, healthcare and supportive services from all echelons to include Federal, State, County and private non-profit agencies would be able to brief, educate and interact with Veterans and their loved ones. Veterans Affairs (VA) and the State Office of Veterans Services would be able to update Veterans and their families on the latest changes dealing with healthcare (i.e. telemedicine) and brief on the disability claims and appeals process. Connecting Veterans with vital services, conducting workshops, offering support meetings, employment information, cultural activities and ceremonies, guest speakers, Veterans benefits coordination, Social Security briefings, addressing Veterans Homelessness and Women Veterans discussions are all potential agenda items for the Summit.

The OVS supports the concepts and intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families.

**HB-2697-HD-2**

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 4:07:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

**Comments:**

To the Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Good morning, my name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No. 2697 HD2, relating to Veterans; Office of Veterans' Services; and Veterans Summit.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in support of House Bill No. 2697 HD2 and supports its passage.

House Bill No. 2697 HD2 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH") as it requires the Office of Veterans' Services to organize, coordinate, and conduct a biennial State of Hawaii Veterans Summit to to discuss and collaborate on all issues affecting veterans, their families and dependents, including, among other things, the benefits, rights, and services which are available to veterans, and appropriates funds.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that we "[t]he Armed Forces in Hawai'i and their families sacrifice to serve and defend our country and to help us in time of need. Hawai'i should honor their service by strongly supporting the best possible care of wounded and disabled veterans. We therefore support efforts to keep our Veteran's Hospitals fully funded.

We honor the service of all of our military members." (Platform of the DPH, P. 10, Lines 530-534 (2016)).

Given that House Bill No.2697 HD2 requires the Office of Veterans' Services to organize, coordinate, and conduct a biennial State of Hawaii Veterans Summit to discuss and collaborate on all issues affecting veterans, their families and dependents, including, among other things, the benefits, rights, and services which are available to

veterans, and appropriates funds, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

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