

SB-149-SD-1

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Testimony for WAM on 2/21/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirtieth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 22, 2019

S.B. 149, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE COUNCIL

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes Section 2 of S.B. 149, S.D. 1 which allows the State Fire Council to employ staff exempt from collective bargaining and civil service.

Section 2 of S.B. 149, S.D. 1 allows the State Fire Council to employ an administrator, administrative assistant, and other staff without regard to Chapters 76 and 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Exempting employees from civil service and excluding employees from the right to collectively bargain creates a government workplace of “at will” employment with minimal employee rights. While we can understand that an administrator or management position could be “at will,” we oppose denying employment protections for administrative assistants and “other staff” as stated in this measure, without having further information on the classification of these positions. Collectively, the expansion of excluding and exempting positions in state government is in direct conflict with the Article XVI, Section 1 of the Hawaii State Constitution and state law which establish a merit-based civil service system free from coercive political influences.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to Section 2 of S.B. 149.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



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February 21, 2019

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 149, Senate Draft (SD) 1 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Manuel P. Neves, Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support SB 149, SD1, which proposes to revise the statutory language to allow flexibility in hiring personnel to accomplish the responsibilities of the SFC. It would also allow a county fire department to employ personnel and the allotted funds to be used for office equipment and supplies.

The SFC was established by the Hawaii State Legislature in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's (SFM) office. It is comprised of the four county Fire Chiefs, administratively attached to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and Hawaii's equivalent of an SFM.

The current language allows the SFC to employ full-time personnel and specifies the positions as an Administrator and Administrative Assistant. This bill proposes to revise the language to include employing part-time personnel or other staff. This would allow hiring personnel based on the allotted funding and the classification of such personnel the responsibility of the hiring agency. It will also authorize the SFC to contract with any county fire department to employ personnel to accomplish the duties and responsibilities of the SFC.

The SFC and the HFD urges your committee's support on the passage of SB 149, SD 1.

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
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Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or lrogers@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Neves', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MANUEL P. NEVES
Chair

MPN/LR:clc