



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
February 15, 2023

The Honorable Representative Adrian Tam, Chair
House Committee on Culture, Arts & International Affairs
And
The Honorable Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
House Committee on Health & Homelessness
The Thirty-Second Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Tam, Representative Belatti, and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: HB794 Relating to Disability Awareness.

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **offers comments for HB794**, which Designates the month of October as “Disability Awareness Month: Employment, Enrichment, and Inclusion” in recognition of the employment challenges and successes of persons with disabilities in the State.

The Council supports this measure’s goal of supporting and bringing awareness to our working-age disability population. People with disabilities still face disparities in our workforce and, on average, earn less per year than their peers. Our intellectual and developmental disability population still faces challenges finding gainful employment and face unnecessary barriers to our workforce in Hawai'i. However, October is already established as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), and our State has recognized this through proclamations from the Governor and our Mayors.

NDEAM was created to educate the general public on the issues that workers with disabilities face and how employers can be more inclusive in their hiring practices. This tradition started in 1945 with Public Law 176 from congress. This month has taken many forms over the years and currently resides in the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), which has been in charge of the month and its theme since 2001. This year makes 76 years since the first NDEAM was celebrated.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony that **offers comments for HB794**.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus

Executive Administrator

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 794
Relating to Disability Awareness

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, ARTS, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN K. TAM, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE ROSE MARTINEZ, VICE CHAIR

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS
REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing Date: February 15, 2023
10:15 AM

Room Number: 309
Via Videoconference

EOA's Position: The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of Health, supports HB794, related to Disability Awareness.

Fiscal Implications: This measure does not include an appropriation request.

Purpose and Justification: The purpose of this Act is to designate the month of October as "Disability Awareness Month: Employment, Enrichment, and Inclusion" in recognition of the employment challenges and successes of persons with disabilities in the State. The measure amends Chapter 8, HRS to add a new section for this designation.

Employment enrichment and inclusion are important words for people with disabilities.

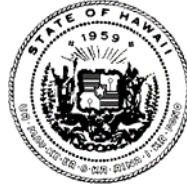
Opportunities to recognize and acknowledge the accomplishments and successes of individuals with disabilities in employment helps to reduce the barriers associated with employment and provide resources in support of employment opportunities.

Disability Awareness month would help to educate the community about people with disabilities and encourage more inclusive employment.

Recommendation: EOA appreciates the committee scheduling this bill for a hearing and supports the bill moving forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 13, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Adrian K. Tam, Chair
Committee On Culture, Arts & International Affairs

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 794 – RELATING TO DISABILITY AWARENESS.**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 10:15 a.m.
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to designate the month of October as "Disability Awareness Month: Employment, Enrichment, and Inclusion" in recognition of the employment challenges and successes of persons with disabilities in the State.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 5 adult residents in Hawaii (over 258,000) identifies as having at least one disability that could affect their ability to work. These residents with disabilities represent the diverse demographics of our state, with many of them successfully employed as role models to other people with disabilities. One of the benefits of Disability Awareness Month will be to shine a spotlight on those people with disabilities in Hawai'i, along with employers who continue their commitment to having an inclusive workforce. This bill will hopefully motivate and encourage the business and educational communities to engage in strengthening the inclusion of people with disabilities in Hawai'i's workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HB-794

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 9:32:48 PM

Testimony for CAI on 2/15/2023 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support.

LATE

HB-794

Submitted on: 2/15/2023 8:37:44 AM

Testimony for CAI on 2/15/2023 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaili Swan	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

i strongly support HB794 Beacuse i work in the community and its unfair for people with disability to earn less pay check please pass this bill thank you.

HB-794

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 4:19:45 PM

Testimony for CAI on 2/15/2023 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the passage of HB 794 in recognition of the employment challenges and successes of persons with disabilities in the State. Individuals with disabilities want the same recognition and supports as non-disabled individuals living in Hawaii.

To: The House Committees on CULTURE, ARTS, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS and
HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS

Subject: HB 794 – RELATING TO DISABILITY AWARENESS

Hearing: February 15, 2023

Hello Chair Tam, Chair Belatti, and members of the Committees,

My name is Gabrielle Ulloa residing on the island of Guam and a student in the Master of Social Work Program, Distance Education Option at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa's Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. I am writing in support of HB 794 which seeks to recognize the employment challenges and successes of individuals with disabilities by designating the month of October as "Disability Awareness Month: Employment, Enrichment, and Inclusion."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 218,444 adults in Hawaii have a disability.¹ Disability awareness is an important part of establishing inclusion for people with disability, especially in the workplace. A study found that individuals with disabilities who disclosed their disability status at work experienced discriminatory behaviors such as coworker unease, inappropriate questions, and assumptions about their capability.² By highlighting the employment challenges experienced by individuals with disabilities, the community can work together with individuals with disabilities to create effective solutions to facilitate inclusion, positive attitudes, and ensure equity. By highlighting the successes of individuals with disabilities in the workplace, the community may be informed on the vast capabilities, skills, and strengths of individuals with disabilities in a variety of workplace settings. Fear and discomfort about interacting with individuals with disabilities are often due to lack of knowledge and stereotypes. The more informed people are on disabilities, the more comfortable and understanding they will likely be in interacting with an individual that has disability.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on HB 794.

Sincerely,


Gabrielle Ulloa

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, May 18). Disability & Health U.S. State Profile Data: Hawaii. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved February 8, 2023, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/hawaii.html>

² McKinney, E. L., & Swartz, L. (2019). Employment integration barriers: experiences of people with disabilities. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-23.

LATE

HB-794

Submitted on: 2/15/2023 12:26:22 AM

Testimony for CAI on 2/15/2023 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We don't need a day, month or year for things. Waste of governing body time

Thank you

Mrs Ruth Love