



LATE

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Board of Directors:

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action supports: SB3023, SD1

Gary L. Hooser
President

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committees,

Andrea N. Brower
Ikaika M. Hussey
Co-Vice Presidents

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) supports of SB3023 SD1, which would include persons with disabilities under the minimum wage requirements.

Kim Coco Iwamoto
Treasurer

Current labor laws unjustly prohibit workers with disabilities from reaching their full vocational and socioeconomic potential. Written in 1938, Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) discriminates against people with disabilities. The provision allows the Secretary of Labor to grant Special Wage Certificates to employers, permitting them to pay workers with disabilities less than the federal minimum wage. This is based on the false assumption that disabled workers are less productive than nondisabled workers, but successful employment models have emerged in the last seventy-five years to assist people with significant disabilities in acquiring the job skills needed for competitive work. Section 14(c) sustains segregated subminimum wage workshops that exploit disabled workers, paying some only pennies an hour for mundane, repetitive tasks.

Bart E. Dame
Secretary

Paul Achitoff

Malia K. Chun
Laura Harrelson

The subminimum wage model fails to provide adequate training or employment to disabled workers. Data shows that less than five percent of the four-hundred thousand workers with disabilities in segregated subminimum wage workshops will transition into competitive integrated work. Moreover, research shows that the subminimum wage model costs more but actually produces less! In fact, workers must unlearn the useless skills they acquire in order to obtain meaningful employment. It is poor policy to reward such failed programs with wage exemptions, preferential federal contracts, and public and charitable contributions.

Katie McMillan
Walter Ritte Jr.

Karen Shishido

Leslie Malu Shizue Miki
Kekaulike Prosper Tomich

After more than seventy-five years of demonstrated failure, it is time to invest in proven, effective models for employment. Please support SB 3023, SD1 and support fair wages for workers with disabilities.

Cade Watanabe

Best Regards,

Anne Frederick, Executive Director
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action

The Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) is a public non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. HAPA's mission is to catalyze community empowerment and systemic change towards valuing 'aina (environment) and people ahead of corporate profit.