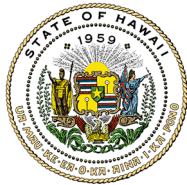


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA  
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR OF  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
**HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4420

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1330  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON **PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS** AND **LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FEBRUARY 3, 2023

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Moriwaki, Vice-Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Lee and members of the committees:

I am James Barros, Administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA).

HI-EMA provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB1330.

HI-EMA faces ongoing challenges in finding applicants and hiring for positions that are critical to meet the demands of its mission to protect the people and property of Hawai'i against natural and human-caused hazards and threats.

Removing obstacles to hiring for certain positions in the emergency management specialist series would allow for more flexibility and speed in hiring trained, experienced, and well-qualified personnel to meet the State's needs.

It also would make the State more competitive in recruiting qualified applicants who may have multiple job opportunities. On average it is taking more than 6 months to advertise, recruit, fill, and close an active hiring process; in 2022 this was closer to 9 months. Many times, candidates are no longer available or interested due the length of the process.

This measure would convert positions at Level IV and higher from civil service status to exempt status via an amendment to Section 76-16 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. It would maintain

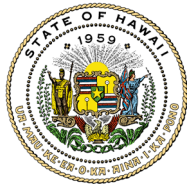
civil service status at lower levels to provide a path for advancement and professional development within the series, but expedite hiring at the levels where higher qualifications and experience are required to fill critical roles, reducing risk to the State. This would allow for quicker hiring to meet the State's immediate needs and build a development system to train employees and build their experience for the more advanced positions.

We ask for your support of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STEPHEN F. LOGAN  
BRIGADIER GENERAL  
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4495

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1330  
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON **PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY**

BY

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

FEBRUARY 7, 2023

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Moriwaki, Vice-Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Lee and members of the committees:

I am MG Kenneth S. Hara, Adjutant General, Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Advisor, State of Hawaii, Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB1330

The HI-EMA continues to face challenges in finding applicants and hiring for positions that are critical to meet the demands of its mission to protect the people and property of Hawai'i against natural and human-caused hazards and threats.

Removing obstacles to hiring for certain positions in the emergency management specialist series would allow for more flexibility and speed in securing the services of trained, experienced, and well-qualified personnel to meet the State's needs. It also would make the State more competitive in recruiting for such positions, where qualified applicants may have multiple job opportunities and accept another offer while the traditional State hiring process moves at its deliberate pace. On average it is taking more than 6 months to advertise, recruit, fill, and close an active hiring process; in 2022 this was closer to 9 months. Many times, candidates are no longer available or interested due the length of the process.

This measure would convert positions at Level IV and higher from civil service status to exempt status via an amendment to Section 76-16 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. It would maintain civil service status at lower levels to provide a path for advancement and professional development within the series, but expedite hiring at the levels where higher qualifications and experience are required to fill critical roles, reducing risk to the State.

We ask for your support of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

MG Kenneth S. Hara: [kenneth.s.hara@hawaii.gov](mailto:kenneth.s.hara@hawaii.gov); 808-672-1001

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300



## 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 Senate  
Committee on Labor and Technology

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 9, 2023

### S.B. 1330 — RELATING TO THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes the purpose and intent of S.B. 1330 which converts the Emergency Management Specialist series positions at level IV and higher in the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency from civil service status to exempt status.

The use of exempt employees, which are considered “at will” by the state, is completely contrary to the principles of civil service. Exempt employees do not have the same rights and benefits of civil service employees and that is inherently unfair. We have consistently opposed the creation of more exempt positions in state government and have advocated for sensible civil service reform.

Instead of creating more exempt positions, the civil service system must become more flexible and competitive. Converting these positions to an exempt status is a ‘band-aid’ fix to address the underlying recruitment and retention issue of these positions. Instead, the state should look into raising the pricing of the Emergency Management Specialist series. By simply raising the pricing, it will allow the state to offer a competitive salary along with the robust rights and benefits of a civil service position. The answer to the challenges faced by state is not the creation of more exempt employees, but substantive reform of the state’s civil service system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong opposition of S.B. 1330.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director