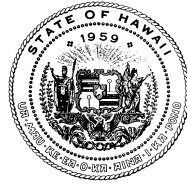


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII



KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.G.A., M.P.H.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY  
ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB2757 HD1  
RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE.**

REP. MARK M. NAKASHIMA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Hearing Date: February 14, 2024

Room Number: 329

- 1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the intent of a family leave
- 2 program in the State of Hawaii but defers to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on
- 3 specifics.
  
- 4 The benefits of paid leave are well established. Providing new parents with paid time off to care
- 5 for newborn or recently adopted children contributes to healthy development, improves maternal
- 6 health, and enhances families' economic security. Paid medical and caregiving leave lets
- 7 workers care for themselves and loved ones when ill or injured and reduces financial insecurity
- 8 and stress during those times; and benefits businesses by improving retention and productivity
- 9 and boosting labor force participation.
  
- 10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

February 14, 2024

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair,  
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2024  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 329, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: H.B. 2757 H.D.1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

The DLIR supports the intent of providing paid family leave but is opposed to this measure as drafted. HB2757 HD1 requires the department to establish and administer a family and medical leave insurance program and begin receiving claims and paying benefits by January 1, 2028. The DLIR would begin by collecting payroll contributions as a percentage of wages from both employers and employees by January 1, 2027, and administer a trust fund for contributions and the payment of benefits by January 1, 2028. HB2757 HD1 also, among other provisions:

- Contains an unspecified general fund loan for the program that the department would be required to pay back by December 31, 2029.
- Repeals the Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) Law (Chapter 392, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) on January 1, 2027.
- Amends the Prepaid Health Care Act (Chapter 393, HRS).
- Requires the coordination of benefits under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the Hawaii Family Leave Law (Chapter 398, HRS).
- Does not contain an appropriation or additional staffing to implement the law.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Hawaii Family Leave Law, Chapter 398, HRS, currently provides four weeks of protected leave and if offered by employer, allows the use of up to ten days of paid sick leave.

Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) law, Chapter 392, HRS, requires employers to obtain insurance that pays a wage replacement to an eligible employee who is unable to work due to the employee's own disability.

Prepaid Health Care Law (PHC), Chapter 393, HRS, requires that employers provide employees adequate medical coverage for non-work related illness or injury.

### **III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL**

The DLIR opposes the repeal of the TDI Law. Hawaii is one of five states with a TDI law for both private and public sector workers that was enacted in 1969 to partially replace wages lost when an employee is unable to work because of an off-the-job sickness or injury.

The department also opposes the conflict with Chapter 393, Prepaid Health Care Law, because -7(b) (pg. 13, lines 17 to pg. 14, line 5) requires PHC coverage to continue while the individual is on leave, working intermittently, or on a reduced schedule. Such a substantive change in the provision of Prepaid Health Care would risk the revocation of the exemption provided to Prepaid under the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). This could lead to the invalidation of the Prepaid Health Care Law and the loss of this groundbreaking healthcare law enacted in 1974 and a forerunner of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The proposal also conflicts with Chapter 398, Hawaii Family Leave Law. If a covered individual takes paid family leave under Chapter 398, HRS, by electing to substitute their accrued paid leave, and the reason for the leave is covered under both Chapter 398 and the proposed family leave insurance program, the covered individual could be paid both accrued paid leave and partial wage replacement benefits from the family leave insurance program.

The department also opposes the assignment of this responsibility without staffing resources. The DLIR estimates that approximately 120 staff would be required to implement and administer this program. Staffing is needed for employer account registration; contribution intake and processing; cashiering, delinquency, collection, and compliance; fund monitoring and compliance; claims intake and adjudication; payment processing and disbursement; complaint intake and processing; hearings and adjudication; information technology support; and administrative staff support.

There is also no provision for the procurement or development of an information technology system to implement and administer the program. Such a system would require substantial resources and time to develop and implement.

The department also notes the following:

- The measure does not contain a filing deadline for applications.
- The covered individual's average weekly wage and benefit amount are based on the wages earned prior to the filing of the application. If the individual has multiple events in a year and files multiple applications, the individual's average weekly wage may change for each application. It may be easier to administer if the average weekly wage and benefit amount remain the same for the one-year period.
- The measure requires the first payment be made within two weeks after the family leave begins but this may not be possible in situations when the application is filed after the family leave period begins. If individuals are permitted to file applications retroactively after an absence period begins and the start of the family leave period is backdated to the actual start of the absence period, the two-week period could have passed by the time the application is filed.
- If an individual files an application for benefits in the week after the absence period starts, or later, part of the absence period would have occurred before the start of the application year. Benefits are not payable in the period before the application year so the individual may not be compensated for the period preceding the week when the application was submitted. It is also unclear if the employer is required to meet the leave and employment protection provisions during the absence period that occurred before the start of the application year.
- If a covered individual files a claim in advance of a family leave event, the individual's average weekly wage and benefit amount would not reflect the wages earned between the date the application was filed and the actual start of the absence period. The average weekly wage and benefit amount are based on the wages earned during the twelve months preceding the application. Therefore, the claimant may want to consider if waiting to file the application would affect the individual's benefit amount.
- The proposed benefit amount may be less than what some individuals could qualify for under TDI if TDI were not repealed. Statutory TDI benefits are paid at 58% of the claimant's average weekly wage, up to a maximum weekly benefit set annually. Under this measure, the benefit amount is 55% of the individual's wage for those earning more than 100% of the state average weekly wage.
- Section -4(d) prohibits the payment of less than eight hours of family and medical leave insurance benefits for less than eight hours in one week. If an individual works part time or a reduced schedule and uses less than eight hours of leave in the week, the inability to collect benefits for the week may be a significant loss.
- The eligibility requirement of having to earn \$400 should be reevaluated. The \$400 is taken from the TDI law and the amount has not changed since the law was established in in 1969. Based on the current minimum wage (\$14/hour), an individual would earn more than \$400 after working 29 hours.



- Self-employed individuals can opt into the program as covered individuals but may not earn wages therefore confounding benefit determinations.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 13, 2024

**TO:** Representative Mark Hashem, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** H.B. No. 2757 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE  
**Hearing Date:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024  
**Time:** 2:00 p.m  
**Location:** Conference Room 329

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

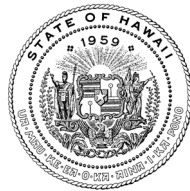
The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is committed to enhancing systems of support for families across the State with young children. Our office supports H.B. No. 2757 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) regarding implementation.

We know that high-quality early learning experiences at the youngest years of a child's life are critical for their growth and development, contributing to life-long success and wellbeing. Bonding and fostering nurturing attachment between caregivers and children are a crucial aspect of these early learning experiences.

We also know many of Hawai'i's families either face economic hardship or are on the brink of doing so. When needing to care for a newborn or a family member, Hawai'i's families simply cannot afford to take unpaid leave.

Our office is committed to protecting early learning opportunities for families and their children, and as such, we strongly promote policies such as paid family leave, which allows families the ability to meaningfully connect with their keiki without interfering with their employment and ensuring financial stability.

EOEL appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**WRITTEN ONLY**

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 2757, H.D. 1

**February 14, 2024**  
**2:00 p.m.**  
**Room 329 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill (H.B.) No. 2757, H.D. 1, adds a new chapter in the HRS to create a new Hawai'i Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. By January 1, 2027, the bill requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance the payment of benefits. The bill specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program. By January 1, 2028, H.B. No. 2757, H.D. 1, requires DLIR to start receiving claims and payment benefits under the program.

The bill also establishes the Family and Medical Leave Trust Fund, to be administered by DLIR, and all contributions pursuant to the new chapter shall be paid into the trust fund and all benefits payable shall be paid from the trust fund.

On January 1, 2026, the Director of Finance is authorized to transfer an unspecified amount of general funds to the trust fund as a loan, and no later than December 31, 2029, DLIR shall repay the general fund loan.

B&F defers to DLIR on the overall merits of this proposal; however, B&F strongly recommends first conducting a feasibility/actuarial study of the impact of this program. B&F also believes it would be prudent to conduct an operational study of the resources DLIR would need to implement it before going forward with program implementation.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

February 14, 2024

### TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

#### House Bill 2757 HD1 – Relating to Paid Family Leave

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Bill 2757 HD1 - Relating to Paid Family Leave.

This bill would provide employees with up to twelve weeks of paid family leave during the first year after the birth, adoption, or fostering of a child, or to care for a family member with a serious health condition and up to twenty-six weeks of paid medical leave if the employee has a serious health condition.

Statistics show that only seventeen percent of workers in the United States have access to paid family leave through employers. This gap negatively impacts our residents and can lead to people making the difficult choice to quit their jobs in order to provide care.

There is also a negative impact to businesses that must then recruit and train new employees.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW  
Executive Director



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 13, 2024

**TO:** Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure:** H.B. No. 2757 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE  
**Hearing Date:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024  
**Time:** 2:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Conference Room 329

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support**

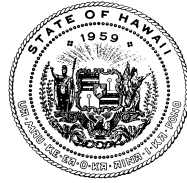
The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is committed to enhancing systems of support for families across the State with young children. Our office supports H.B. No. 2757 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) regarding implementation.

We know that high-quality early learning experiences at the youngest years of a child's life are critical for their growth and development, contributing to life-long success and wellbeing. Bonding and fostering nurturing attachment between caregivers and children are a crucial aspect of these early learning experiences.

We also know many of Hawai'i's families either face economic hardship or are on the brink of doing so. When needing to care for a newborn or a family member, Hawai'i's families simply cannot afford to take unpaid leave.

Our office is committed to protecting early learning opportunities for families and their children, and as such, we strongly promote policies such as paid family leave, which allows families the ability to meaningfully connect with their keiki without interfering with their employment and ensuring financial stability.

EOEL appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE**  
**KE KE'ENA KŪPA'A MAULI OLA**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
415 S. BERETANIA ST. #415  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B.2757 HD1**  
**RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

Representative Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

February 14, 2024, at 2:00 pm

Room Number: 329

The Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **SUPPORTS** H.B. No. 2757 HD1, Relating to Paid Family Leave.

Established through Act 291 (Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022) the overall aim of the OWR is to make Hawai'i a trauma-informed state. OWR is focused on breaking down barriers that impact the physical, social, and emotional well-being of Hawai'i's people. OWR explores avenues to increase access and availability to mental, behavioral, social, and emotional health services and support. In this effort, the OWR is dedicated to addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) from keiki to kupuna. Paid family leave is one of the most concrete economic supports for families to avoid ACEs. Research shows that states with paid family leave policies were associated with a decrease in hospital admissions for abusive head trauma.<sup>1</sup>

Infancy and childhood are extremely important times in contributing to physical health, mental health, learning, and overall well-being in life. When families are provided with an environment where they can nurture their infant without fear of losing their income, they can attend to their children in a stress-free and attentive environment in this crucial time of their child's life.

The OWR is aware that more dialog is warranted for implementation to be effective and efficient and we believe that this measure is a step in the right direction and to help create more resilient families in Hawai'i.

Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach to understanding and responding to the widespread impact of trauma. By passing this bill, the State would be upholding the TIC principles which strengthens our pathway towards a trauma-informed state. As such, the OWR supports the purpose of H.B. 2757 HD1

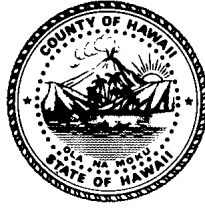
Mahalo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tia L.R. Hartsock".

Tia L R Hartsock, MSW, MSCJA  
Director, Office of Wellness & Resilience  
Office of the Governor

<sup>1</sup> Klevens J, Luo F, Xu L, et al Paid family leave's effect on hospital admissions for pediatric abusive head trauma *Injury Prevention* 2016; 22:442-445.

**Jennifer Kagiwada**  
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272  
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

## **HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2**

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

DATE: February 13, 2024

TO: House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member  
Council District 2

SUBJECT: HB 2757 HD1

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members,

I write in support of HB 2757 HD1 which will establish a family and medical leave insurance program. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawai‘i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai‘i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai‘i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Jenn Kagiwada





## HIPHI Board

Misty Pacheco, DrPH  
Chair  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD  
Secretary  
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender

Carissa Holley, MEd  
Treasurer  
Hale Makua Health Services

Keshia Adolpho, LCSW  
Na'au Healing Center

Debbie Erskine  
ARCH-MEPS Consulting LLC, Owner

Camonia Graham - Tutt, PhD  
University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu

Jennifer José Lo, MD  
Hawai'i Health Partners

May Okihiro, MD, MS  
John A. Burns School of Medicine,  
Department of Pediatrics

Kathleen Roche, MS, RN, CENP  
Kaiser Permanente

Dina Shek, JD  
Medical-Legal Partnership  
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai  
HMSA

JoAnn Tsark, MPH  
John A. Burns School of Medicine,  
Native Hawaiian Research Office

## HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research & Evaluation

Community Health Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging & Community Living

Public Health Workforce

Date: February 12, 2024, 2024

To: Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Support for HB2757 HD1, Relating to Paid Family Leave

Mtg: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 2:00 PM

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The Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, convened by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>i</sup>, **strongly supports HB2757 HD1**. This bill would provide employees up to 16 weeks of paid family leave by establishing a family and medical leave insurance program within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, which would be funded through payroll contributions.

It is time for Hawai'i to pass a strong family leave insurance program. Employees need paid time off of work to care for a newborn, newly adopted or foster child, ill family member, and other unexpected health emergencies. Paid family leave guarantees that employees can cover basic living costs while also providing care to family members when they need it most. Thirteen states and Washington, DC<sup>ii</sup>, have passed similar legislation providing partial wage replacement for family and medical leave purposes.

Paid time off for families to care for a newborn also helps to establish a foundation for breastfeeding. Infant feeding practices can significantly affect later growth and development and can protect against obesity<sup>iii</sup>. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and continued breastfeeding with the addition of other foods until a child is at least twelve months of age<sup>iv</sup>.

"A robust body of evidence suggests that breastfeeding has multiple health benefits for infants, and that paid family leave (and other forms of maternity leave) significantly increases the length of time that mothers breastfeed. In a review and analysis of studies of breastfeeding in developed countries, the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality found that full-term infants fed formula are at substantially greater risk than breastfed infants for acute ear infection, eczema, gastrointestinal infection, hospitalization for lower respiratory tract diseases in the first

year of life, asthma, childhood obesity, Type 2 diabetes, leukemia, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).<sup>iv</sup>

Furthermore, when people can take time away from work to care for themselves and their families, there are many health benefits. People are able to better manage chronic conditions, it improves health for mothers and fathers; it allows families to care for their kūpuna; and it has been shown to increase health equity.

For all of these reasons, we **strongly support HB2757 HD1**, and thank this committee for considering this important policy.

Mahalo,



Peggy Mierzwa  
Policy & Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

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<sup>i</sup> Created by the legislature in 2012, **Healthy Eating + Active Living Coalition**, formerly the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023/>

<sup>iii</sup> S. Arenz et al., Breast-feeding and childhood obesity - a systematic review, 28(10) *International Journal of Obesity and Related Metabolic Disorders* 1247-56 (2004).

<sup>iv</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, AAP Reaffirms Breastfeeding Guidelines, <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/AAP-Reaffirms-Breastfeeding-Guidelines.aspx> (last updated February 27, 2012).

<sup>v</sup> [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text\\_1059.pdf](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_1059.pdf)

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 12:35:50 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pride at Work - Hawaii	Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of Pride At Work which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. P@W-HI fully supports HB 2757 HD 1.

We ask that the bill to be amended to recognize all legally recognized families in the Aloha State, including but not limited to:

Reciprocal Beneficiaries,  
Civil Unions, and  
Hanai families.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i



**2024 Network Members**

City and County of Honolulu  
County of Hawai'i  
Department of Agriculture  
Hawai'i Appleseed  
Hawai'i Children's Action Network  
Hawai'i Food Bank  
Hawai'i Good Food Alliance  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute  
Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Health Center  
Lanakila Pacific  
Mālama Kaua'i  
Maui Nui Food Alliance  
Parents and Children Together  
Supersistence  
The Food Basket Inc.,  
Hawai'i Island's Food Bank  
The Pantry, by Feeding Hawai'i Together  
UH Center for Indigenous Innovation/ Health Equity  
Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

Hawaiihungeraction.org

## House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00P

### **RE: Support for HB 2757 – Relating to Paid Family Leave**

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i Hunger Action Network, a coalition of more than twenty local organizations with the mission to advocate for food security for Hawai'i households, appreciates the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT of HB 2757**. This bill would establish a family and medical leave program within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, financed by payroll deductions.

Our network members understand that Hawai'i's rising rates of food insecurity are fundamentally rooted in economic inequality. Workers earning low wages struggle to meet their basic needs, and for this reason cannot afford to take time off of work in order to take care of a new baby, elderly parent, or sick family member. Working mothers have more difficulty breastfeeding, and working parents often do not have time to grocery shop or prepare meals for their children. Alternatively, if they forego pay, they may be forced to cut their grocery budget, skip meals, or rely on cheaper, empty calories to survive.

The impact of passing this bill would be truly profound, especially in Hawai'i, where nearly a third of children live in a household with just one parent, and two-thirds live in households where both parents work. Paid family leave is a proven tool—used in every developed country in the world except for the U.S.—to ease the economic burden on working families and single mothers. In fact, thirteen states now have paid family leave programs in order to fill in this gap.

This bill contains many well-thought out provisions that have been thoroughly researched and discussed over the past several years that the legislature has debated this issue:

- By relying on small payroll deductions, it does not require employers to bear the burden, nor does it require a major investment on behalf of tax payers.
- It permits workers to take leave not just for the birth of a child, but also to care for other family members that may need additional care.
- And it prioritizes workers earning the lowest wages—ensuring that those who need it most would receive the highest pay.

Mahalo for your consideration of this bill. Paid family leave will be a significant boost for Hawai'i's working families, bringing us one step closer to a more equitable economic future for all who call these islands home.



## UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

#### COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00 PM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on HB2757, HD1 – RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties.

UPW **opposes** HB2757, HD1, which by 1/1/2027, requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (“DLIR”) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits. Additionally, this measure specifies that by 1/1/2028, DLIR is required to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. This bill further specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

We strongly believe that paid family and medical leave is a benefit that employers can and should provide to their workforce to remain in step with evolving trends in the labor market. Hawaii’s public employees are currently saddled with substantial payroll deductions for health plans offered by the Employer-Union Health Trust Fund as well as mandatory contributions to the Employees’ Retirement System. An additional, yet to be determined payroll deduction for a benefit that our members may not utilize could prove to be a significant financial burden for those who are lower income earners. As a result, what is intended to serve as an employee benefit may prove to serve as a deterrent to employment in the public sector.

UPW appreciates that intention of this bill, but we simply cannot support legislation that would result in additional financial burden for our membership. This is a benefit that should be fully paid by the employer.

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#### HEADQUARTERS

1426 North School Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914  
Phone 808.847.2631

#### HAWAII

362 East Lanikaula Street  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336  
Phone 808.961.3424

#### KAUAI

2970 Kele Street, Suite 213  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1803  
Phone 808.245.2412

#### MAUI

841 Kolu Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436  
Phone 808.244.0815

1.866.454.4166

Toll Free - Molokai/Lanai only

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kalani Werner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kalani Werner  
State Director

---

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**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:36:48 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization supports HB 2757 HD 1.

While we do support the bill we call upon you to amend the bill to account for all the legally recognized family units in the Aloha State, this includes but not limited to:  
Civil Unions, Reciprocal Beneficiaries, and Hānai Families.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation with this requested amendment.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)  
Chair and SCC Representative  
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 4:09:22 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Doris Matsunaga	Save Medicaid Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save Medicaid Hawaii supports HB2757

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 4:45:22 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Golojuch	Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports HB2757. We hope that the bill is passed without delaying implementation. Please pass and implement as soon as possible. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member



To: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hearing Date/Time: February 14, 2024 2:00 p.m.  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329  
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of H.B.2757 HD1

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and the Members of Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of H.B. 2757 HD1 which would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a family and medical leave insurance program. We strongly support this measure.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Twenty one states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws(\*). The states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. Paid family leave is good for business—employees become more productive and loyal when they have it.

In fact, the owners of small businesses in Hawai'i we talked to are excited to have a family and medical leave insurance program available to them. They are already paying for temporary disability insurance (TDI) and they know the small additional payment they would need to pay to provide paid leave benefits for their employees will be worth it. It would provide time off their employees need and fund for the employers to hire temporary help. For the business owners who are already providing paid leave out of their own pocket, H.B. 2757 HD1 would provide a less expensive option.

During the 2023 legislative session, the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations was concerned about what would be required to establish and implement paid family leave in terms of staffing, information technology needs, and funding. Fortunately, twelve states and the District of Columbia have experience and information technology establishing and

implementing paid family and medical leave insurance program (\*). We suggest DLIR considers outsourcing the establishment and implementation of this program.

Please pass this measure for our keiki, our kupuna, and our working families. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Public Policy Committee, AAUW of Hawaii  
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

*The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaua'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for equal opportunities in education, at workplace and for economic security, and in leadership.*

(\*) <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/state-paid-family-leave-laws-across-the-u-s/>



**Parents And  
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS  
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2757 HD1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

**TO:** Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Sayama, & Members,  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO  
**DATE:** February 14, 2024 at 2:00 PM

**Parents and Children Together (PACT) offers testimony in support of HB 2757 HD1 Relating to Family Leave**, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish and administer a family leave insurance program.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws, and the states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. Many of Hawaii's working families are not afforded adequate amounts of paid leave causing financial hardship and increased dependency on public assistance during times of illness or caregiving. Low-wage workers are the least likely to have access to paid leave forcing them to choose between maintaining employment or caring for their families. A family leave insurance program could enable workers to retain employment while caring for family and help businesses retain key employees and remain competitive.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Paid Family Leave supports family well-being and the economy. It increases health equity among different racial and socioeconomic groups AND helps to increase worker retention and loyalty.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:03:28 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tanya Smith-Johnson	Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies coalition of Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies fully support this measure .



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## COMMITTEE ON LABOR & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00PM

**RE: HB2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

**A coalition of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii and The Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) Hawaii respectfully opposes HB 2757 HD 1 Relating to Paid Family Leave**, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits and requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. Specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

SHRM Hawaii serves and represents nearly 600 members and employers' statewide and human resource management is a critical component to the success and survival of the many businesses that make up our local economy. HR professionals are responsible for evaluating and balancing the needs of both the employers and employees and caring for businesses' most valuable asset: the working people of our state.

We appreciate and understand the intent of this bill to allow for paid family leave in the workplace. However, we have serious concerns that this measure is not a reasonable, manageable or an affordable approach in addressing those needs.

First, Hawaii employers already pay Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) premiums based on payroll up to the allowable wage base. Expanding TDI benefits to now include family leave will not only increase administrative compliance, but, more importantly, employers will likely shoulder the burden of increases in TDI premium rates to the proposed extended coverage to family leave.



It is important to note that many businesses already offer paid time off and paid leave programs as a means of attracting and retaining their workforce, especially with the employment environment not yet recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, employers are already facing increased financial burdens from high inflation rates and the recent minimum wage increase.

The proposed bill does not provide leave minimums and applies to very small employers. This unlimited leave mandate could ultimately force local businesses to shut down operations or close permanently. With the way the pandemic has affected the economy, we need policies that will provide flexibility for businesses so they can help create more jobs for our economy. We need to be encouraging businesses to adopt their own innovative paid leave programs, rather than placing yet another mandate on employers and businesses.

Furthermore, the recent Paid Family Leave Program Impact Study<sup>1</sup> released in November 2019, brought concerns on what exactly a possible paid family leave program in Hawaii would look like and cost. Recognizing the challenges employers face in coordinating multiple paid leave laws, the report recommended the state consider numerous issues, including the following, when deciding how to implement paid family leave in Hawaii:

- Clear regulation
- Allowing for at least two, but ideally three years, to implement the new program
- Straightforward administration
- Comprehensive education
- Permitting paid family/medical leave to run concurrently with unpaid FMLA
- Considering a simplified benefit formula
- Avoiding Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) status
- Advocating for return to work within the law, but excluding job protection (as it is accounted for elsewhere)
- Providing gender neutral covered relationships and leave lengths
- Sunsetting existing unpaid leave laws (to start fresh with any new law)

Given the lack of substantiated data on the adverse impact of mandatory paid family leave on Hawaii employees, SHRM Hawaii asks that the committee hold this bill and review the findings of the Paid Family Leave Program Impact Study before enacting a one-size-fits-all policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Paid Family Leave Program Impact Study in Accordance with Act 109, SLH 2018  
[https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019\\_PaidFamilyLeaveProgramImpactStudy.pdf](https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019_PaidFamilyLeaveProgramImpactStudy.pdf)



In closing, while we appreciate the Legislature indicating their intention to address the issue of family leave, we have concerns about the impacts this will have to small businesses that are still struggling to recover from the pandemic.

We respectfully ask that you do not advance this bill. We look forward to contributing positively to the development of sound public policy and continuing to serve as a resource to the legislature on matters related to labor and employment laws.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Rosanne Nolan  
Legislative Affairs Committee Co-Chair

Dailyn Yanagida  
Legislative Affairs Committee Co-Chair





Testimony to the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Wednesday, February 14, 2024  
2:00 p. m.  
State Capitol Conference Room 329 and via videoconference

Re: HB 2757 HD 1 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce:

I am Gary Simon, a member of the board of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition, whose mission is to improve the quality of life of those who give and receive care by increasing community awareness of caregiver issues through continuing advocacy, education, and training. I am offering testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition.

The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition strongly supports HB 2757 HD 1, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits by January 1, 2027; and requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program by January 1, 2028.

Up to 40 percent of people in the workforce are not eligible for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act — and many cannot afford to take unpaid leave. Lack of paid family leave can lead to financial strain and negative workplace impacts for caregivers. Paid leave programs result in better health outcomes and lower overall health care system costs.

We urge you to support the paid family leave and HB 2757 HD 1, and we urge you to recommend its passage.

Mahalo for seriously considering the bill.  
Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Simon".

Gary Simon



Email [gsimon@aarp.org](mailto:gsimon@aarp.org)



**TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE**

**FEBRUARY 14, 2024**

**HB 2757, HD1, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Democratic Party of Hawaii **supports** HB 2757, HD1, relating to family leave. In 2018, delegates to the Democratic Party of Hawaii's State Convention adopted resolution HHS: 2018-02, which "urges the Hawaii State Legislature to enact a paid family leave plan."

It is time to *finally* establish a family leave insurance program for Hawaii's workers that provides paid time off to address family emergencies, including care for newborn keiki and kūpuna care. Once effectuated, family leave insurance should also provide progressive wage replacement, allowing low-income workers to receive a higher percentage of their weekly wages (ideally, up to 90 percent) to make the benefit accessible to everyone.

**Hawaii's workers need this benefit.** In a 2017 public poll, 62 percent of Hawaii respondents reported that they had wanted to take leave in the past in order to care for a new child or family member. Currently, though, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family and medical leave. Lower-income workers in Hawaii, who are more likely to be Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, are the least likely to have paid family and medical leave, while they need that financial support the most.

The federal Family Medical Leave Act (which leaves out 40 percent of the state's workforce) provides for only *unpaid* leave with up to 12 weeks for employers with 50 or more employees. The Hawai'i Family Leave Law (HFLL) only applies to employers with 100 or more employees and provides up to four weeks of *unpaid* leave to workers.

Hawai'i has the fastest growing aging population in the nation. Our senior (age 65+) population is expected to grow 81 percent by 2030. Our state currently has 154,000 unpaid caregivers providing care to kūpuna or seriously ill adult relatives, which can lead to financial and emotional strain. Hawai'i caregivers provide 144 million hours of unpaid care a year, worth \$2.6 billion annually. Notably, 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021, further showing our population's desire for family leave support.

**This program would help Hawaii's businesses.** Family leave insurance increases worker retention and loyalty. Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported that family leave had either a positive or a neutral effect on their business. Small businesses were less likely than large businesses to report any negative effects.

Statewide paid family and medical leave also helps even the playing field for small businesses. Most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family and medical leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining the best workers. Under a statewide paid family and medical leave program, however, small payroll deductions would go into a state fund, which workers would apply to when they need to take leave.

Since employees would be paid from the state fund while taking family or medical leave, employers would not need to pay them while they are on leave. Enabling small businesses to provide paid family and medical leave through a state-managed program would help them compete for workers and deliver adequate care for their employees. A survey conducted by the small business advocacy organization Small Business Majority revealed that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family and medical leave.

**Providing paid time off for family caregiving strongly promotes gender equity.** Women are often disproportionately impacted by the lack of paid leave, as they are the primary caregivers of infants, children, and aging parents. The lack of paid family leave exacerbates the gender wage gap for women and adversely impacts the economic stability of both male and female caregivers. Most working mothers who give birth can get partial pay through Hawai'i Temporary Disability

Insurance (TDI) to recover from childbirth, but TDI cannot be used by non-birth parents or to care for other family members.

**We know this can work in Hawai'i.** Top experts on family leave have studied the usage, cost, and feasibility of implementing a family leave insurance program for the islands. Multiple studies have been performed about the establishment of family leave for Hawai'i, all of which have found that paid family leave is a cost-effective way for workers to take adequate time off to care for their families without facing financial ruin or jeopardizing their careers, and that a statewide program can be implemented without significant cost to the state.

It's a stark reality when employees face the dire choice of caring for newborn or sick children, spouses, or parents or working to sustain their family's income. We must offer a smart, affordable solution that empowers workers to care for their families, while preserving their incomes.

Mahalo nui loa,

**Kris Coffield**

*Co-Chair, Legislative Committee*  
(808) 679-7454  
kriscoffield@gmail.com

**Abby Simmons**

*Co-Chair, Legislative Committee*  
(808) 352-6818  
abbyalana808@gmail.com



## HOUSE BILL 2757, HD1, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

FEBRUARY 14, 2024 · CPC HEARING

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HB 2757, HD1, relating to paid family leave, which by 1/1/2027, requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits; by 1/1/2028, requires the department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

It is time to *finally* establish a paid family leave program for Hawai'i's workers that provides paid time off to address family emergencies, including care for newborn keiki and kūpuna care. Once effectuated, family leave insurance should also provide progressive wage replacement, allowing low-income workers to receive a higher percentage of their weekly wages (ideally, up to 90 percent) to make the benefit accessible to everyone.

**Hawai'i's workers need this benefit.** In a 2017 public poll, 62 percent of Hawai'i respondents reported that they had wanted to take leave in the past in order to care for a new child or family member. Currently, though, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family and medical leave. Lower-income workers in Hawai'i, who are more likely to be Native Hawaiian or

Pacific Islander, are the least likely to have paid family and medical leave, while they need that financial support the most.

The federal Family Medical Leave Act (which leaves out 40 percent of the state's workforce) provides for only *unpaid* leave with up to 12 weeks for employers with 50 or more employees. The Hawai'i Family Leave Law (HFLL) only applies to employers with 100 or more employees and only provides up to four weeks of *unpaid* leave to workers.

Hawai'i has the fastest growing aging population in the nation. Our senior (age 65+) population is expected to grow 81 percent by 2030. Our state currently has 154,000 unpaid caregivers providing care to kūpuna or seriously ill adult relatives, which can lead to financial and emotional strain. Hawai'i caregivers provide 144 million hours of unpaid care a year, worth \$2.6 billion annually. Notably, 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021, further showing our population's desire for family leave support.

**This program would help Hawai'i's businesses.** Family leave insurance increases worker retention and loyalty. Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported that family leave had either a positive or a neutral effect on their business. Small businesses were less likely than large businesses to report any negative effects.

Statewide paid family and medical leave also helps even the playing field for small businesses. Most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family and medical leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining the best workers. Under a statewide paid family and medical leave program, however, small payroll deductions would go into a state fund, which workers would apply to when they need to take leave.

Since employees would be paid from the state fund while taking family or medical leave, employers would not need to pay them while they are on leave. Enabling small businesses to provide paid family and medical leave through a state-managed program would help them compete for workers and deliver adequate care for their employees. A survey conducted by the

small business advocacy organization Small Business Majority revealed that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family and medical leave.

**Providing paid time off for family caregiving strongly promotes gender equity.** Women are often disproportionately impacted by the lack of paid leave, as they are the primary caregivers of infants, children, and aging parents. The lack of paid family leave exacerbates the gender wage gap for women and adversely impacts the economic stability of both male and female caregivers. Most working mothers who give birth can get partial pay through Hawai'i Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) to recover from childbirth, but TDI cannot be used by non-birth parents or to care for other family members.

**We know this can work in Hawai'i.** Top experts on family leave have studied the usage, cost, and feasibility of implementing a family leave insurance program for the islands. Multiple studies have been performed about the establishment of family leave for Hawai'i, all of which have found that paid family leave is a cost-effective way for workers to take adequate time off to care for their families without facing financial ruin or jeopardizing their careers, and that a statewide program can be implemented without significant cost to the state.

It's a stark reality when employees face the dire choice of caring for newborn or sick children, spouses, or parents, or working to sustain their family's income. We must offer a smart, affordable solution that empowers workers to care for their families, while preserving their incomes.

**Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · [kriscoffield@gmail.com](mailto:kriscoffield@gmail.com)**





## HB 2757, HD1, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

FEBRUARY 14, 2024 · CPC HEARING

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** Imua Alliance supports HB 2757, HD1, relating to paid family leave, which by 1/1/2027, requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits; by 1/1/2028, requires the department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

It is time to *finally* establish a paid family leave program for Hawai'i's workers that provides paid time off to address family emergencies, including care for newborn keiki and kūpuna care. Once effectuated, family leave insurance should also provide progressive wage replacement, allowing low-income workers to receive a higher percentage of their weekly wages (ideally, up to 90 percent) to make the benefit accessible to everyone.

**Hawai'i's workers need this benefit.** In a 2017 public poll, 62 percent of Hawai'i respondents reported that they had wanted to take leave in the past in order to care for a new child or family member. Currently, though, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family and medical leave. Lower-income workers in Hawai'i, who are more likely to be Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, are the least likely to have paid family and medical leave, while they need that financial support the most.

The federal Family Medical Leave Act (which leaves out 40 percent of the state's workforce) provides for only *unpaid* leave with up to 12 weeks for employers with 50 or more employees. The Hawai'i Family Leave Law (HFLL) only applies to employers with 100 or more employees and only provides up to four weeks of *unpaid* leave to workers.

Hawai'i has the fastest growing aging population in the nation. Our senior (age 65+) population is expected to grow 81 percent by 2030. Our state currently has 154,000 unpaid caregivers providing care to kūpuna or seriously ill adult relatives, which can lead to financial and emotional strain. Hawai'i caregivers provide 144 million hours of unpaid care a year, worth \$2.6 billion annually. Notably, 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021, further showing our population's desire for family leave support.

**This program would help Hawai'i's businesses.** Family leave insurance increases worker retention and loyalty. Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported that family leave had either a positive or a neutral effect on their business. Small businesses were less likely than large businesses to report any negative effects.

Statewide paid family and medical leave also helps even the playing field for small businesses. Most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family and medical leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage in attracting and retaining the best workers. Under a statewide paid family and medical leave program, however, small payroll deductions would go into a state fund, which workers would apply to when they need to take leave.

Since employees would be paid from the state fund while taking family or medical leave, employers would not need to pay them while they are on leave. Enabling small businesses to provide paid family and medical leave through a state-managed program would help them compete for workers and deliver adequate care for their employees. A survey conducted by the small business advocacy organization Small Business Majority revealed that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family and medical leave.

**Providing paid time off for family caregiving strongly promotes gender equity.** Women are often disproportionately impacted by the lack of paid leave, as they are the primary caregivers of infants, children, and aging parents. The lack of paid family leave exacerbates the gender wage gap for women and adversely impacts the economic stability of both male and female caregivers. Most working mothers who give birth can get partial pay through Hawai'i Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) to recover from childbirth, but TDI cannot be used by non-birth parents or to care for other family members.

**We know this can work in Hawai'i.** Top experts on family leave have studied the usage, cost, and feasibility of implementing a family leave insurance program for the islands. Multiple studies have been performed about the establishment of family leave for Hawai'i, all of which have found that paid family leave is a cost-effective way for workers to take adequate time off to care for their families without facing financial ruin or jeopardizing their careers, and that a statewide program can be implemented without significant cost to the state.

It's a stark reality when employees face the dire choice of caring for newborn or sick children, spouses, or parents, or working to sustain their family's income. We must offer a smart, affordable solution that empowers workers to care for their families, while preserving their incomes.

**Kris Coffield · Executive Director, Imua Alliance · (808) 679-7454 · [kris@imuaalliance.org](mailto:kris@imuaalliance.org)**



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I LABOR CAUCUS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION  
AND COMMERCE · FEBRUARY 14, 2024

HB 2757, HD1, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Labor Caucus **supports** HB 2757, HD1, relating to paid family leave, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish and administer a family leave insurance program; provides family leave insurance benefits and extends the period of family leave to 16 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees who meet the hourly qualifications; and eliminates the previous threshold of 100 employees for employers to be subject to the family leave law.

It is time to *finally* establish a paid family leave program for Hawai'i's workers that provides paid time off to address family emergencies, including care for newborn keiki and kūpuna care. Once effectuated, family leave insurance should also provide progressive wage replacement, allowing low-income workers to receive a higher percentage of their weekly wages (ideally, up to 90 percent) to make the benefit accessible to everyone.

**Hawai'i's workers need this benefit.** In a 2017 public poll, 62 percent of Hawai'i respondents reported that they had wanted to take leave in the past in order to care for a new child or family member. Currently, though, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family and medical leave. Lower-income workers in Hawai'i, who are more likely to be Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, are the least likely to have paid family and medical leave, while they need that financial support the most.

The federal Family Medical Leave Act (which leaves out 40 percent of the state's workforce) provides for only *unpaid* leave with up to 12 weeks for employers with 50 or more employees. The Hawai'i Family Leave Law (HFLL) only applies to employers with 100 or more employees and only provides up to four weeks of *unpaid* leave to workers.

Hawai'i has the fastest growing aging population in the nation. Our senior (age 65+) population is expected to grow 81 percent by 2030. Our state currently has 154,000 unpaid caregivers providing care to kūpuna or seriously ill adult relatives, which can lead to financial and emotional strain. Hawai'i caregivers provide 144 million hours of unpaid care a year, worth \$2.6 billion annually. Notably, 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021, further showing our population's desire for family leave support.

**This program would help Hawai'i's businesses.** Family leave insurance increases worker retention and loyalty. Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported that family leave had either a positive or a neutral effect on their business. Small businesses were less likely than large businesses to report any negative effects.

Statewide paid family and medical leave also helps even the playing field for small businesses. Most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family and medical leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining the best workers. Under a statewide paid family and medical leave program, however, small payroll deductions would go into a state fund, which workers would apply to when they need to take leave.

Since employees would be paid from the state fund while taking family or medical leave, employers would not need to pay them while they are on leave. Enabling small businesses to provide paid family and medical leave through a state-managed program would help them compete for workers and deliver adequate care for their employees. A survey conducted by the small business advocacy organization Small Business Majority revealed that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family and medical leave.

**Providing paid time off for family caregiving strongly promotes gender equity.** Women are often disproportionately impacted by the lack of paid leave, as they are the primary caregivers of infants, children, and aging parents. The lack of paid family leave exacerbates the gender wage gap for women and adversely impacts the economic stability of both male and female caregivers. Most working mothers who give birth can get partial pay through Hawai'i Temporary Disability

Insurance (TDI) to recover from childbirth, but TDI cannot be used by non-birth parents or to care for other family members.

**We know this can work in Hawai'i.** Top experts on family leave have studied the usage, cost, and feasibility of implementing a family leave insurance program for the islands. Multiple studies have been performed about the establishment of family leave for Hawai'i, all of which have found that paid family leave is a cost-effective way for workers to take adequate time off to care for their families without facing financial ruin or jeopardizing their careers, and that a statewide program can be implemented without significant cost to the state.

It's a stark reality when employees face the dire choice of caring for newborn or sick children, spouses, or parents, or working to sustain their family's income. We must offer a smart, affordable solution that empowers workers to care for their families, while preserving their incomes.

Mahalo,

**Jason Bradshaw**

*Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Labor Caucus*



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT  
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII  
FEBRUARY 14, 2024  
HB 2757 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE.**

Good afternoon, Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee Consumer Protection & Commerce. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901 and is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to supporting the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, on-line sellers, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

We respectfully oppose HB 2757. This measure requires by 1/1/2027, the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits; by 1/1/2028, requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program; and is effective 7/1/3000.

We would like to point out that Family Leave is used when the Employee needs to take care of someone else who is a family member; and Sick Leave and TDI are used when the employee themselves are sick or injured.

**Employers want to take care of their employees, but there has to also be a balance to what businesses can afford.** Many employers already offer benefits that include significant paid time off to those employees who have earned it in addition to the mandated family leave for employees to care for their family who are ill and ensure that their jobs are secure when they return to work.

We would like to point out that TDI is calculated based on payroll and wage base. By including family leave in the TDI calculations, the employer's premium rates would significantly increase. Not to mention that the administrative process will also add an additional burden and increase the cost to the businesses. It is important to note that in addition to the "family leave" compensation the employer would have to pay to the individual taking sick leave, the employer must pay another employee "filling in" for this individual.

**Hawaii is the only state in the entire nation that mandates medical insurance coverage for employees' healthcare. This is an added benefit to employees while being an increasing cost to employers every year with rate hikes in healthcare.** For a small business, the cost for individual health insurance could be anywhere from \$900 per month or more per employee depending on the program they have.

While we understand the intent of a Family Leave Insurance Program, now is not the time to implement this program. Retailers are already operating on a very thin margin. **Many are not able to afford these kinds of costly operational increases, especially with the recent raises in the minimum wage.** Retailers have still not recovered. Many are still barely hanging on to keep their doors open and their employees employed. Many still carry a large debt from being shut down and the lack of customers – especially since the Japanese visitors have not returned. The rising cost for employee health care benefits, products and goods, services, and shipping continue to have a substantial effect on our operations since the pandemic ensued. Furthermore, **numerous businesses are still trying to recover from the Maui Fires last year.** Some of our local retailers lost multiple stores in the fires – this not only includes Maui based stores but also business from the neighboring islands who have expanded to Maui. We are also seeing streamlined and pivoted business with shortened hours of operations and freeze in employee hiring for certain positions. We continue to see local and national retailers quietly closing their doors in Hawaii. **Measures like this will encourage more businesses to close their doors as they can no longer afford to operate in Hawaii and thus more of our friends, family and neighbors will be unemployed.**

**Retailers often are not able to absorb all the costs associated with these types of government mandates and must pass the cost on to the customer by raising prices of goods and services.** This means groceries, clothing, supplies, appliances... will be even more expensive than they are now. **This helps Hawaii to continue to be one of the most expensive states in the nation to reside in.**

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

From: Paula Arcena, External Affairs Vice President  
Mike Nguyen, Public Policy Manager

Hearing: Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 329

RE: **HB2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave**

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AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB2757 HD1**. This measure requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish, by 1/1/2027, a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits; requires DLIR to start, by 1/1/2028, receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

Founded in 1994 by Hawai'i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 84,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately 40 percent of our members are keiki. We are Hawai'i's only health plan exclusively dedicated to serving Medicaid and Medicaid-Medicare dually-eligible beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality, whole-person care for all.

AlohaCare's commitment to whole-person care and health equity includes addressing social determinants of health, including housing, nutrition, and economic stability. Evidence of the health and economic benefits of paid family and medical leave are well established. Workers need to be able to take time off to attend to their own health, the health of family members, and other caregiving responsibilities without losing their wages or jobs.

Paid family leave is beneficial for family health and well-being outcomes, in terms of infant and maternal health and overall financial stability, especially in low-income families.<sup>1</sup> For example, research shows that providing new parents with paid time off to care for their newborn or recently adopted children contributes to healthy growth and development for infants and toddlers.<sup>2</sup> Rigorous U.S. and international studies find that adequate periods of paid leave have significant, positive effects on maternal physical and mental health, an increase in breastfeeding, which has health benefits for mother and child, and a reduction in maternal stress and intimate partner violence.<sup>3</sup>

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of HB2757 HD1**.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://news.stanford.edu/2022/03/09/real-benefits-paid-family-leave/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20190301.484936/full/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.newamerica.org/better-life-lab/reports/paid-family-leave-how-much-time-enough/maternal-health-and-wellbeing/>



Feb. 14, 2024, 2 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference

**To: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce**  
**Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair**  
**Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice-Chair**

**From: Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**  
**Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**

RE: COMMENTS ON HB2757 HD1 — RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Sayama and Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on [HB2757 HD1](#), which would establish a family and medical leave insurance program funded by payroll contributions.

The idea of being able to take paid leave from work in order to care for a family member is certainly appealing, but decades of data demonstrate that such programs rarely live up to their promise and may even harm those they intend to help.

It is often assumed that family leave policies will be especially helpful to female workers, as women are expected to benefit more from paid leave. However, research demonstrates that family leave programs show no benefit to female workforce participation, and may even have a negative effect.

A recent study of the long-term effects of California's Paid Family Leave Act found that it did not help narrow the pay gap, and was instead associated with reduced employment and earnings for first-time mothers.<sup>1</sup> A different study of maternity leave reform in the United Kingdom found that among highly educated workers, paid leave programs tend to increase gender inequality, with fewer women holding management and

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<sup>1</sup> Martha J. Bailey, Tanya S. Byker, Elena Patel, et al., "[The Long-Run Effects of California's Paid Family Leave Act on Women's Careers and Childbearing: New Evidence from a Regression Discontinuity Design and U.S. Tax Data.](#)" National Bureau of Economic Research, October 2019.

promotion-track jobs, while lower-educated female workers were 10 percentage points less likely to receive a promotion than they were before the reforms were enacted.<sup>2</sup>

Nor are the benefits of paid leave programs evenly distributed. Low-income workers are significantly less likely to take advantage of paid leave, making it little more than a government-subsidized leave program for well-paid workers.

In 2020, 18 million California workers paid into the state's family leave program and were eligible to take advantage of its benefits. However, only 14% of workers earning less than \$20,000 took paid leave, while workers earning \$80,000 to \$99,999 had a utilization rate four times higher than the lowest earners. Those making \$100,000 or more a year utilized paid leave three times as much as low income workers.<sup>3</sup>

Family leave policies in San Francisco<sup>4</sup> and New Jersey<sup>5</sup> have seen similar results, with low-income families far less likely to utilize leave policies than high-income earners.

In addition to problems of efficacy, paid leave programs also struggle with problems of cost. It is nearly impossible to properly evaluate the financial viability of the program proposed in this bill, as the contribution requirements are left to a later determination. However, there is a real risk of underestimating the full cost of the program, which could create a burden for the state budget and taxpayers.

The bipartisan AEI-Brookings Working Group on Paid Family Leave analyzed the proposed federal FAMILY Act — which also relies on payroll contributions — and argued that the authors of the bill severely underestimated the costs of the paid-leave program. Depending on take-up rates, the funding mechanism might have only covered half the program's costs.<sup>6</sup>

Before embarking on an ambitious paid leave program such as the one proposed by HB2757, lawmakers should demand a strict analysis of its financial impact on the state budget and the economy as a whole to ensure that the program will not become a fiscal nightmare.

Finally, we must consider the effect that enacting this bill would have on Hawaii's business climate.

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<sup>2</sup> Jenna Stearns, [“The Long-Run Effects of Wage Replacement and Job Protection: Evidence from Two Maternity Leave Reforms in Great Britain.”](#) SSRN, May 7, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Kristin Schumacher, [“Paid Family Leave Payments Don't Add Up for California Workers.”](#) California Budget and Policy Center, February 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Julia M. Goodman, William H. Dow and Holly Elser, [“Evaluating the San Francisco Paid Parental Leave Ordinance: Employer Perspectives.”](#) University of California at Berkeley, February 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Amy Dunford, [“Boosting Families, Boosting the Economy: How to Improve New Jersey's Paid Family Leave Program.”](#) New Jersey Policy Perspective, April 2017.

<sup>6</sup> AEI-Brookings Working Group on Paid Family Leave, [“Paid Family and Medical Leave: An Issue Whose Time Has Come.”](#) May 2017.

Because the proposed program is very broad, even including businesses with only five employees, it would add to the cost of doing business in our state. Employers would have to compensate for the increased costs associated with the program, which could mean fewer jobs or stagnant wages.

Support for family leave would decrease if workers knew it would equate to higher taxes or might require them to forego a raise or promotion.

As attractive as the idea of paid leave might be, the negative tradeoffs that accompany family leave programs cannot be ignored. Given the many questions raised by this bill, it seems clear that more analysis is needed of the effects and fiscal impact of paid family leave in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii



aloha@pacificbirthcollective.org  
pacificbirthcollective.org

‘Aloha ‘Āina Center  
810 Kokomo Road # 240 & #170  
Ha‘ikū, Hawai‘i 96708

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Thursday, February 14, 2024 2:00 p.m. State Capitol, Conference Room 329 &  
Videoconference

In Support of H.B. No. 2757, Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Nakashima and Vice Chair Sayama and members of the  
Committee:

On behalf of our organization Pacific Birth Collective and the women and  
families we serve across Hawai‘i we write in SUPPORT of H.B. No. 2757,  
Relating to Paid Family Leave.

Pacific Birth Collective is dedicated to education, support and advocacy for  
women and families during their childbearing years including through the  
postpartum period. Paid family leave is one of the most concrete economic  
supports that can be provided to families to improve outcomes for women  
during this sensitive period of adjustment after the birth of a baby.  
Additionally the evidence supporting the physical health and well being  
benefits of infants and mothers being able to stay together at least through the  
first six months of life are significant. We strongly support this program as a  
trickle down that will improve the health of families in our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Sincerely,  
Kiana Rowley, BS RN  
Director of Leadership and  
Operations  
Pacific Birth Collective  
EIN 84-2562504



P.O. Box 4270 Kaneohe, HI 96744  
[www.breastfeedinghawaii.org](http://www.breastfeedinghawaii.org)

TO: Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair, Representative Jackson Sayama, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

FROM: Patricia Bilyk, RN, MPH, MSN, IBCLC (Retired)  
Maternal Infant Clinical Nurse Specialist  
Breastfeeding Hawaii Board Member

RE: HB2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave

DATE: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 2pm

Good Afternoon Rep. Nakashima, Rep Sayama and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce. I am Patricia Bilyk and I am representing Breastfeeding Hawaii . We are in SUPPORT of HB 2757 HD1 which would require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

Breastfeeding Hawaii is a 501c3 non profit organization whose mission is to protect, promote and support breastfeeding in the State of Hawaii, by providing education and advocacy to families, businesses, professionals and other community individuals.

Each day the Breastfeeding Hawaii Board Members work with breastfeeding families who are grappling with

- 1) establishing a relationship and caring for an infant,
- 2) establishing and maintaining a milk supply for the infant
- 3) planning to return to work 2 weeks to 3 months post delivery and with
- 4) the inability to take more time with their newborn because they need a paycheck.

We feel having paid family leave would significantly help our families with the above issues.

We further feel a Paid Family Leave Insurance Program should have the following components:

- 1) all businesses and employees covered
- 2) 16 weeks of paid leave
- 3) workers restored to the same position
- 4) progressive wage replacement

We feel it is time and Pono-the right thing to do, to provide a Paid Family Leave Insurance Program for Hawaii's working families!

We encourage this Committee to approve this bill and pass it out of Committee. Mahalo.



P.O. Box 4270 Kaneohe, HI 96744  
[www.breastfeedinghawaii.org](http://www.breastfeedinghawaii.org)



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Testimony of Bob Hood

President of the Hawaii Energy Marketers Association (HEMA)

### HB 2757, HD1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair

The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m.

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

I am Bob Hood, President of the Hawaii Energy Marketers Association (HEMA). HEMA is a nonprofit trade association comprised of members who market motor fuel products and operate convenience stores across the state.

HEMA **opposes** HB 2757, HD1 which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

We recognize that some employees may sometimes need to take time off for reasons outside the scope of existing employer policies and programs. However, it is important that companies already implement complex scheduling policies balancing employee and business needs, which include attractive benefits like paid leave programs to attract and retain talent.

Whether it is remote or hybrid work, retirement compensation, or vacation, they are valuable tools to attract and retain employees. The added financial burden of mandated paid family leave will cost employers and small business capital that would prolong economic recovery as businesses reel from competitive workforce, national and local inflation, and increased costs and delays associated with goods and commodities.

While we understand the intent of the measure, **Hawaii employers are already burdened with many employer obligations and further shouldering them with added costs, step up wage increases, mandates, taxes and fees will tip the scale to shutter or risk passing on the costs to customers.**

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in opposition.



**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii  
The House of Representatives  
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 14, 2024

H.B. 2757, H.D. 1 — RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

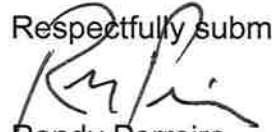
The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes the '**contributions section**' of H.B. 2757.H.D. 1, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

While the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act allows employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid family leave each year, many employees cannot afford to survive without compensation for that long and are forced with a hard choice: take much needed time to care for yourself, your child or family member, or return to work. Paid Family and Medical Leave is a twenty-first century workforce benefit that employers can provide which can allow the employee personal and professional flexibility.

**Although we appreciate the intention, we respectfully oppose this measure. It is our position that Paid Family and Medical Leave should be a 100% employer paid program and benefit.** Employees should not be subject to mandatory payroll deductions to support this program. Additionally, government employees are already subject to hefty payroll deductions from the Employer-Union Health Trust Fund and the Employee Retirement System, among others. Adding an additional payroll deduction may cause financial constraint for our members and we cannot justify that for a program that all members may not take advantage of.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of H.B. 2757, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Randy Perreira  
Executive Director





## **House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce**

### **Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB2757 HD1**

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 2:00 p.m Conference Room 329

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members,

We support HB2757 HD1 for paid family leave, aiming to establish a family and medical leave insurance program. It will provide benefits, ensure eligibility requirements, and offer employee protections.

In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawaii's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

A state-run family leave insurance plan is affordable for small businesses and our state. It is a small price to pay for the financial security guaranteed by 16 weeks of paid family leave.

Please support HB2757 HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director



February 13, 2024

To: COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE  
Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

RE: Strong Support of HB 2757 HD1– Relating to Paid Family Leave Bill

Hrg: Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 329

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA is in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757 HD1 which would allow workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child. We have been expecting our working families and their employers to cobble together family care. No one should have to choose between their loved ones and their paycheck.

### **The Need for Paid Family Leave in Hawaii**

The United States is the only developed country that doesn't have national paid family leave. The average amount of paid family leave in OECD nations is about one year. The second-worst nation after the United States (which has zero weeks of leave) is Mexico, which has 12 weeks of leave.

To fill that gap, 13 states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws. California was the first state to pass paid family leave, about 20 years ago. This program is not a new idea and works in other states. Hawai'i struggles to keep our working-age families from moving away. 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021. We are competing with states that have paid family and medical leave – including the entire West Coast – for the best workers. When young couples are deciding where to start a family, paid family and medical leave may be an important deciding factor for them.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT of HB 2757 HD1 for state funding.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler  
Executive Director



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

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TO: Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 14, 2024  
TIME: 2pm  
PLACE: Room 329

RE: HB2575 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Position: Comments

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,

HFIA has some concerns about how this mandate may impact labor costs for businesses in our state. Hawaii already has some of the highest labor costs in the country, and the highest cost of living in the country. We are concerned that creating additional labor costs for our local food businesses will have unintended consequences that could lead to business closures or price increases.

The measure does not specify the amount of contributions that employers and employees will make and the implementation timeline is extremely rapid. We are concerned that by the time the department is able to specify the contribution amounts it will be very close to the effective date and both employers and employees will not be able to plan in advance for how this will impact their finances.

We believe that more information from stakeholders, additional detailed data about the possible unintended consequences, and an extended time frame would be advisable prior to enacting a mandate of this scope.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2757 HD1: RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

TO: House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: **Wednesday, 2/14/24; 2:00 pm; via Videoconference or Room 329**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members, Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in Strong Support of HB 2757 HD1**, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program. I am Rob Van Tassell with Catholic Charities Hawaii. **This bill provides one step to address the great burden that Hawaii's cost of living places on our workforce.**

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 75 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy to the most vulnerable of the people in Hawaii. This bill is one of our economic justice priorities.

Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly urges your support for paid family and medical leave that will help our residents live a life of peace and dignity. This is one step to help ensure a healthier and more productive local workforce. This bill would assist our working families to meet their basic needs in times of family crises.

Middle class, ALICE, and low-income families face severe burdens when they undergo situations when they cannot work but do not have paid family or sick leave. Paid sick leave is also a critical public health tool to combat disease and can result in significant savings in health care costs. In Hawaii, an estimated **42% of private sector workers lack paid sick leave. About 40% of our workforce provides care to their older parents. For 7 in 10 children, both parents, or their single parent, work. If a child or elder becomes sick, the workforce and employers suffer.**

Low-income workers are less likely to have paid sick leave. They are the working poor, people who work hard, but due to our high cost of living struggle to make ends meet. We serve these workers in our programs. Choosing between work and caring for a loved one creates great stress. With the high cost of living in Hawaii, many families but have little or no reserves when a crisis strikes.

**We urge your support for this bill to give hope to workers when a family crisis hits.** If you have any questions, please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson at (808) 527-4813.





*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Re: **HB 2757 HD1 – Relating to Paid Family Leave**  
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference  
February 14, 2024, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757**. This bill requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits by 1/1/2027. It also requires DLIR to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program by 1/1/2028, and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child.

**The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave.**<sup>1</sup> The average amount of paid family leave in OECD nations is about one year. The second-worst nation after the United States (which has zero weeks of leave) is Mexico, which has 12 weeks of leave.

**To fill that gap, thirteen states plus the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws.**<sup>2</sup> California was the first state to pass paid family leave, about 20 years ago. This program is not a new idea and works in other states. Hawai'i should join them.

Paid family leave includes:

- Parental leave – for parents, including fathers and adoptive and foster parents, to bond with a new child
- Medical leave – for a worker to recover from their own serious illness or injury
- Caregiving leave – for a worker to care for a family member with a serious health condition.

In some states, paid family leave also includes:

- Deployment leave – to handle arrangements for military service
- Safe leave<sup>3</sup> – to deal with domestic violence, such as seeking a restraining order or relocating to safety.

<sup>1</sup> <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/paid-family-leave-across-oecd-countries/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/state-paid-family-leave-laws-across-the-u-s/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023/>

**Paid leave helps children by helping their parents.** Research has found that states with paid family leave have seen significant **health, social and economic benefits**.<sup>4</sup> Families who have access to paid leave – especially working women – are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and **less likely to need public benefits**.

**Paid family leave is good for business.** According to research that looks at how paid family leave works in other states,<sup>5</sup> employees with paid family leave are more productive, which can help increase profits, and loyal, which lowers turnover costs.

A statewide paid family leave program would be financed by small payroll deductions that go into a state fund, which workers would apply to when they need leave. **Since employees would be paid from the state fund while taking leave, employers would not need to pay them while they are on leave.**

In addition, statewide **paid family leave helps even the playing field for small businesses.** Currently, most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining the best workers.

**Enabling small businesses to provide paid family leave through a state program helps them compete for the best workers.** Not surprisingly, recent surveys show that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family leave.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, as Hawaii struggles to keep our working-age families from moving away, we are competing with states that have paid family leave – including the entire West Coast – for the best workers. **In 2021, 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws.**<sup>7</sup> When young couples are deciding where to start a family, paid family leave may be an important deciding factor for them.

This bill would provide up to **12 weeks** of parental, caregiving, deployment or safe leave per year. It would also provide up to **26 weeks** of medical leave, which is the same amount of leave that Hawaii workers currently are eligible for under Hawaii's Temporary Disability Insurance law.<sup>8</sup>

This bill directs the Department of Labor to determine the standard percent of payroll that would be deducted to finance this program. Most employers and employees would split the payroll deductions 50/50, which is how Social Security and Medicare are financed, but employers could choose to cover more if they wish. **Employers with fewer than five employees would pay only half of the standard percent of payroll**, and they could decide how to split the cost between themselves and their employees. Self-employed workers could opt into the program, and they would pay only half of the standard level as well.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML\\_Health-Case\\_Fact-Sheet\\_11.30.21.pdf](https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML_Health-Case_Fact-Sheet_11.30.21.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML\\_Business-Case\\_Fact-Sheet\\_5.10.22.pdf](https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML_Business-Case_Fact-Sheet_5.10.22.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/small-businesses-support-bold-investments-child-care>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/geographic-mobility/state-to-state-migration.html>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07\\_Ch0346-0398/HRS0392/HRS\\_0392-0023.htm](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07_Ch0346-0398/HRS0392/HRS_0392-0023.htm)

**Employers also would no longer need to purchase and administer private Temporary Disability Insurance** for their employees (since employees' own illness or injury would be covered by the medical leave in the program), saving them time, administrative burdens, and money.

The wage replacement rates in this bill are as high as 90% of a worker's pay if they make 50% or less of the state average weekly wage (SAWW) and gradually dropping down to 50% of a worker's pay if they make twice the SAWW. The maximum amount that any worker could receive would be equal to the SAWW.

**We also respectfully request the following amendments to this bill:**

- **Add hanai family** to the definition of family member;
- Add language to **permit the use of safe leave if their family member (not just the worker) is the domestic violence survivor**;
- **Deleting the following language** at § -7(a), "provided that job duties and hours in the new position need not be identical to the previously-held position, but the employer shall make a reasonable effort to make them similar, at the employee's request." **This language would effectively allow employers to punish workers for taking leave** by shifting them to less desirable hours or duties. Requiring employees to request that their employers make reasonable efforts to restore them to positions with similar job duties and hours places a **burden on workers that exists in no other state paid family leave program**, and the most marginalized workers are the least likely to make such requests when returning from leave.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this bill with our suggested amendments.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo  
Director of Research and Economic Policy





**To: Hawaii State House Committees on Consumer Protection & Commerce**  
**Hearing: February 14, 2024 2:00 PM**  
**Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2757 HD1**

Dear Chair Nakashima and the Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in strong support of HB2757 HD1 Relating to Family Leave which requires the establishment and administration of a family and medical leave insurance program within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

We believe the timing of this comprehensive proposal is ripe. During the past six-seven years, two analyses of establishing paid family leave programs have been conducted. These reports include an economic analysis, Hawai'i-based eligibility modeling and cost breakdowns, a feasibility study, opinion polling and focus groups, options for compliance, and enforcement protocols.

It is time now to put the robust analyses, hard work, focus, and the valuable resources already expended by government entities and stakeholders alike, into real policy that gives actual relief to Hawaii's hardworking families in an increasingly challenging economy.

As we discovered during the pandemic, paid family leave is essential for families, employers, and our workforce. Paid family leave is good for business because employees are more productive when they have a benefit that helps to protect their families. In order for full participation in our economy, workers must have access to the benefits of paid leave otherwise, our businesses face a shortage of workers.

A paid family leave policy also helps even the playing field for small businesses. Currently, most small businesses cannot afford to offer adequate paid family leave to their employees, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining the best workers. A recent survey showed that two-thirds of small business owners support paid family leave.<sup>1</sup>

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls.

A paid family leave policy is a priority of the Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus. We ask that the committees pass this important measure for Hawaii's working families; and we thank the committee for this opportunity to provide our strong support of HB2757 HD1.

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<sup>1</sup> Survey: Small Businesses Support Tax Reforms to Pay for Robust Infrastructure Investments, Small Business Majority, June 8, 2021, [www.smallbusinessmajority.org](http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org)





February 14, 2024

Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce:

Chair Mark M. Nakashima

Rep. Natalia Hussey-Burdick

Vice Chair Jackson D. Sayama

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen

Rep. Terez Amato

Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi

Rep. Della Au Belatti

Rep. Adrian K. Tam

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates

Rep. Elijah Pierick

Rep. Mark J. Hashem

Re: HB2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) addresses the social, political, and economic impacts of domestic violence on individuals, families, and communities. We are a statewide partnership of domestic violence programs and shelters.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 27 member programs statewide, I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of HB2757 HD1** which would implement paid family and medical leave in Hawai'i.

**This critical policy is not only beneficial for caregivers and families throughout our islands but also to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking (all forms of intimate partner violence, IPV) who need to take time off to receive victim services, make court appearances, seek medical services, or relocate themselves and family.** Currently, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, and Maine include safe leave in their paid family leave laws.

Survivors of domestic violence face many challenges when making decisions about their safety. One of the most crucial factors is their finances. The ability to provide for themselves and their families is a key economic consideration for survivors when deciding to leave an abusive partner. It's also important to recognize the impact that financial abuse can have on survivors making it almost impossible to take unpaid time off to address their medical, emotional, and/or legal needs without extensive time off. We must support them in every way possible.

According to the CDC, approximately 75% of female intimate partner violence survivors and 48% of male domestic violence survivors experience some form of injury related to intimate



partner violence. Negative health outcomes that are associated with intimate partner violence include conditions affecting the heart, muscles and bones, and digestive, reproductive, and nervous systems, many of which are chronic. Survivors can experience mental health problems such as depression and PTSD symptoms.<sup>1</sup>

The lifetime per-victim cost is \$103,767 for women and \$23,414 for men. This economic cost estimate includes almost 32 million women and 12 million men who are victims of intimate partner violence during their lives in the US. The lifetime economic cost to the U.S. population is \$3.6 trillion for medical services for IPV-related injuries, lost productivity from paid work, criminal justice, and other costs.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Intimate partner violence: Consequences. *U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/fastfact.html>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

TESTIMONY OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LIFE INSURERS COMMENTING  
ON HB 2757, HD 1, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

February 14, 2024

Honorable Representative Mark M., Nakashima, Chair  
Honorable Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
State House of Representatives  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
Hawaii State Capitol Room 329  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

Our firm represents the American Council of Life Insurers (“ACLI”). The American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI) is the leading trade association driving public policy and advocacy on behalf of the life insurance industry. 90 million American families rely on the life insurance industry for financial protection and retirement security. ACLI’s member companies are dedicated to protecting consumers’ financial wellbeing through life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, reinsurance, and dental, vision and other supplemental benefits. ACLI’s 275 member companies represent 93 percent of industry assets in the United States.

Two hundred sixteen (216) ACLI member companies currently do business in the State of Hawaii; and they represent 95% of the life insurance premiums and 99% of the annuity considerations in this State.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on HB 2757, HD 1, Relating to Paid Family Leave.

HB 2757, HD 1, mandates the State of Hawaii to establish a family and medical leave insurance program to be administered by the State’s Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The program’s family leave and medical leave benefits are to be funded solely by way of employee payroll deductions.

ACLI supports sustainable paid family and medical leave laws (PFML).

When government-mandated PFML is proposed, ACLI will support legislation that includes the preservation of the employer’s ability to meet the mandated coverage requirement through private short-term disability income insurance.

For decades, disability insurers have been providing American workers with income protection when a medical condition keeps them out of the workplace. In 2017 alone, this private insurer-based system paid American workers more than \$20 billion as they recovered from conditions

that kept them from their jobs.<sup>1</sup> As Hawaii looks to establish a paid family leave program, disability insurers can provide employers with the coverage they need to comply with the family leave benefit required by HB 2757, HD 1, .

Enhancing the availability of wage replacement coverage for family and medical leave can best be achieved by authorizing the use of private insurance to fund the payment of benefits to enable the employee to care for a new born or adopted child, family members suffering from a serious health condition and other qualifying persons described in the bill. Disability income insurance currently provides the most extensive coverage to employees for wage replacement purposes.

Many insurers are well-equipped to provide family and medical leave employee benefits as they have the capital, organizational structure, and professional staff. Insurers have a deep reservoir of customer service, claims and administrative staff who are skilled at administering these benefits.

In addition to offering the policies and having the infrastructure to support administration, insurers help employers comply with unpaid leave requirements and accommodation services. Workers depend on their employers to help navigate the multiple and not always consistent benefits available at the employer level, the state level, and/or the federal level. Insurers have helped to facilitate employers' compliance with the various leave programs, paid and unpaid. This facilitation occurs because employers have trusted these companies' experience, expertise, and understanding of the entitlements under the various federal, state, and municipal laws which sometimes may overlap and other times may have different (and sometimes competing) eligibility rules, leave entitlements, and administration requirements.

Having insurers provide and administer these benefits makes sense for the following three key reasons:

- It will reduce the State's financial and administrative burden of implementing the mandated family and medical leave insurance program.
- Insurers already have the expertise, systems, and staff in providing and administering like benefits.
- It provides employers with a way to manage a number of leave and benefits in one consolidated platform thereby increasing ease of use and compliance.

Accordingly, ACLI suggests that HB 2757, HD 1, be amended to allow employers to meet the mandated coverage requirement through private short-term disability income insurance by adding a new section to read as follows:

An employer may satisfy the requirements of this chapter by providing covered individuals with the required family leave benefits through a private employer plan consisting of employer-provided benefits, insurance with any insurer

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<sup>1</sup> Calculation based on NAIC 2017 Annual Statement Data

authorized to transact the business of insurance in the state, or a combination of both. Employees covered by a private employer plan or insurance shall be exempt from program contributions but such contributions may be applied by the employer to fund the cost of the premiums to insure the payment of benefits required by this Chapter.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2757, HD 1, Relating to Paid Family Leave.

LAW OFFICES OF  
OREN T. CHIKAMOTO  
A Limited Liability Law Company

Oren T. Chikamoto  
P. O. Box 4277  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96812  
Telephone: (808) 531-1500  
E mail: [otc@chikamotolaw.com](mailto:otc@chikamotolaw.com)



**LATE**

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2757, HD 1

TO: Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama & CPC Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz  
Grants & Advancement Manager

DATE: February 14, 2024 (2:00 PM)

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Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** HB 2757, HD 1, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave (PFML) insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

Only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family leave. As noted by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute and other advocates, paid family and medical leave increases health equity and improves health for mothers and fathers. New mothers will have the opportunity to spend the first months of their child's life in close proximity, increasing the likelihood of breastfeeding and the benefits provided to newborns and infants. PMFL also affords families greater opportunity to care for aging parents.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions, and have also been deeply impacted by trauma related to histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**LATE**

Committee: Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 2:00pm  
Place: Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HB2757 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

The ACLU of Hawai'i **supports HB2757 Relating to Paid Family Leave**, which requires, by 1/1/2027, the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits. It also requires the Department, by 1/1/2028, to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

In the past seven years, the State has conducted at least two comprehensive studies on the efficacy and implementation of a paid family leave program for Hawai'i. The first was **completed in 2017 by the Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW)<sup>1</sup> with a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor**. The second was conducted by the **Legislative Reference Bureau<sup>2</sup> in response to ACT 109 (2018)**. We don't need any more studies on a paid family leave program in Hawai'i.

The United States is the only developed country in the entire world that does not provide by law paid family leave to workers. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) only provides unpaid leave. And only for a little more than half of all U.S. employees.<sup>3</sup>

For workers living paycheck to paycheck, this is not an option. When a loved one is sick, their only options are to leave them unattended, or lose income and risk missing utility bill payments, not buying food, or worse, risk becoming houseless. This is unacceptable.

Providing robust family leave for every worker is a principle of equality.

Nationally, a mere 17% of workers have access to paid family leave.<sup>4</sup> **That 17%, however, is nearly universally higher-paid workers who are more likely to be white.** During the COVID

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL\\_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Love-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Love-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019\\_PaidFamilyLeaveProgramImpactStudy.pdf](https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019_PaidFamilyLeaveProgramImpactStudy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WHF\\_FMLA2018SurveyResults\\_Appendices\\_Aug2020.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WHF_FMLA2018SurveyResults_Appendices_Aug2020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/08/31/lack-paternity-leave-problem-moms-and-dads-study-finds/5662562002/>

pandemic, those were the same workers who able to work safely from the comfort of their own homes.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed us just how vulnerable our workers and families are to virulent disease. Not only would a public paid family leave program provide much needed assistance to Hawai'i's "essential workers" who live paycheck to paycheck and are predominantly women and people of color, it could also prove useful in protecting customers and coworkers from catching and spreading contagious illnesses.

A robust public paid family leave insurance program would provide workers up to 16 weeks of paid leave. And because a public insurance program would cover all workers in the state, it would cost just \$58 a year for each worker.<sup>5</sup> **When split with the employer, that amounts to just \$0.56 a week.**

The ACLU of Hawai'i has a longstanding commitment to redressing the adverse effects of racism and sexism and other forms of invidious discrimination in American society. That includes decades long commitments to affirmative action in employment and paid leave reflected in our organization's policies. It includes commitments to defend essential health care coverage to address "harsh economic and social disparities that threaten our country's democratic foundation and the cohesion of our society."

13 states and the District of Columbia have implemented paid family leave programs. It's time for Hawai'i to join them.

Sincerely,

**Josh Frost**

Josh Frost  
Policy Assistant  
ACLU of Hawai'i  
[jfrost@acluhawaii.org](mailto:jfrost@acluhawaii.org)

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.*

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL\\_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Leave-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Leave-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf)





**LATE**

February 13, 2024

House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hearing on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 2:00 a.m.  
Representative Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Sayama, Vice-Chair

**Testimony in Strong Support of HB2757\_HD1**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee,

UNITE HERE Local 5 represents 10,000 working people in the hotel, food service and health care industries across Hawaii.

We strongly support the intent of providing paid medical and family leave for Hawaii workers. HB2757\_HD1 will give Hawaii's working families security, peace of mind and opportunity. Local families now are dealing with runaway rent, inflation and medical cost increases. The ability to take time off and not worry about lost income when illness strikes or family needs arise is critical to the pursuit of happiness.

Without this type of social safety net, families are disincentivized to take care of themselves or each other, all because of the implied economic threat to income or job security. This is an appalling economic threat to live under, and one that lawmakers can eradicate with this simple solution.

Enacting paid family and medical leave as public policy will improve Hawaii's quality of life forever. Other states have passed this type of policy, Hawaii should too.

**We urge you to pass HB2757\_HD1.**

Thank you for your consideration.

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 5:04:42 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zane K Lacaden	?Ohana Leader Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Zane Lacaden and I am a registered voter in district 10-07 In Kahului, Maui. I am testifying strongly in support for HB 2757 relating to paid family leave.

Paid family leave is important to me because my best friend, who is a single mother of a 14 year old girl and a 8 year old boy, has been suffering from some kind of autoimmune disease since 2017. She’s always had to make a decision to sacrifice her health for the wellbeing of her children. She has a masters degree in Social Work, and the career itself takes a toll physically and mentally. She couldn’t take time off, because 2 weeks is just not enough time to figure out what the disease is, and how to treat it.

She finally had enough last year (2023) and took July, August, and September off. Her job allowed her time off using sick leave and TDI, but it’s still a month or two of missing paychecks to keep up with her household overhead. Family and Friends helped in any way they could. Financially, getting groceries, etc... I am also her neighbor, so I also helped with childcare, taking care of her while she’s physically unable to do things.

July was a month of discovery with learning that she has Hashimoto’s Desises (hypothyroid). Then August had the fires, and she really wanted to help, but she couldn’t because of the TDI. It all helped, but the stress of not being able to provide if she needs more time to recover didn’t help her well being mentally or physically.

She was getting better all through September, but went back to work in October against doctors' suggestions. During that time her health declined, and it was like going back to stage 1. This could have been avoided if Paid Family Leave was available for her to figure out more and more how to live with the Hashimoto’s knowing that her family is covered with a roof over their heads and food available for them.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Zane Lacaden

‘Ohana Leader Council Member



**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 6:42:43 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brooke Hallett	American Academy of Pediatrics - Hawaii Chapter	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Committee Members,**

**The Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics represents over 250 board certified pediatricians. We strongly support HB2757 relating to family leave. Paid family leave benefits children and their families and provides a big step forward in addressing health and economic disparities. Paid family leave helps support a stable family environment in which children experience less stress and have a strong foundation for positive learning, health and behavior. Having paid time away from work for caregivers to be present during major life events such as welcoming a new child, personal illness, or caring for sick family members helps support not only the health and well-being of the individual family, but also the economic well-being of families and the state.**

**Health**

**Paid family leave improves health outcomes. Children are more likely to attend well-child medical visits and receive all necessary immunizations. Breastfeeding rates and maternal mental health improve. There is a reduction in infant mortality. One study found mothers living in states with the most generous paid family leave had a 32% greater likelihood of breastfeeding at six months and 15% lower likelihood of having postpartum depression.[\[1\]](#)**

**Economics**

**Paid family leave improves the economy. This is particularly true for working mothers. They are more likely to return to the workforce, be healthier, more economically secure, and less likely to need public benefits. Mothers with paid leave are 39% less likely to receive public assistance after the birth of a child.[\[2\]](#) If women in Hawaii participated in the labor force at the same rate as women in countries with paid leave, we would have 18,000 more workers in Hawaii and over \$650 million more wages earned.[\[3\]](#) Paid leave**

also helps businesses retain employees with firm specific knowledge, including the healthcare workforce. According to the Department of Labor, turnover is very costly, taking approximately 21% of the employees salary and benefits to recruit and train a replacement worker. Paid leave would also help level the playing field for small businesses including private practitioners. Small business owners cannot afford to offer adequate paid leave which puts them at a disadvantage to attracting and retaining the best workers.

## Equity

Paid family leave helps address equity. Lower-income workers in Hawaii are the least likely to have paid family and medical leave. These are the families who need the most financial support. It is very expensive to raise a family in our state and many parents have more than one job. If a woman in Hawaii takes 4 weeks of unpaid leave, on average, the household will lose \$3,700 of income. In addition, infant mortality rates are disproportionately higher in low-income populations. This includes the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population. The rates are 9.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and up to 22 for people from the Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia. This is compared to the state average of 4.67 infant deaths per 1,000.<sup>[4]</sup> Paid family leave can greatly reduce existing health and economic disparities.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Globally, 186 countries provide paid leave. Eight states plus the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws. These places have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. A small payroll tax can cover the costs of this bill. HB2757 provides a very important investment in the health and economic well-being of Hawaii families and keiki. We, the pediatricians of the Hawaii AAP, want to make our support very clear. Mahalo for your consideration.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Perry, et al. *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 143(1):p14-22, January 2024.

<sup>[2]</sup> Heather Boushey and Sarah Jane Glynn, “The Effects of Paid Family and Medical Leave on Employment Stability and Economic Security” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2012)

<sup>[3]</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). *Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Expanded State Employment Status Demographic Data (2021 Annual Averages)*. Retrieved 13 December 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/lau/ex14tables.htm>; U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2021 (Table B20017)*. Retrieved 6

December 2022, from data.census.gov. For methodology, see Novello, A. (2021, July). **The Cost of Inaction: How a Lack of Family Care Policies Burdens the U.S. Economy and Families.** Retrieved 6 December 2022 from National Partnership for Women & Families website:

**[4] Infant Mortality and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders.** US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health. <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/infant-mortality-and-native-hawaiianspacific-islanders>



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

**LATE**

**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
President

**Logan Okita**  
Vice President

**Lisa Thompson**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Ann Mahi**  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAII HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Item: **HB2757 HD1 - Relating to paid family leave**  
Position: **Support**  
Hearing: **February 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 329**  
Submitter: **Osa Tui, Jr. – President, Hawai'i State Teachers Association**

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association **supports** HB2757 HD1 which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations by 1/1/2027 to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits and then requires the Department by 1/1/2028 to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. It also specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported that family leave had a positive or neutral effect on their business. Small businesses were less likely than large businesses to report any negative effects.

This bill is also for workers. The majority of our workforce in Hawai'i cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees. All workers deserve access to family leave.

A public insurance model that includes all eligible workers in the state is affordable. The Institute for Women's Policy Research studied the use and cost of family leave insurance for our state and found that the annual cost to cover sixteen weeks of leave for a worker making \$48,000 would be roughly \$58 - a small price to pay for the financial security guaranteed by sixteen weeks of paid family leave.

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



# HAWAII WORKERS CENTER

(503) WORKERS

**LATE** \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

Defending and Respecting the workers of  
Hawaii'i

hawaiiworkerscenter@gmail.com  
Mail: 2252 Puna St., Honolulu, HI 96817  
hawaiiworkerscenter.org

February 13, 2024

**LATE**

**Executive Board  
Committee**

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*Board Chair*

Mary Ochs  
*Vice Chair*

Dr. Arcelita Imasa  
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**Executive Director**

Sergio Alcubilla III, Esq.

Hawaii'i State House of Representatives  
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT for H.B. 2575 HD1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE.**

Dear Chair Rep. Nakashima, Vice-Chair Rep. Sayama, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

The Hawaii'i Workers Center (HWC) envisions a Hawaii'i in which all workers are empowered to exercise their right to organize for their social, economic and political well-being.

It is a resource of information, education, training and organizing for Hawaii's workers.

The HWC stands in strong support of H.B. 2575 HD1 which requires requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

Paid family and medical leave is often a luxury that is afforded to higher paying jobs and professional industries. However, the majority of Hawaii's workforce is not afforded this luxury and cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member who is sick. Our current system only allows an extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees.

Allowing parents to care for newborn children or family members who are ill should not be a luxury or benefit afforded only to the few. As Hawaii's population ages and many continue to live in multigenerational homes, it is imperative that we have a system in place to support our kupuna, young families, and working class communities. This program will begin to lay the framework so that all of Hawaii's workers will not have to make the choice between caring for a loved one and bonding with their newborn or being able to pay rent the next month.

We ask that you please pass and support H.B. 2757 HD1.

Sincerely,

Sergio Alcubilla  
Executive Director





**MAUI**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**LATE**

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 329  
Wednesday, February 14, 2024 AT 2:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

**OPPOSE HB2757 HD1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **OPPOSES HB2757 HD1**.

While the Chamber understands the intent of this measure, we cannot continue to hit small businesses with increased regulations and costs on all fronts. There have been numerous requirements that have been placed on small businesses that they are accumulating to the point where it is less costly and more beneficial for a small business to close its doors.

We understand that this bill will replace Temporary Disability Insurance with a state run "leave" insurance fund and division of DLIR. We object to the requirement of allowing up to 12 weeks of family leave when the state currently requires only 4 weeks. Small businesses are having a very hard time finding employees as it is, to require them to try to find a temporary employee for up to 12 weeks would not help them at all. And this is just one of many issues we have with this bill

Small businesses are the life blood of Hawai'i's economy and to pile yet another requirement on them is approaching the last straw.

For this reason, we **OPPOSE HB2757 HD1** and respectfully ask that it be deferred.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:38:14 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

I am in strong SUPPORT of HB2757 HD1. It is time that ALL workers, particularly low-wage workers, are provided with the same *humane* working conditions that other workers are afforded. Being able to stay home when you are sick or when your young children are sick and not lose your pay (that is unfortunately never enough to begin with) is a benefit that all employers should be providing for their employees. This also obviously reduces the spread of viruses that could have serious health impacts for co-workers.

I can't even begin to count the number of times I have seen friends and families whom I worked with having to *drag* themselves to work when they are feeling their absolute worst because they have to pay their bills. I've witnessed single, homeless parents having to call in sick in order to take care of their babies or toddlers because no one else could care for them. That meant money taken out of the paychecks they depended on in order to move out of our shelter and into housing. These are just a few examples of what our low-wage workers are going through out there.

Mahalo nui to our legislators who introduced and support this critical piece of legislation.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:39:36 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Abby Simmons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and esteemed Committee,

I strongly support this bill, it's desperately needed.

Mahalo nui loa,

Abby Simmons

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:51:43 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Krystal Baba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**STRONGLY SUPPORT!** Please pass HB2757 regarding paid leave.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:55:22 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terri Calizo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:58:57 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Bickel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

n 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:59:47 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am supportive of this bill that every worker deserves paid family and medical leave. It is only when worker's health and family life is stable will they be able to continue to work without worry. The paid leave would help achieve this through community effort. Instead of additional deductions from people's paycheck, perhaps see if current taxes pay to the government is enough to fund this program. Paid leave is worth funding over some of the other projects, e.g. a new stadium. Thank you for your consideration!

Mahalo,  
Michelle K.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 3:01:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Phil Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

All who are interested in supporting our working families in Hawaii should be happy to pass this important bill. With the shortage of workers in our state it is essential that we create the social safety net that allows them to remain employed. Paid family leave not only allows them to respond to their essential family obligations but in many cases it allows them to remain in the workforce. Workers should not have to make the choice between meeting their families needs and possible dismissal from their jobs.



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 3:01:42 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Samonte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**SUPPORT!** I support this bill, HB2757 HD1.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 3:10:26 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
RoAnn Vioria	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2757, which proposes the establishment of a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. This bill is essential for ensuring that employees in Hawaii have the necessary support during times of family or medical need.

HB 2757 aims to bridge the gap in our current system by providing employees with the opportunity to take leave for important reasons such as caring for a newborn, adopted, or foster child, dealing with a serious health condition, or assisting a family member with a serious health issue. The program would offer financial assistance to eligible individuals, enabling them to take time off from work without worrying about losing income or job security.

This proposed program reflects our state's values of compassion and fairness. By prioritizing the well-being of workers and their families, we demonstrate our commitment to building a supportive and inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. HB 2757 not only benefits employees but also contributes to the overall health and stability of our workforce and economy.

In conclusion, I urge you to support HB 2757 and take action to create a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program in Hawaii. By doing so, we can provide much-needed assistance to individuals and families facing challenging circumstances while reinforcing our dedication to social and economic justice.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 3:40:29 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB2757. Thank you.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 4:01:38 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please strongly support this bill which strengthens families, and helps ensure that family members, young or old, get the care essential to their well-being!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 4:04:34 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Delafield	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i values families and understands the importance of supporting their health and well-being. But, so many families in our state are not getting the support that they need at the most critical times in their lives.

**Ensuring that Paid Family & Medical Leave is passed into law will allow families to provide needed care to their keiki and kūpuna.**

As a Hawai‘i resident, a parent, and an academic researcher investigating maternal and perinatal health I see the enormous benefit that this bill will provide for our entire community and the potential for a positive intergenerational impact.

There are so many examples of ways this bill could improve the health and well-being of families and communities. Here is one that might not have been mentioned.

Today, the American Heart Association (AHA) just published a scientific statement on the importance of the **opportunities in the postpartum period to reduce cardiovascular disease risk** after adverse pregnancy outcomes. The AHA highlights many actions that can be taken during the postpartum period to change the trajectory of someone’s health.

Providing Paid Family and Medical Leave for families would support many of the interventions highlighted by the AHA. For example, a woman who had hypertension during her pregnancy would have an easier time establishing breastfeeding if she didn’t have to go back to work due to financial concerns. Breastfeeding could help reduce her blood pressure, help promote weight loss after pregnancy, and provide multiple benefits for her newborn infant. Without Paid Family & Medical Leave, this woman might have to go back to work before she is ready and able to make important changes that could benefit her baby, reduce risk to her cardiovascular health, and preserve her health for future pregnancies.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of this vitally important bill. Please pass Paid Family & Medical Leave for the health of our families and communities in Hawai'i.

~ Rebecca Delafield, PhD (Honolulu, HI)

American Heart Association statement:

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/epub/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001212>

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 4:38:26 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bernadette Kaleinani Tom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Family leave would be a welcomed additional benefit to Hawai'i working citizens because we live multi-generational lives and end up having to take care of unexpected illnesses or permanent health issues that change our lives; e.g., parents that suffer terminal illnesses, strokes, heart attacks, etc and HB2757 would take the stressors of these unexpected events from taking its toll on the entire family.

Please consider HB2757 for residents of the State of Hawai'i because sometimes our neighbors need help sometimes and it is our kuleana to help each other, ultimately helping ourselves, as that's what we are known for.

Thank you.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 5:00:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MALIA HANAKAHI	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members, my name is Malia Hanakahi.**

**I am testifying in support of bill HB2757, which could create a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai`i. Right now, we have 0 weeks of paid leave, but families who have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits. Paid leave is also good for businesses and the economy. Everyone benefits in a state with paid family and medical leave, especially our `ohana.**

**This bill is important to me because of many factors that go into or arise with child-rearing. Maternal and paternal mental health, postpartum depression, infant-parent bonding, physical health, and economic well-being. As an early childhood educator in the State of Hawai`i, when I had my own children, I found it preposterous that I had 0 weeks of paid family leave, but instead had to use my sick and personal days in order to get paid. I ended up having to take leave without pay in order to care for my child. Furthermore, the amount of leave I was “allowed” to take (on my own dime), which amounted to about 3 months, is not enough. Babies wake every few hours to eat or feed throughout the night, leaving parents with little sleep. Additionally, although there are some laws which put in place requirements for breastfeeding mothers in the workforce, the reality of implementation is really lacking. In many cases, there is no private space and a lack of time for mothers to express breastmilk while they are away from their babies. I gave birth to both of my children at 36 weeks, being categorized as preterm labor. My first child had significant problems with latching and feeding, which in turn affected my own mental health. Not to mention all the physical challenges after childbirth. Because of these challenges, I felt it hard to bond and connect with my child. My husband went back to work just a week after I gave birth, leaving most of the child-rearing burden on me and the financial strain on him. Losing an income due to being on leave without pay would put any family in Hawai`i under a significant amount of financial strain. I was also the parent with health benefits, which would have to be paid fully out of pocket (with no contribution from my employer) or I would lose benefits. During this time, we ended up on government assistance. Becoming a new parent is very alienating in itself, but I was completely unaware of how governments can either support or hurt the family unit...and in my own experiences, I have seen how our government lacks in supporting mothers, children, and**



**their families. So much happens within a child's first 3 years of life, yet this is a time when parents are often under the most stress.**

**Thank you for listening and allowing me to share my support of bill HB2757.**

**Malia Hanakahi**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 5:11:24 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Deb Nehmad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws, and the states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. Paid family leave is good for business—employees become more productive and loyal when they have it.

Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child.

HB2757 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a family and medical leave insurance program. The program extends family leave to 12 weeks and medical leave to 26 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Employees can take family leave to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, to care for a qualifying service member who is individual's next of kin, and for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking to take self care. Employees can take medical leave when they have a serious health condition that makes the covered individual unable to perform the functions of the individual's position. The medical leave insurance program would meet Hawai'i's temporary disability insurance (TDI) requirement.

HB1658/SB2046 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a family leave insurance program. The program extends family leave to 16 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Mothers who gave birth would be able to take paid family leave in addition to temporary disability insurance (TDI). Victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, could use the family leave insurance program to receive medical, victim, legal services they need or to relocate. Those who suffer disability resulting

from accident, sickness, pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or organ donation could use the family leave insurance program to receive health care. HB1658/SB2046 would eliminate the previous threshold of 100 employees for employers to be subject to the family leave law.

SB2474/HB1768 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a family leave insurance program. The program extends family leave to 16 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Mothers who gave birth would be able to take paid family leave in addition to temporary disability insurance (TDI). SB2474/HB1768 would eliminate the previous threshold of 100 employees for employers to be subject to the family leave law.

Women, as primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family and medical leave. According to AARP Hawaii, there are approximately 157,000 unpaid family caregivers in the State.

According to AAUW, moms working full-time, year-round are paid 74 cents for every dollar paid to dads. This is known as the motherhood penalty. This is unacceptable.

Please support this important bill.

Mahalo

Deb Nehmad, mother

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 5:29:46 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because *as much as I love taking care of my young grandson, child, quality and affordable childcare has made it difficult for my kids to get me some help At 70 years old, it's a lot.*

Mahalo for letting me testify!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 5:33:41 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i families need paid family leave:

- In Hawai'i, where many families are living paycheck to paycheck, it is critical that our state implement programs so that families are able to thrive, not just survive.
- Currently, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family leave.
- Paid Family & Medical Leave has health benefits:
  - It allows people to better manage their chronic disease by creating time they can get treatment.
  - PFML improves health for both mothers and fathers.
  - When mothers can stay with their children, breastfeeding is increased, which leads to life-long health benefits for babies.
  - It allows families to provide care for their kūpuna.
  - It has been shown to increase health equity.

PFML:

- Is insurance, funded by small deductions from paychecks, that is used to pay employees when they need:
  - Parental leave – for parents, including fathers and adoptive and foster parents, to bond with a new child
  - Medical leave – for a worker to recover from their own serious illness or injury
  - Caregiving leave – for a worker to care for a family member with a serious health condition.
  - These are areas where Ohana need to have help and employees need to be give paid time off. Most employees cannot afford to take any time off from work because they need their paychecks. Passing this bill will go a long way to help all of Hawaii's employees needing to care for themselves and their families.
  - Please support HB 2757
  - Thank you for your consideration,
  - Michele Nihipali
  - 54-074 A Kam Hwy.
  - Hauula, HI 96717

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:10:03 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patti Hatzistavrakis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Patti Hatzistavrakis, am in full support of Bill 2757 HB RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE. In Hawai'i, where many families are living paycheck to paycheck, our state must implement programs so that families can thrive, not just survive. Paid Family & Medical Leave has health benefits such as allowing people to better manage their chronic disease by creating time they can get treatment. In addition, it improves health for both mothers and fathers. When mothers can stay with their children, breastfeeding is increased, which leads to life-long health benefits for babies. Furthermore, Paid Family Leave allows families to provide care for their kūpuna and has been shown to increase health equity. As a supporter of Bill 2757 HB RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE, I urge the committee to pass this bill, for the betterment of our communities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:10:17 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Annette Mente	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima & committee members,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** for the passage of HB 2757 to establish a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. This is such a critical bill for working families and keeping those families in Hawaii (vs moving to states with these benefits in place and with a lower cost of living).

As a state worker, I can't imagine not having leave benefits in place to care for family members. It's been so critical to maintain mental and physical well-being for all of my family especially as both my parents approached end-of-life. I was able to honor my parents' wishes to spend their last days in the familiar surroundings of their home with family by their bedside.

Please help support this important policy change to help make Hawaii be a family-friendly state.

Thank you.

Annette Taeko Mente

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:15:57 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ka`iulani Galon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a mother, sister, daughter and community advocate, I full heartedly support the passing of HB2757. Family paid leave provides the true support our state and country can be uplifting to allow ALL an equal start from birth. Allowing parents the grace and agency to stay with their newborns is a privilege that not all families can afford. To allow for more maternal, infant, and child health outcomes, Paid Family Leave can be a catalyst to start out and encourage each life with love, support and the ability to attend to their family in a way all families deserve, even those without privilege. This is a social justice means to allow for all our keiki to thrive in Hawaii. Please take this testimony and move this policy forward.



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:32:03 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nhi Hoan Quach	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because *I like many Hawaii residents expect to be an unpaid caregiver for a friend of family member who has health problem or disability in the next few years and without job protections and financial safety net offered by the passing of this bill, i and many other in this situation will experience financial hardship and stresses that impacts our health and well-being further straining our health care system. I personally know of women who had to make the difficult choice of leaving their job while still of a abled body and mind to remain in the workforce. A co-worker of mines recently due to taking repeated leave for her own health problem and to care for parents, lost her full time status at and also health care coverage benefits from her employer.*

Mahalo for letting me testify!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 6:51:38 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessie L Gonsalves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hb2757 I support fully and needs to be passed. PAID FAMILY LEAVE IS NEEDED! Please pass this bill!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 7:18:11 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha/- please support this bill, which will cover family caretakers working in small companies. This is especially important since a large number of companies in Hawaii employ under 100 people.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Elizabeth Hansen

Hakalau HI 96710

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 7:22:26 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rodger Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha/- please support this bill, which will cover family caretakers working in small companies. This is especially important since a large number of companies in Hawaii employ under 100 people.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rodger Hansen

Hakalau HI 96710

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 7:38:41 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this legislation. Hawaii should lead in family-friendly policies like this one. Please give this bill the support it deserves.

David Ball

Waialae-Kahala

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 7:40:43 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Courtney Velazquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill.

Mahalo!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:11:38 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leilani Kailiawa	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha, Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of bill HB2757 HD 1 regarding paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because I have lived experience where I took care of my newborn child at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children at his bedside for 7 months. It was important for me to be able to bond with him and breastfeed him, knowing that he would have developmental challenges in the future. I am from Hawai'i Island. I was away from my older two sons and husband to take care of my child. My husband took off from his independent contractor job every two weeks to fly over to Oahu so he could bond with our son and give me a break. I exhausted my TDI from my job, needed to quit, needed to bond, and needed to breastfeed my son in order to help him with his developmental needs after knowing that he could have challenges in the future.

PAID leave would have helped us. Families should not have to choose between their health, their family, or their income.

Mahalo for allowing me to share my testimony.

Please strongly consider passing this bill

With gratitude,  
Leilani Kailiawa

Send DataSend Data

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:12:59 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I live in Mō'ili'ili. I'm writing in STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2757 HD1.

In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, O'ahu, Mō'ili'ili



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:24:40 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:43:20 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nikki-Ann Yee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair, Sayama, and members of the committee,

I strongly support HB2757, HD1 relating to paid family leave. Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child. In Hawai‘i, we pride ourselves on ‘ohana and family values. This measure is an opportunity to show how our state values are reflected in our state priorities. Please pass this measure. Mahalo!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:45:36 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

My name is Caroline Kunitake and I am in support of HB 2757 HD1.

I support paid family leave. I have taken care of some family members and I realize how this legislation could help struggling families. The cost of living in Hawaii is very high. Few families have resources to hire outside help with caregiving. We must find solutions to allow people to continue to work while caring for their loved ones.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws, and the states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. Paid family leave is good for business—employees become more productive and loyal when they have it.

Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child.

HB2757 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a **family and medical leave insurance program**. The program extends family leave to 12 weeks and medical leave to 26 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Employees can take family leave to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, to care fo a qualifying service member who is individual’s next of kin, and for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking to take self care. Employees can take medical leave when they have a serious health condition that makes the covered individual unable to perform the functions of the individual's position. The medical leave insurance program would meet Hawai‘i’s temporary disability insurance (TDI) requirement.

Please support this legislation. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:47:14 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
justin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

Mahalo,

Justin Hughey

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:49:20 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai'i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It's time for Hawai'i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:50:05 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support this bill for the reasons stated in the Democratic Party of Hawaii Education Caucus testimony.

To: Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Jackson Sayama, Vice Chair and  
Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta

RE: HB 2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Position: Strong Support

I am writing in support of HB 2757 HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave. As we discovered during the pandemic, paid family leave is essential for families, employers, our workforce, and the health of our communities.

Paid family leave is good for business because employees are more productive when they have a benefit that helps to protect their families. Paid family leave also protects our workplaces, allowing employees who are sick to stay home to prevent passing illnesses to others.

Paid family leave enables full participation in our economy, workers must have access to the benefits of paid leave otherwise employers face a shortage of workers.

Paid family leave is a priority of the Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus. I respectfully ask the Committee to pass this important measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony in strong support of HB2757 HD1.



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 9:41:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because *[optional personal story]*.

Mahalo for letting me testify!

Andrew Isoda

Lahaina, Mau'i

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 9:59:40 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

TO: Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

FROM: Natalie Iwasa, CPA, CFE  
808-395-3233

HEARING: 2 p.m. Wednesday, February 14, 2024

SUBJECT: HB2757, HD1, Paid Family Leave - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair Nakashima and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to provide testimony on HB2757, HD1, which would require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance the payment of benefits, among other things.

Small businesses are already burdened by increased state unemployment insurance fees, inflation and added regulations. While some governmental mandates exempt small businesses, this bill does not.

In addition, the DLIR appears to be understaffed and/or underfunded as evidenced by its backlog of applications and payments under the state's premium supplementation program. The department is often a year or two behind processing applications, and apparently has no funding left to pay eligible employers.

Before you add another program that will be costly for small businesses in particular, please be sure current programs are adequately resourced and funded.

**Please hold HB2757, HD1, in committee.**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:16:52 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jasmine Jenkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because I am currently on maternity leave after giving birth to my son. Thankfully my employer has included benefits for employees to receive 12 weeks of paid leave. I have gone through medical complications which I am now going to be on leave for 17 weeks. Meanwhile, other moms at our Vietnam office receive 6 months paid maternity leave as it is part of their government's law for mothers. All while our own moms here in Hawaii, who I know gave birth around the same time had less than half the time paid or no paid leave at all. Of course moms don't give birth for the economy's sake but it's statistically good for the economy, yet there's little to no support. This isn't a partisan issue either. When surveyed in 2022, over 80% of Americans voted that paid family leave should be mandatory for all states. We need our people to be healthy and live without complications. We're consistently ranked in the top five healthiest states in the country, yet we don't have paid family leave to ensure our women and children are healthy to be able to provide for themselves and family? That makes zero sense. We need to do better. I support this bill. Mahalo for letting me testify!

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 2:26:02 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marilyn Mick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Mahalo for letting me testify!

Marilyn Mick, Honolulu

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce. My name is Carol Wakayama and I wish to submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757 HD1 (“Relating to Paid Family Leave”).

Changes outlined in HB 2757 HD1 would greatly benefit the entire community as ‘family leave’ does not only pertain to individuals caring for ‘one category of family member.’ HB 2757 HD1 could provide life-improving (or life saving) changes/benefits to: 1) young families with a child who needs care; 2) families providing assistance to elderly family members; and 3) any other person needing help/time to care for a precious someone who has a serious medical condition.

Placing employees into a position where they possibly feel forced to choose between their jobs or caring for a family member is ... unimaginable.

HB 2757 HD1 might also become a ‘life saver to the community’ when another pandemic (or some other widespread crisis) strikes. Perhaps the number of fatalities could be reduced if employees (who previously did not have any type of family leave benefits) - feel they can now take ‘covered time off’ to rest, heal and help their family member(s). The passage of HB 2757 HD1 may help reduce employees’ fears that they will lose their jobs/sources of income - if they choose to help their family .... and, possibly, the community-at-large.

Humbly, I request your support of HB 2757 HD1. Thank you for this opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Carol Wakayama  
Honolulu, Hawaii

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:09:11 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Camile Cleveland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Camile Cleveland and I'm a resident of Kaimukī on the Island of O‘ahu. I am testifying on this measure as an individual citizen, and **I strongly support HB2757.**

Paid family leave is critical in order to keep Hawaiian families in Hawai‘i. **13 states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws although the United States is the only developed country that doesn’t have national paid family leave. The United States is embarrassingly behind** - demonstrating how we undervalue parental responsibilities and other caretakers as a society. The average amount of paid family leave in OECD nations is about one year. The second-worst nation after the United States (which has zero weeks of paid leave) is Mexico, which has 12 weeks of leave.

Hawai‘i struggles to keep our working-age families from moving away. [34,898 residents of Hawai‘i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021.](#) We are competing with states that have paid family and medical leave – including the entire West Coast – for the best workers. When young couples are deciding where to start a family, paid family and medical leave may be an important deciding factor for them.

Hawai‘i has [154,000 unpaid family caregivers](#) for adult family members, providing 144 million hours of care worth \$2.6 billion per year, and those numbers will continue to increase as our population ages.

I would love to see this measure pass with **more than twelve weeks paid family leave**, and see Hawai‘i be a leader in passing a Paid Family Leave policy which truly values the parents and caretakers and drives longer-term benefits in the state. As stated in a [brief by the National Conference of State Legislatures](#), "**Families lose billions in wages by taking unpaid leave, reducing their time at work to care for family members, or by paying for child care. Studies suggest that paid leave leads to healthier babies who have better outcomes later in life, and enables mothers to stay better connected to the workforce, which leads to higher earnings.**"

Paid Family Leave should be a unanimous, common-sense measure. Such a policy shows that we value those who care for keiki and kūpuna, and is long overdue for Hawai‘i.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:26:07 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Wakatake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support HB2757.

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai'i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It's time for Hawai'i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

Mahalo for your time,

Linda Wakatake



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:28:55 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai‘i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai‘i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai‘i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It’s time for Hawai‘i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:40:50 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE**

**Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair**

**DATE: Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

**TIME: 02:00 p.m.**

**RE: HB 2757, HD1 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE.**

**Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committees:**

**My name is Linda Dorset, and I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757, HD1. The bill establishes a family leave insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need some paid time off to care for a loved one at home.**

**Family caregivers are the backbone of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care that range from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that the family member can remain in the home and age in place; but they sacrifice income, job security, and savings. Family caregivers often pay as much as \$7,200/Year out of their own pockets for needed supplies such as incontinent supplies, medications, and additional in-home assistance. It is estimated that there are 154,000 Caregivers giving 144 Million Care Hours/Year which amounts to \$2.6 Billion of Unpaid Labor/Year. Many must also balance work and caregiving or leave the workforce altogether.**

**Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB2757, HD1. They deserve this help. We know eventually all of us will be there.**

**Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!**

**Linda Dorset  
Wailuku, Maui**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 9:13:16 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dan Gardner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dan Gardner, and my wife and I are in very STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757. The bill establishes a family leave insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need some paid time off to care for a loved one at home. Caregivers are the backbone of Hawai'i's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care to loved ones - from bathing, preparing meals and escorting them for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that their family member can remain in their homes and age in place. Many caregivers have to quit or retire from their jobs prematurely to provide the needed care, often sacrificing their own source of income and financial security. Caregivers should not have to choose between their jobs and caring for their family. Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB2757.

Sincerely, Dan Gardner

Honolulu, HI

daniel.dano.gardner@gmail.com

House Committee On Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Testimony on House Bill No. 2757, HD1  
Relating to Family Leave

Aloha Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Deborah M. Oyakawa, and I was a caregiver for my mother who had dementia. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of H.B. 2757, HD1. The bill provides a family leave insurance program that can help working caregivers with paid time off to care for their loved ones at home.

Due to the stress of being a caregiver, my focus and energy level were taxed and I was not performing well at work. I had to reduce my hours significantly. To supplement my income, I tapped into my retirement plan and eventually drained the funds. I am now in my sixties with no retirement money to help support me.

There are many family caregivers who find themselves in similar situations. They sacrifice their own financial security to provide countless hours of care that range from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that their family member can remain in their homes and age in place. In addition, family caregivers often pay out of their own pockets for needed health care supplies and additional assistance. Like me, they have to draw down from their personal and retirement savings. They shouldn't have to choose between their own livelihood or take care their families. Please support these unsung heroes by passing H.B.2757, HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Deborah M. Oyakawa  
Waikoloa, HI 96738  
deboyakawa@gmail.com

February 14, 2024

TO: Chair Nakashima and Committee Members  
FROM: Carl Takamura  
RE: HB 2757 HD1

My name is Carl Takamura and my sister and I provided care for my mother, especially during the latter years of her life before she passed away at 105. I strongly support this bill that would establish a family care insurance program for working caregivers who need paid time off to care for a loved one at home.

Family caregivers are a vital and, I believe, an underappreciated component of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care performing daily tasks so that their loved one(s) can continue to live at home and age in place. Many caregivers struggle to provide this care, often at the sacrifice of their own families, personal health, and financial security. This bill would provide some much-needed support for these unsung heroes.

We urge you to approve this important proposal.

Mahalo,

*Carl Takamura*

Carl Takamura  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
Email: ctakamura@aol.com

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 9:46:16 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Anuheia Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i families need paid family leave:

- In Hawai‘i, where many families are living paycheck to paycheck, it is critical that our state implement programs so that families are able to thrive, not just survive.
- Currently, only one in four private sector workers has access to paid family leave.
- Paid Family & Medical Leave has health benefits:
  - It allows people to better manage their chronic disease by creating time they can get treatment.
  - PFML improves health for both mothers and fathers.
  - When mothers can stay with their children, breastfeeding is increased, which leads to life-long health benefits for babies.
  - It allows families to provide care for their kūpuna.
  - It has been shown to increase health equity.

PFML:

- Is insurance, funded by small deductions from paychecks, that is used to pay employees when they need:
  - Parental leave – for parents, including fathers and adoptive and foster parents, to bond with a new child
  - Medical leave – for a worker to recover from their own serious illness or injury
  - Caregiving leave – for a worker to care for a family member with a serious health condition

There are so many individuals feeling overwhelmed due to caregiving issues and having to return to work too early. Please consider this bill.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 9:50:56 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen L Worthington	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

As a mother and a children's policy attorney, I urge you to **support** bill HB2757 HD1 and provide paid family leave for Hawai'i families. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave makes economic sense, enhances the health and well-being of children and their caregivers, and is the right and moral policy decision.

Best regards,

Karen Worthington

Kula, Hawaii 96790



Testimony on House Bill No. 2757 HD 1  
RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE  
Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 2:00 pm  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

HB 2757 HD1

Aloha Chair Nakashima, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dolores Foley and I am a former caregiver of my mother who had cancer. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 2757 HD1. The bill establishes a family leave insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need some paid time off to care for a loved one at home.

Family caregivers are the backbone of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care that range from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that their family member can remain in their homes and age in place. Many caregivers have to quit or retire from their jobs prematurely to provide the needed care, often sacrificing their own source of income and financial security. Caregivers should not have to choose between their jobs or caring for their family. Please support these unsung heroes by passing H.B. 2757 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2737

Dolores Foley  
Kailua Oahu  
dolores@hawaii.edu



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 9:53:23 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel Paul Ross	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this measure that is so important to the working people of Hawaii

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE**

**Hearing:**

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 2:00 pm  
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONEY ON HOUSE BILL 2757, HD 1  
RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

**To:** Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair; Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee

My name is Anna Filler and I am in strong support of **HB 2757, HD 1**. The purpose of this bill establishes a family insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need paid time off to care for a loved one at home. Appropriates funds.

Family caregivers are the backbone of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care that range from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that their family member can remain in their homes and age in place. Many caregivers have to quit or retire from their jobs prematurely to provide the needed care, often sacrificing their own source of income and financial security. Caregivers should not have to choose between their jobs and caring for their family. Please support these unsung heroes by passing **HB 2757, HD 1**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge you to support **HB 2757, HD 1**.

Anna Filler  
Rep. District 25, Ala Moana, Kaka'ako, Downtown  
Email: [afiller@twc.com](mailto:afiller@twc.com)

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:06:07 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert L Holder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

## Testimony in Support of Paid Family Leave

Aloha,

My name is RobertHolder, and I am here today to urge you to enact comprehensive paid family leave legislation.

The current state of affairs in our country is simply unsustainable. Millions of hardworking Americans have no access to paid leave, forcing them to make impossible choices between their jobs and their families. This is not just a personal struggle; it has far-reaching consequences for our economy, our communities, and our collective well-being.

Consider the human cost:

- Parents are forced to return to work prematurely, missing crucial bonding time with newborns and potentially jeopardizing their child's health and development.
- Working caregivers grapple with excruciating decisions, torn between caring for a sick or aging loved one and keeping their income.
- Families face financial hardship and stress, leading to higher healthcare costs, lower productivity, and increased risk of depression and anxiety.

However, the benefits of paid leave extend far beyond individual families:

- Businesses report increased employee loyalty, retention, and morale. When employees don't have to fear losing their job for taking leave, they are more invested in their work and less likely to leave.
- The economy receives a boost as parents and caregivers remain in the workforce and spend their leave pay on local goods and services.
- Gender equality is promoted as women, who disproportionately shoulder caregiving responsibilities, have equal opportunity to participate in the workforce.

Opponents of paid leave often cite concerns about cost and complexity. However, numerous studies have shown that these concerns are unfounded. Many innovative funding models exist, and the economic benefits of increased productivity and tax revenue often outweigh the costs.

The time for action is now. Our nation deserves a system that respects and empowers working families. By enacting paid family leave, we can strengthen our economy, build stronger communities, and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

I urge you to prioritize this critical issue and pass comprehensive paid family leave legislation that is accessible, affordable, and inclusive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Robert Holder

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:20:00 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nate Hix	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We all believe that people should be able to take care of their family members when it's needed. Hawai'i has a great opportunity to give its residents this ability by passing this bill and joining almost all of the other developed nations who already have paid family leave policies in place. Please pass this bill.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:51:26 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tony Radmilovich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is an important step to secure funding for paid family leave, please vote yes.



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:55:10 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nellieshy mamuad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i am in full support of HB2757 for the following reasons:

- i have personally experienced the struggle of having to take unpaid leave for health reasons for just 6 weeks
- although i have worked for my employer for over 5 years, i still do not accrue enough paid leave to cover my personal needs or those for my kids
- i am a single parent and the sole provider for my kids
- i had to beg for public assistance that could not even cover my bills, as they initially found me ineligible due to averaging my income
- due to no income during my leave, i was forced to apply for credit cards to make ends meet for that short period of time
- this also caused me to ask my doctor to clear me sooner rather than focusing on healing so that i would be able to pay my mortgage and feed my kids
- PFML would have been a lifesaver for me and will be for so many other families
- i often live paycheck to paycheck and know that i literally cannot afford to get sick or take time off to address my health needs

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:56:40 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roberta Wong Murray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB 2757 Paid Family Leave.

I was working fulltime when my husband was diagnosed with ALS. His symptoms became unmanageable on his own within a year. Paid family leave was not available to me at the time. After I used all my vacation hours, I had to retire to become his full time caregiver until his passing a year later. During that time, our medical insurance premiums skyrocketed due to COBRA payments of nearly \$1000.00 a month.

Had there been a paid family leave plan in place, I believe I would have been able to find help with caregiving and I'd still be working today.

Please pass HB 2757

Respectfully Submitted

Roberta Wong Murray

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 10:58:24 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cleota Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits. Requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. Specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

I strongly support this legislation and feel it's long overdue in our State. I'm a certified 403b specialist licensed in the State of Hawaii. In my practice, never a year passes without the need to offer support to an educator and or family member who must put their careers on hold or take FMLA in support of their kupuna's care. It's heartbreaking to see these courageous people take on the role of caregiver which in itself is a 24 hour care role. The stress is compounded when they are forced to cash in their investment and retirement accounts to supplement their basic income and the needs of their family. There is simply no safety net for these courageous people.

Having the State develop a family and medical leave insurance program is a step in the right direction for these families and many more to come. Hawaii's aging population will continue to grow and we need to prevent the heartbreak of seeing our kupuna homeless on the streets and families heartbroken because they can't afford to give up their jobs to care for them.

I encourage all Representatives to support this legislation. Many of you may be facing these issues in the future or I guarantee there will be members of your Ohana who will face these challenges.

With sincere appreciation,

Cleota G. Brown, 808-258-5874

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 11:07:07 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kai Duponte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I support family leave to be available for all workers. Workers should not be faced with the prospect of losing their jobs because of the need to care for children or a sick or injured family member. Hawai'i is considered "The Health State" for a reason--and valuing families is certainly an important part of being healthy. Paid family leave leads to health equity and can be affordable by sharing costs between the employer and employees. Employers will benefit from having more stability in the workforce This is a Win-Win bill for all.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because my husband lost his job as a direct result of his inquiry into taking FMLA so he could support my perinatal mental health condition that continued and worsened postpartum. He was out of work and on unemployment for an entire year. Our financial insecurity hampered my recovery as I could not afford to attend my doctor's recommended therapy appointments, which included physical therapy, as I was unable to walk or carry my children. Now my husband only sees his children 3-6 months out of the year due to being forced to return to the shipping industry. If this bill had been passed years ago, I believe my recovery would have been quicker, our retirement funds would still be there, and my children would see their father every night and every weekend.

Mahalo for letting me testify!

Christen Zulli

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday February 14, 2024, 2:00pm  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, CR 329 & Videoconference  
Re: Judith Ann Armstrong supports HB2757 relating to paid family leave.

Dear Chair Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair Rep. Jackson D. Sayama and members of the Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee,

I, Judith Ann Armstrong, support HB2757 Relating to Family Leave.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws, and the states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. Paid family leave is good for business—employees become more productive and loyal when they have it.

Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child.

HB2757 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a **family and medical leave insurance program**. The program extends family leave to 12 weeks and medical leave to 26 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Employees can take family leave to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, to care for a qualifying service member who is individual's next of kin, and for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking to take self-care. Employees can take medical leave when they have a serious health condition that makes the covered individual unable to perform the functions of the individual's position. The medical leave insurance program would meet Hawai'i's temporary disability insurance (TDI) requirement.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB2757.

Sincerely,

Judith Ann Armstrong

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:09:19 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jordan Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i families deserve paid family leave! Please pass HB2757. Here in Hawai'i, where most 'ohana are living paycheck to paycheck, it is critical that our state provide such support for our communities so that 'ohana are able to thrive and not just survive.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:09:35 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ka'ale'a Kyrstin Hanawahine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

**I am in strong support of HB2757.** The health, economic, and social benefits that this bill will create are necessary for our people and are long overdue. As a Native Hawaiian and lifetime resident of Hawai'i, I can't express how applicable and important this bill is to and for Hawaiian values, especially the value of 'ohana. It is time we passed a bill that benefits our people, our residents, and our culture. Moreover, as an MPH and MBA student, I have done extensive research on the health and economic impacts of a paid leave program, and it almost shocks me that, year after year, this bill has yet to be passed. After extensive, open-minded review of both opposing and supporting viewpoints, I find that those in opposition do not understand that this bill benefits everyone, from employers, employees, families, and the state as a whole. The initial costs are miniscule compared to the long-term benefits that this bill will create. Those in opposition need to stop thinking about short-term impacts and consider the long-term, sustainable impacts this bill creates. Short-term, close-minded decision-making is what drives, and has driven, our economy and our people's well-being into the ground. Pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

With love,

Ka'ale'a Hanawahine



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:11:31 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and members,

In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave. No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their keiki or kupuna. The majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai'i law only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees.

All workers deserve access to family leave, which is essential in allowing parents to care for newborn keiki and family members who are seriously ill. Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent. Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck.

Ann Freed,

Mililani, HI

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2024, Room 329

To: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Chair, Rep. Mark M. Nakashima  
Vice Chair, Rep. Jackson D. Sayama

From: Jean Evans, (Individual)

Re: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2757, HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave**

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members,

My name is Jean Evans and **I am Strong support of HB 2757, HD1 Relating to Paid Family Leave**

It is shocking to know that the United States is the **ONLY** developed country in the world that does not provide paid family leave. Currently 13 states and the District of Columbia do have such laws and all reports show they help to retain talented productive employees while increasing family well-being.

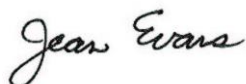
The proposed bill for family and medical leave is based on the successful insurance model which includes a large pool of companies and employees to make it affordable. The leave may be taken to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, or a qualifying service member who is individual's next of kin. This leave may also be taken for self-care for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault. In addition, an employee may take this leave if they are injured, sick or disabled and cannot perform their duties.

As well as benefiting employees and their families, paid family leave is good for businesses. Many companies are having significant difficulty recruiting employees who often initially choose to apply to a potential employer based their benefit package and, in particular, how they are seen to value and care for their staff. This benefit also has been shown to increase employee retention and loyalty.

Without paid family leave, it's been demonstrated that, workers and working families are relocating to areas that allow families to take paid time leave. This is true here in Hawaii where the cost of living is so high that workers cannot survive if they take unpaid leave or have to quit their job due to a family medical/health issue.

Please pass HB 2757, HD1 for the sake of working families in Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony today and I encourage you to pass this important measure.



Jean Evans

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:31:36 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
S. Sanae Tokumura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony on House Bill No. 2757 HD1

RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 2:00 pm

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sanae Tokumura, and for over 10 years I provided direct care for my mother at my home as her primary caregiver. Recently she has had to be placed in a nursing home with end-stage dementia, because she can no longer be safely cared for at home anymore.

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 2757 HD1. The bill establishes a family leave insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need some paid time off to care for a loved one at home. Because I am self-employed, I had some flexibility with my work hours. I made up lost hours by getting very little sleep at night. However, there are thousands of families who do not have the options I did. I would never have been able to care for my mother if I had to be reporting to an employer. This measure will provide relief to at-risk families who are trying hard to remain in Hawai‘i, resisting the urge to flee to cheaper pastures. Employers must strive to maintain Hawai‘i’s workforce by providing benefits such as these.

During those years as a direct caregiver, I routinely hurt myself to keep my mother from being placed in a facility, and having to resort to medicaid. Bathing her, feeding her, keeping her comfortable, clean and as happy as possible was itself a backbreaking, full-time job. My husband helped with transportation whenever he could, sacrificing his working hours as well. But I had to be the one to take her to cancer treatments and all other medical/dental visits. The strain of caring for my mom continues to drive me toward a sooner retirement, but that would be by choice.

Other caregivers I know have quit or retired in order to provide essential care for their loved one. Some of them have sacrificed their financial security. Please pass H.B. 2757 HD1.

Mahalo for allowing this testimony.

Sanae Tokumura

Honolulu, Oahu

[solidconcepts@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:solidconcepts@hawaii.rr.com)

(808) 722-0425

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:34:22 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai'i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai'i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai'i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It's time for Hawai'i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

Mahalo.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 12:47:09 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jodi Robinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure for paid family leave.

Kevin L. Johnson, Ko Olina, Hawai'i

**Hawai'i Legislature**  
**House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce**  
**Wednesday, February 14, 2024, Conference Room 329, 2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
RE: Support for HB 2757 HD 1, Relating to Paid Family Leave

I would like to take this opportunity to express my **strong support of HB 2757 HD 1, Relating to Paid Family Leave.**

I recently had the experience of caring for my spouse for several weeks after surgery. While I am retired, it certainly opened my eyes to the challenges this would pose to folks still in the workforce. My previous employer would NOT have allowed me paid time off for this task and hiring it done would have been beyond my means.

The hundreds of thousands of Hawaii citizens providing this care would likely have to enter the ranks of unemployed with no guarantee of returning to their jobs, when the situation changes. Investing in family caregivers serves to benefit both the overall health of Hawaii and decrease the burden these folks may place on the Social Service programs (through no fault of their own).

Your forward thinking **support HB 2757 HD 1** is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Kevin L. Johnson*

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee,

My name is Michael Paul and I strongly support HB 2757, for the creation of paid family leave in Hawai'i. This policy will have a tremendous impact for working families throughout our state and will help ease the heavy economic burdens faced by families when they are needed to care for a loved one. This bill will support the health and wellness of every community on our islands.

Every developed nation in the world, every single one, except ours, has a paid family leave policy. A quarter of US states have risen to the occasion to fill this great need. This legislation would allow us to join them.

Having children, experiencing medical emergencies, caring for sick family members, these are all parts of everyday life, and are events nearly all of us will face one day. It is unjust that when these things happen, which are a basic part of human existence, to low wage workers that they are put in a no-win situation. Folks are often forced to choose between caring for themselves or their loved ones and having no income. We can do the right thing for Hawai'i's communities, we can help ameliorate this problem, this is our chance.

Investing in our communities by providing paid family leave is a win-win scenario. It is one more step in the struggle to solve poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness.

Mahalo for your time,

Michael Paul, resident of House District 27



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:24:53 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maya Maxym	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a parent and pediatrician, I strongly support HB2757 to support paid family leave in Hawai'i. Paid leave supports children and families. Extensive data exist to show the many mental and physical health benefits of adequate parental leave when families welcome a new child into the family. Paid family leave helps keep women in the workforce and reduces their need for other forms of governmental support (e.g. SNAP). Paid family leave is also good for kupuna and for anyone with a sick family member. It is a heartwrenching decision to leave the bedside of a loved one in order to keep food on the table. Paid family leave would enable family members and sick workers to take the time they need away from work without worrying about losing their job or not being able to pay bills. Lastly, paid family leave makes economic sense. A small payroll tax supports it, and everyone has the opportunity to benefit. The state does not need to budget for additional expenses because it pays for itself. Workers who receive paid family leave contribute more economically over time and are more productive when they return to work; additionally, not having to hire and train a substitute represents significant cost savings to small and large businesses alike. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maya Maxym, MD PhD

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:29:52 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lei Fisher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this!

Mahalo nui,

Lei Fisher, O'ahu

Date: 2/13/24

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Consumer Protection  
Chair: Representative Mark M. Nakashima  
Vice Chair: Representative Jackson D. Salaam

From: Nancy Rustad

Hearing Date/Time/Room: Wednesday , February 14, 2024, 2:00 pm, Room 329 and  
Videoconference

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2757

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee.

My name is Nancy Rustad and I am in support of SB2757.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family leave. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws, and the states with paid family leave have seen significant health, social and economic benefits.

Paid family leave is good for both business owners and their employees. Indeed, employees become more productive and loyal when paid family leave is available to them.

HB2757 would require the department of labor and industrial relations to establish and administer a **family and medical leave insurance program**. The program extends family leave to 12 weeks and medical leave to 26 weeks for businesses that employ one or more employees. Employees can take family leave to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, to care for a qualifying service member who is individual's next of kin, and for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking to take self care. Employees can take medical leave when they have a serious health condition that makes the covered individual unable to perform the functions of the individual's position. The medical leave insurance program would meet Hawai'i's temporary disability insurance (TDI) requirement.

Women, as primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents, are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family and medical leave. According to AARP Hawaii, there are approximately 157,000 unpaid family caregivers in the State.

I encourage you to act on behalf of the best interests of our Hawaii businesses and workforce by supporting SB2757. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:41:52 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Teri Heede	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are the only civilized nation in the world to be unable to provide family leave.

Medicall leave is a given for ALL of us sooner or later.

Pass this bill

Testimony on House Bill No. 2757 HD 1  
RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE  
Wednesday, Feb 14, 2024, at 2:00 pm  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christina Enoka and I am a former caregiver of my father who had stage 4 cancer. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757 HD 1. The bill establishes a family leave insurance program that provides insurance benefits for working caregivers who need some paid time off to care for a loved one at home.

During my father's illness, my sister and I helped our mother with the daily care and transport to doctor appointments which included chemotherapy and radiation treatment. Because my mother did not drive, it was necessary to assist with weekly grocery shopping and other household upkeep purchases. Additionally, I was the primary contact for insurance claims processing. My father's care lasted for 10 months until his death. My father wanted to be at home and my sister, and I did everything we could to accommodate his wishes; this included taking time off from work either using vacation hours or unpaid time. It also involved running a variety of necessary errands frequently in addition to our own household needs. This brought some peace to my mother as she was able to stay by his side throughout his illness.

Family caregivers are the backbone of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of care that range from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. They lovingly perform these daily tasks so that their family member can remain in their homes and age in place. Many caregivers have to quit or retire from their jobs prematurely to provide the needed care, often sacrificing their own source of income and financial security. Caregivers should not have to choose between their jobs or caring for their family. Please support these unsung heroes by passing H.B. 2757 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Christina Enoka  
Mililani, Oahu  
Ncsmn150@gmail.com

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:50:52 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Paid family leave is critically important to provide economic security for new parents. If we want to be a state that values families, let's pass this bill.

Renee Rabb

Hawaiian Paradise Park

Keaau, HI 96749

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:56:15 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathan Abril	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Committee Members, my name is Nathan Abril.

I am testifying in support of bill HB2757, which would create a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Right now, local families have 0 weeks of paid leave, but families who have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits. Paid leave not only gives workers more power and independence from their employers, but it is also good for business and the economy. Most studies show that establishing a paid leave program is not only great for workers' health but worker productivity.

In addition, the United States is the only wealthy nation to not have a paid family leave program set up. I converse with my friends on the European continent, and they are always shocked at this revelation. Most of them find it barbaric and cruel that mothers are expected to take leave and not be compensated by their employers. In Estonia alone, Estonians get more than 80 weeks paid leave. Yet, in the wealthiest nation on Earth, we get 0 ([How does the U.S. compare to other countries on paid parental leave? Americans get 0 weeks. Estonians get more than 80.](#)). This is an embarrassment.

Even though I am a childless, adult male. I still support a paid family leave program. Not only for when I decide to have children, but because it is better for society and our 'ohana. New parents deserve to spend time with their new children during those formative years. Not having to work or worry about how they are going to pay bills after the birth of their new child.

In addition, I recommend this bill be amended with the following text:

"§ -2 Eligibility of benefits. (a) Beginning January 1, 2028<sup>7</sup>, family leave insurance benefits shall be payable to an individual who;" and:

"By January 1, 2027<sup>6</sup>, the department shall establish and 18 administer a family and medical leave insurance program and 19 begin collecting contributions as specified in this chapter."

There is no justification to have this bill, if passed, kick in 2028 and collection of contributions start in 2027. Families in Hawaii are struggling and need paid leave NOW. This bill must be amended to ensure working-class families are able to qualify for these benefits as soon as possible. Having the benefits begin in 2028 is just another justification for employers to continue

exploiting their employees in the immediate future. In addition, it does nothing to help the families currently struggling to support themselves and their newborn children.

Mahalo,  
Nathan Abril



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 1:57:27 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rev. Samuel L Domingo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai‘i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai‘i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai‘i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It’s time for Hawai‘i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 2:00:46 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Bauer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a mom of a 3.5 year old. In some ways, I was so lucky to have my son born during the pandemic in 2020 because his dad and I were both able to be home with him, I was out of work and he was able to work from home. But even under those circumstances, we struggled. Those first few days, weeks, and months were so hard, physically and mentally. My body was recovering from giving birth and we were adjusting to life with a newborn that needed constant attention. It just blows my mind that the assumption was that my husband would go back to work after the first 3 days and everything would be fine. It was not fine, he was pulled between work and his desire to be a father at home. I would be so tired from being up all night with the baby that I remember crying on days he had to go into the office. Working, even from home, meant that he really wasn't available to help me and he wasn't available to bond with his own son. There is plenty of evidence out there about how crucial these early days are and the need for that time to bond.

I swore if we ever had another baby, I would make him take time off of work but of course it would be unpaid and since we already have one baby and the cost of living is so high, this isn't an option. Not to mention that the amount of leave I would get, now that I am back working, wouldn't be significant enough to really allow me time to recover and also bond with my family. This financial burden is one major reason we will most likely not have another baby.

I have talked to so many moms who went back to work the week they gave birth, or even in the first couple months and it takes its toll on both their health and well being and their families. Very few of my mom friends are willing to have a second or third child because of how unsupported and exhausted they felt during this time, and how expensive it is to raise a child in Hawaii. 183 countries have paid family leave, if the US cannot provide it as a nation, can Hawaii at least make an example, lead the way and provide it for its citizens? It's a cruel double standard to tell us to have kids and then provide no support.

Thank You for your time and consideration,

Sarah



**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 3:28:21 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai‘i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition. Hawai‘i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees.

Hawai‘i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It’s time for Hawai‘i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

96822

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 4:18:23 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ricardo Molero Bravo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OB/GYN in the state of Hawaii, and we need this bill to pass. Too many of my patients are being affected by the lack of paid family leave on the State. They have to choose between their health or the health of their loved ones and going back to work, sometimes too soon.

**LATE**

**Chair Mark Nakashima**  
**Vice Chair Jackson Sayama**

**House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**  
**2:00 PM**

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a labor and social justice activist, testifying as an individual in **SUPPORT** of **HB2757 HD1**, Relating to Paid Family Leave. As you may already know and as other testifiers will attest, there is no federal law guaranteeing paid family and medical leave for private sector workers. Hawai'i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to workers in workplaces with more than 100 employees.

Working people should not be asked/forced to choose between caring for a family member or taking care of themselves and getting paid. The vast majority of our people are struggling to survive in Hawai'i with our high cost of living and the general affordability crisis. It might be a bit of a cliché at this point, but a cliché is a cliché for a reason. This is especially the case for workplaces/industries with low wages and/or little to no benefits. Making sure that workers have job security and are able to at least receive a portion of their lost wages will go a long way in making sure they and their families are able to maintain a sense of stability during difficult times.

It's also a huge issue that even with unpaid leave, there is a huge chunk of workers left out. Half of our workers labor daily in small businesses<sup>1</sup>. Small business workers should also be able to pay the bills while taking care of either themselves or their family members. A future paid family and medical leave program **MUST** include small business workers.

Please **PASS** House Bill 2757 HD1 out of your committee. Give working people a break, literally!

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,  
State House District 23 | State Senate District 12  
Cell: 808-255-6663

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<sup>1</sup>

Email: [junshinbusiness729@gmail.com](mailto:junshinbusiness729@gmail.com)

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 7:21:05 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our laws should mirror our values. If we truly mean what we say about honoring our kupuna and loving our keiki, we should do more to make it possible for families to care for their loved ones when the need arises.

Paid family leave is not a luxury. It is a statement of who we are as a community.

Please pass this bill. Mahalo.



**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 7:56:33 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
felicia linton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our families should not have to choose between family care(infant/kupuna) and paying the bills. Families should have paid leave to care for their kupuna and their keiki. Bonding with newborns creates strong family ties. Ohana is everything in Hawaii. I support this bill.

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:07:24 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chris Barzman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in **support** of bill HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Mahalo for letting me testify!

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:29:12 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OBGYN on Oahu and I am in strong support of paid family leave.

As a new mother who just completed her 12 weeks of maternity leave, this is an issue near and dear to my heart. I was so fortunate to be able to be off for a full 12 paid weeks after the birth of my son but the logistics and nuances behind the process were very confusing, even for me - someone who works in the medical field and is expected to fill out forms for my patients for such leave all the time. I had to piece together sick leave and vacation hours, in addition to my extra earned leave in order to be paid for the full time off. I know that many of my patients are not so lucky.

I have so many patients who get far less time off and often not at full pay. They must struggle with the difficult decision to return to work too soon after birth or take unpaid leave, which many just cannot afford to do. I can't even think about what I would have done if I had to return to work at 6 weeks postpartum, juggling the balance of providing for my family financially while also physically providing for my child. I know I would not have been able to do my job at work or complete my responsibilities at home to the best of my ability. Paid family leave can eliminate these challenging choices and ultimately will lead to a more effective workforce with parents returning to work after a more reasonable time with their family.

Please support HB2757! Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sara Harris, MD

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2024 8:47:30 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Kamalei Stovall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

No one should have to sacrifice their financial well-being to care for their family. A majority of Hawai‘i's workforce cannot afford to take unpaid leave to care for a new child or assist a family member with a serious health condition.

Hawai‘i law provides only a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than 100 employees. In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women—often the primary caregivers of infants, children, and elderly parents—are disproportionately affected by the absence of paid family leave.

Hawai‘i has one of the fastest growing populations over the age of 65 in the nation. From 2020 to 2030, the percentage of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 22.5 percent of the state's population. Nearly one-third of workers who do not have access to family leave will need time off to care for an ill spouse or elderly parent.

Multiple studies have shown that family leave programs can be established in a manner that is affordable for small businesses and our state. When medical emergencies arise, no one should be forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or earning a paycheck. It's time for Hawai‘i to step up and provide this critical economic and social support for workers and their families.

Na'u me ka oia'i'o,

Lauren Kamalei Stovall

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/14/2024 8:39:04 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mai Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support [HB2757 HD1](#) regarding Paid Family Leave. It's time Hawaii took care of each other. We need this bill to pass. Mahalo

**LATE**

**HB-2757-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/14/2024 10:55:29 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/14/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Ginoza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Karen Ginoza, retired teacher, and past president of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. I am testifying in **support** of HB2757 HD1 relating to paid family leave. Right now, we have 0 weeks of guaranteed paid family leave. Families who do have access to paid leave are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and less likely to need public benefits.

Paid family leave is important to me because my niece is a caregiver for her father. She has been a caregiver for her father for the past year. He was released from the hospital on February 24, 2023, and is currently receiving hospice services at home. He requires assistance with personal care, and it is necessary for her to be available whenever different workers come to her home to provide services.

She did not qualify for unpaid leave because her company did not meet the requirement of one hundred employees. So, she took a leave of absence from work. Caregiving has created a financial burden on her family because of the lack of income. It also impacts her future employment. She also shared with me the mental and emotional stresses of having to care for her dad full time.

I urge you to pass HB2557 HD1 (family leave), so my niece can receive assistance while caring for her dad. This will also help other families facing the same problems.

Mahalo for letting me testify!

