



January 28, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB755, Relating to Paid Family Leave

To: Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Labor

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support of HB755, Relating to Paid Family Leave

Hearing: Thursday, January 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 309, State Capitol

On behalf of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to thank the committee for hearing this important bill. I would like to express my strong support of HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave (PFML) program in Hawai'i.

As stated in the Commission's Hawaii State Paid Family Leave Analysis Grant Report, mothers with access to paid family leave are more likely to return to work after birth of a child.¹ Women who take paid parental leave are 39% less likely to receive public assistance, and 40% less likely to receive food stamps than women who do not take paid leave and return to work. This trend is also present in men.²

Deputy Director Gayle Goldin, from the U.S. Department of Labor, stated that recent research has shown, "a comprehensive paid family and medical leave program keeps people out of poverty. It means more people would stay financially stable when they experience health and caregiving needs, and it would help employers recruit and retain workers."³

As PFML has been shown to benefit working adults and positively impact local businesses, I respectfully urge this Committee to pass HB755. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Llasmin Chaine, LSW
Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

¹ Boushey, Heather. 2008. "Family Friendly Policies: Helping Mothers Make Ends Meet," Review of Social Economy, 66(1): 51-70.

² Houser, Linda, and Thomas P. Vartanian. 2012. Pay Matters: The Positive Economic Impacts of Paid Family Leave for Families, Businesses and the Public. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Center for Women and Work.

³ News Release. (November 21, 2024). US Department of Labor Announces New Research that Underscores Benefits of Paid Family and Medical Leave. U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/wb/wb20241121>

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



BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

BRIAN K. FURUTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMŌHALA LIMAHANA
235 S. BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of
BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO
Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR
Thursday, January 30, 2025
9:00AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

In consideration of
HB755, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and the members of the committee.

The Department of Human Resources Development (HRD) offers the following comments for HB755.

The purpose of HB755 is to:

1. Repeal Chapter 392 – Temporary Disability Insurance of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.
2. 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.
3. Require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program.

HRD appreciates the intent to establish a family and medical leave insurance program; however, we have concerns regarding adding additional costs to an already generous benefits package for State employees and the potential impact to operations.

1. Most public sector employees are already afforded generous vacation and sick leave benefits. Employees can earn up to fourteen (14) hours of sick and vacation leave per month. There is no limit to the amount of sick leave that can be accumulated. Employees can accumulate up to 720 hours of vacation leave. By Chapter 398, HRS, employees are provided four (4) weeks of unpaid job protection leave. However, through collective bargaining, employees are allowed

to utilize their sick leave benefits for the entire duration. The only caveat is that the employee's sick leave balance may not go below the minimum requirement of fifteen (15) days to satisfy our self-insured temporary disability insurance plan. In addition, through the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA), eligible employees are provided with twelve (12) weeks of unpaid job protected leave. Employees may use vacation leave during the entire period to care for others. If for their own health/illness issues, employees can exhaust their sick leave balance and use any vacation leave balance if approved.

2. This bill would provide for an extra 12 weeks of paid leave in addition to the employees' accrued vacation and sick leave benefits. HRD is concerned about the potential cost to the state and the impact this will have on operations and public services.

Should this measure advance, HRD recommends that the definition of employer not include the State or counties or any political subdivision.

We are available to answer any questions or provide further information as needed.



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

January 28, 2025

To: The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Chair,
The Honorable Mike Lee, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor

Date: Thursday, January 30, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309, State Capitol

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

Re: H.B. 755 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The DLIR appreciates the intent of this measure to establish paid family and medical leave and offers comments. This measure requires the establishment of a family and medical leave insurance program and collection of payroll contributions by January 1, 2028. By January 1, 2029, the program must start receiving claims and paying benefits.

HB755 proposes to add a new chapter to establish a paid family leave insurance and paid medical leave insurance program that includes:

- A family and medical leave trust fund supported by employer and employee contributions. The fund is to be used to administer the program.
- The employer option to take an employee contribution of up to half of the cost of providing the family leave insurance premiums.
- Partial wage replacement to covered individuals, including self-employed individuals that opt to participate, for up to 12 weeks of family leave insurance benefits and 26 weeks of medical leave insurance benefits per application year.
- Benefits ranging from 50% to 90% of the employee's average weekly wage and capped at the State average weekly wage.
- Family leave insurance benefits when caring for a child after the birth, adoption, or placement of the child; caring for a family member with a serious health condition; caring for a service member who is the covered individual's next of kin; the individual's family member is on active duty in

the armed forces or is notified of impending active duty service; and when the individual who is a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking needs leave for medical care, victim services, court appearances, or relocation.

- Medical leave insurance benefits for individuals unable to work due to serious health conditions that are not caused by work.
- Employment protection and restoration of benefits, pay, and other terms & conditions for eligible employees.
- Appropriation of an unspecified amount to the fund of which an unspecified amount must be repaid.

The bill would also:

- Repeal Chapter 392, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), the Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) law.
- Repeal Subpart B of part VI of Chapter 378, HRS, Victims Leave.
- Remove references to Chapter 392, HRS, from the following statutes: Section 41D-2, Section 103D-310, Section 393-3, Section 398-4, and Section 431:10-244, HRS.
- Amend the title of part VI, subpart C of Chapter 378, HRS and repealing various definitions from Chapter 378-71, HRS.

II. CURRENT LAW

Chapter 398, HRS, Hawaii Family Leave Law (HFLL) provides four weeks of protected leave for employees of employers with 100 or more employees, for the birth or adoption of the employee's child, or to care for the employee's child, spouse, reciprocal beneficiary, sibling, grandchild, or parent with a serious health condition. The law does not provide leave for the employee's own serious health condition. In general, family leave is unpaid, unless the employee elects to substitute any of their accrued paid leaves, for any part of the four-week period.

Chapter 392, HRS, requires Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) benefits to be paid to a qualified employee for up to 26 weeks while the employee is disabled due to the employee's non-industrial illness or injury.

Prepaid Health Care Law (PHC), Section 393-15, HRS, requires the employer to continue the employee's coverage by contributing to the premium the amounts paid by the employer toward such premium prior to the employee's sickness for the period that the employee is hospitalized or prevented by sickness from working for no more than 3 months following the month during which employee became hospitalized or disabled from working, or the period of which the employer has undertaken the payment of the employee's regular wages in such case, whichever is longer.

III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL

The DLIR is concerned about the repeal of the TDI Law which covers both private and public sector workers. In addition to questions about how the repeal would affect claims effective prior to the start of the family and medical leave insurance benefits, the weekly benefit amount under the family and medical leave insurance program could be less than the weekly benefit provided by TDI because of differences between the programs regarding the percentage of wages replaced and the method for calculating the individual's average weekly wage.

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 family leave insurance benefits.

The department 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 no provision for the procurement or development of an information technology system to implement and administer the insurance program. Such a system requires substantial resources and time to develop.

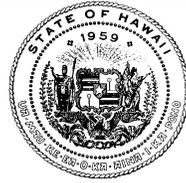
The department also notes the following.

- The 12-month application year begins on the first day of the week when the application is filed, and benefits are payable during the application year. If an application is filed the week after the absence from work began or later, the application year would not include the period of absence prior to the week of the application. It seems the individual would be unable to receive benefits for the absence prior to the application year.
- Also, if the absence period begins before the application year, it is 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 and whether the break between working and the application year would adversely affect the employer's ability to continue employment and benefits.
- The \$400 minimum earning requirement in the definition of "covered individual" could be updated. To qualify for the program, the individual is required to earn at least \$400 in the 52 weeks preceding the paid leave. Based on the current minimum wage (\$14 per hour in 2025), an individual

would earn more than \$400 by working a total of 29 hours within the 52 weeks period. This does not correlate to the requirement to work at least 20 hours per week for fourteen weeks. ($\$14/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ hours/week} \times 14 \text{ weeks} = \3920). This requirement is similar to the requirement in the TDI law. When the TDI law was enacted in 1969, Hawaii's minimum wages was \$1.25 per hour. Based on this minimum wage, \$400 was greater than the total wages an individual would have earned if the individual worked the minimum weeks and hours to qualify for TDI benefits. ($\$1.25/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ hours/week} \times 14 \text{ weeks} = \350). The minimum wage increased to \$1.40 per hour soon after the TDI law was passed. At the increased minimum wage, \$400 was still greater than the wages the individual would have earned after working the minimum weeks and hours. ($\$1.40/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ hours/week} \times 14 \text{ weeks} = \392)

- The definition of “qualifying exigency” refers to the covered individual’s family member’s active duty service but does not include the covered individual’s active duty service.
- “Designated person” is defined but not mentioned outside of the definitions.
- The definition of family member includes the sibling of a spouse but not the spouse of a sibling.
- DLIR requests clarification on whether an application is different from a claim.
- The department suggests setting a deadline for filing an application for both types of insurance benefits.
- DLIR seeks confirmation that an individual is entitled to renewed benefits in a new application year for a qualifying event that began in and was compensated in a previous application year.
- The department requests clarification about the calculation of the benefit amount. The bill requires that the calculated amounts must be added together but it is unclear when there would be more than one average weekly wage that would need to be added.
- The benefit amount is based on the wages earned prior to the submission of the application. The department requests clarification about whether the benefit amount must be recalculated after a subsequent application is filed within an existing application year.
- The department notes that if the individual files a claim for family leave insurance in advance of the period of absence, the weekly benefit will be based on the wages earned prior to the filing of the application and will exclude wages earned during the week of the application until the leave begins.

- The measure sets a deadline for making first and subsequent payments for family leave but does not set a deadline for initial and subsequent payments for medical leave benefit payments.
- Unlike TDI, the medical leave insurance benefit will not have a one-week waiting period for benefits to begin so the medical leave insurance program may have more compensable claims than current TDI plans.
- Employers will likely need to report hours worked per week and wages earned per week on a frequent basis so eligibility and benefit amount can be determined and benefits can be paid promptly. This may pose an administrative burden on employers. For comparison, employers report quarterly wages for Unemployment Insurance purposes within a month of the end of the quarter. Employers do not report hour worked unless an employee has an active Unemployment Insurance claim while working.
- Self-employed individuals may not earn “wages.” If income other than wages are considered, it could be difficult to verify the self-employed individual’s income, hours and weeks worked.
- Sections -7(c) and -8(e) require enforcement of employment protection and prohibited retaliatory action as provided in Chapter 398, HRS, which includes a right for employer appeals. Section -11(a) requires appeals regarding the denial of family leave and medical leave insurance benefits follow Section 383-38, HRS. If an employer and employee are involved in both types of appeals, it may be confusing for them to have two different appeal processes.
- The requirement for the employer to provide health care benefits from the date the covered individual commenced the leave until the date the family and medical leave insurance benefits terminate, may conflict with the Prepaid Health Care Act, Section 393-15, HRS.
- The Department requests clarification on what constitutes “sequential” use of leave referred to in Section -6(a).
- The Department requests clarification on whether Section -7 applies and what the employer’s requirements and rights are if an individual is not entitled to family leave insurance benefits or medical leave insurance benefits; is disqualified due to a false statement or misrepresentation or failure to report a material fact; or the claim is rejected after benefits are paid.
- If funds and positions are made available upon the effective date or soon after the effective date of the bill, it would allow more time for DLIR to establish the program.



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. 755
RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

Representative Jackson Sayama, Chair
Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
House Committee on Labor
January 30th, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. Room Number: 309

The Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** H.B. 755, 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.

Research shows that paid family leave is one of the most concrete supports for families to avoid ACEs. Studies show that states with extended family leave policies were associated with increase in health of the child by the additional time in breastfeeding duration, parental engagement, and parental mental health.¹ 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. Providing family leave is one of the most concrete supports families can be provided to mitigate trauma and address their well-being.

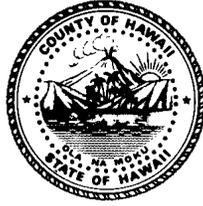
In addition to paid family leave being one way to address overall well-being, paid family leave can serve as a strategy improve worker recruitment and retention. The OWR conducted the Hawai'i Quality of Life and Well-Being Survey, with more than 10,000 residents from our state responding, resulting in it being the largest statewide survey on health and well-being in Hawai'i ever. In this survey, we asked our State workers what are the most important benefits to them. Paid family leave was identified as very important by 4 of 5 state employees, making it one of the top 5 most important benefits for this group.

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

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

¹ Lindsey Rose Bullinger, The Effect of Paid Family Leave on Infant and Parental Health in the United States, Journal of Health Economics, Volume 66, 2019, Pages 101-116, ISSN 0167-6296, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2019.05.006>.

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: January 28, 2025
TO: House Committee on Labor
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: HB 755

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

I write in support of HB 755 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

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
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Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

January 29, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF FERN HOLLAND
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUA'I COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 755, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE
House Committee on Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 309
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kauai County Council.

HB 755 establishes a comprehensive Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program in Hawaii. Working families cannot predict medical needs but require income stability and job security during such times. A household earning \$62,000 annually would contribute approximately \$4 per week to a PFML program, enabling them to receive over \$900 per week in benefits when eligible. Supporting workers through programs like PFML strengthens the economy by helping individuals maintain employment while addressing personal and family care needs.

I urge you to advance HB 755 and prioritize the implementation of this essential program. Supporting Hawaii's workers and their families through paid family leave is a critical step toward building a stronger, more equitable future for our state. This forward-thinking measure will provide essential financial support to employees during critical times, enabling them to care for themselves or their loved ones without sacrificing income stability.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 755. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

FERN HOLLAND
Councilmember, Kauai County Council

AAO:mdt

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

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Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

January 29, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 755, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE
House Committee on Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 309
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kauai County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of HB 755, which would greatly affect the Kauai community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 755. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULSOAN
Councilmember, Kauai County Council

AAO:mdt



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
JANUARY 29, 2025
HB 755 RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE.**

Good morning, Chair Sayama and members of the House Committee on Labor. 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 755. This measure by 1/1/2028, 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 1/1/2029, requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

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 want to point out that **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.

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 live.

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 and are still barely hanging on to keep their doors open and their employees employed.

Many small local businesses still carry a large debt and for some the loans taken out during the pandemic are coming up. The rising cost for employee health care benefits, products and goods, services, and shipping continue to have a substantial effect on our operations. Furthermore, numerous businesses are still trying to recover from the Maui Fires as 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. Many small locally owned businesses are also unsure how they will afford the minimum wage hike coming in January 2026. **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.**

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



To: House Committee on Labor
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, January 30, 2025
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB755

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

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB755 which would establish a paid family and medical leave program for Hawaii.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family and medical leave. To fill that gap, thirteen states plus the District of Columbia have passed PFML laws – more than half of them passed since 2018. Hawai'i should join them!

Paid family and medical 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 federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Hawai'i Family Leave Law (HFLL) protect an employee from losing their job while they are caring for a sick relative or their self or bonding with a new child, but that leave is unpaid. And since the FMLA and HFLL apply only to very large employers, most Hawai'i workers are not even eligible for that unpaid leave.

Meanwhile, Hawai'i has 154,000 unpaid family caregivers, providing 144 million hours of care worth \$2.6 billion per year, and those numbers will continue to increase as our population ages.

Paid family and medical leave helps families: Research found that states with PFML programs have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. 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 and medical leave helps business: Researchers found that PFML is good for business, because employees with PFML are more productive, which increases profits, and loyal, which lowers turnover costs.

The HB755 PFML program would:

- Be a state-run benefit program, like Social Security or Medicare.
- Be funded by small payroll deductions that go into a state fund, which workers apply to when they need to take leave. In the states with PFML programs, the average payroll deduction is 0.69% of wages, usually split between employers and employees.
- Employers would not need to pay employees while they are on leave, since they are paid from the state fund.
- Would be available to both full and part-time workers.
- Provide up to 12 weeks for parental leave and up to 26 weeks for caregiving in an application year.
- Provide a higher portion of wages to lower-income workers, so they can afford to take the leave.
- Ensure that employees have a job to go back to after they take leave
-

No one in Hawai'i should have to choose between their loved ones and their paycheck. It's time for paid family and medical leave in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Nancy Rustad
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 through research, education, and advocacy. Our goal is economic security for women.

January 28, 2025

Aloha,

I **strongly support HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families. No one in Hawai'i should ever have to choose between their loved ones and their paycheck. *It's time for paid family and medical leave in Hawai'i.*

Mahalo,

Lehua Kaulukukui, Chair

Puakalehua Early Learning Consortium

puakalehuaconsortium@gmail.com

<https://www.puakalehua.org>



UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025**

COMMITTEE ON LABOR
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

Thursday, January 30, 2024, 9:00 AM
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

Re: Testimony on HB755 – RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, 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** HB755, which by 1/1/2028, 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 1/1/2029, 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.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

HEADQUARTERS

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

HAWAII

362 East Lanikaula Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336
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2970 Kele Street, Suite 213
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HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

January 30, 2025

H.B. 755 — RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes H.B. 755, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish and administer a family and medical leave insurance program.

It is our strong position that Paid Family and Medical Leave must be a 100% employer paid program and benefit. We represent thousands of members that are on the lower end of the salary schedule and many of them work second or third jobs to get by in Hawaii. They 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 will cause financial constraint for our members which may push them to their financial breaking point. We cannot justify that for a program that all members must pay into and may not take advantage of.

Furthermore, most of our membership, and the public sector workforce, are entitled to 21 days of sick leave, 21 days of vacation leave, and 13 paid holidays per year. We believe that our members that would qualify, under specified circumstance, to take advantage of this program would rather opt to use their vacation/sick leave (if available), because they may not receive their full salary under the benefits structure in this program. While we recognize a need for a paid family leave benefit, the program proposed in this bill would negatively impact our memberships livelihoods. **Therefore, and if this bill is to move forward, we respectfully request that public sector employees be carved out and exempted from this program.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of H.B. 755.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



Papa Ola Lokahi
677 Ala Moana Blvd
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808.597.6550 ~ www.papaolalokahi.org

House Committee on Labor

Representative Jackson Sayama, Chair

Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair

January 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Re: HB755 – Relating to Health

Position: Support

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee, Papa Ola Lōkahi testifies in **support of HB755**, 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 benefit, requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program. The ability for local families to remain in Hawai‘i can be strengthened through various measures, including this one, and we appreciate the Legislature’s commitment to build and strengthen programs that serve our islands’ ‘ohana.

Reports from various federal, state and local resources find that Native Hawaiians are likely to live in multi-generational households, which often puts them at the crux of balancing familial care needs with providing stable income. In addition, Native Hawaiians are one of the ethnicities found to be more likely as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) or under the federal poverty line in Hawai‘i according to a 2022 Aloha United Way report. Caring for a family member—be it a new child or a kupuna or another loved one—can be an ‘ohana’s greatest source of financial vulnerability. Creating a paid family leave program in Hawai‘i not only allows kānaka maoli the ability to remain culturally grounded by supporting our ability to care for ‘ohana. It also helps to address financial stability for whole communities. **We strongly urge this committee to pass this measure.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to **support HB755**. If you have any further questions, please contact our Director of Policy & Strategy, Ke‘ōpū Reelitz at kreelitz@papaolalokahi.org.

Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, authorized by the federal Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act, is charged with raising the health status of Native Hawaiians to the highest possible level, which we achieve through strategic partnerships, programs, and public policy.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 755: RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

TO: House Committee on Labor
FROM: Tina Andrade, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawaii
Hearing: **Thursday, 1/30/25; 9:00 AM; via Videoconference or Room 309**

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members, Committee on Labor:

Catholic Charities Hawaii **Strongly Supports HB 755**, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program. **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. We serve over 113,000 people each year throughout the state. 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 medical leave. Paid leave is also a critical public health tool to combat disease and can result in significant savings in health care costs. Low-income workers are less likely to have paid family or medical leave than other members of the workforce. Hawaii's cost of living is so high that sudden or long-term family crises may result in great stress and even the risk of homelessness. Many of the vulnerable in Hawaii 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. They are often barely able to avoid homelessness, working several jobs to juggle the basic expenses of their families and unable to spend time raising their children. These workers are parents who try very hard to provide care and support to their families but have little or no reserves when a crisis strikes.

Paid leave is good for local businesses, since workers are more productive and loyal, which lowers turnover costs. It also helps small businesses compete for workers with large companies that can afford to offer family/medical leave on their own. Paid family and medical leave supports the State's priority to assist workers to remain in Hawaii.

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.





Andy Huang, Chairman – L&L Hawaiian Barbecue **Ave Kwok, Past Chair** – Jade Dynasty Seafood Restaurant
Mike Palmer, Incoming Chair – Ho'okipa Partners **Tambara Garrick, Treasurer** – Hawaii Farm Project
Victor Lim, Government Relations Lead – McDonald's | **Mail: 2909 Wai'ala'e Avenue #22, Honolulu, HI 96826**

Sheryl Matsuoka, President & CEO **Ginny Wright**, Operations Aschairsociate **Holly Kessler**, Vice President of Operations

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Date: January 28, 2025
To: Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor
From: Victor Lim, Legislative Lead
Subj: HB 755 Relating to Paid Family Leave

The Hawaii Restaurant Association representing 4,000 Eating and Drinking Place locations here stand opposed to HB755 that requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program by 1/1/2028.

Since Covid, our soft economy continues to be challenging for our industry with many legacy restaurants continuing to close. Double digit inflation in costs of food, high utility and fuel costs, medical and general insurance costs and labor cost increase that came with the last minimum wage jump, all contribute to this condition

The bill as is written provides very little information as to what the actual premium cost will be for the employer and the employee, making many of the smaller businesses wonder whether they will be able to afford the additional costs to their business. This is not to say that the bigger and stronger restaurants do offer some form of paid leave already.

In our very tight labor market, an unforeseen consequence with workers on long extended leave will be who will be there to cover the shifts when some are out on leave. Our small and medium restaurants are hurting and just cannot take anymore mandated costs.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our concerns.



Testimony to the House Committee on Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2025
9:00 a. m.
State Capitol Conference Room 309 and via videoconference

Re: HB 755 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Labor:

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 755, which 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 January 1, 2028; and requires DLIR to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program by January 1, 2029.

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 paid family leave and HB 755, 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

THE KŪPUNA CAUCUS



Date: January 28, 2025

COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair

Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

Rep. Andrew Takuya Rep. Sam Satoru
Garrett Kong

Rep. Jeanne Kapela Rep. Julie Reyes
 Oda

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Thursday, January 30, 2025

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Position: **SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Jackson D.Sayama, Vice Chair Rep. Mike Lee, and Committee Members,

The Kūpuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i has more than 2,000 enrolled members who are politically active and greatly interested in all issues affecting seniors in the State of Hawai‘i and nationally.

The Kūpuna Caucus **supports HB755/SB852**. This bill would benefit parents of young families and family caregivers to our beloved Kupuna. Some of these individuals are caring for both and are referred to as the so-called “sandwich generation”. We ask for your support of this bill.

From the Paid Family Leave Website: “Paid Family and Medical Leave supports family well-being and local businesses.

Everyone should be able to take time off to care for themselves or a loved one without risking their job or paycheck.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family and medical leave.

To fill that gap, thirteen states plus the District of Columbia have passed PFML laws. Hawai‘i should join them.

Currently, only about one in four private sector workers in Hawai‘i 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 PFML, while they need that financial support the most.

Research has found that states with PFML programs have seen significant health, social and economic benefits. 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.

Researchers have found that paid family and medical leave is good for business, because employees with PFML are more productive, which increases profits, and loyal, which lowers turnover costs.

Statewide PFML helps even the playing field for small businesses, by allowing them to better compete for the best workers against big companies that can afford to provide PFML on their own.

Similarly, as we struggle to keep our working-age families from moving away, Hawai‘i is competing with states that have PFML – including California, Washington and Oregon – for the best workers.”

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Barbara Penn
on behalf of the
Kūpuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i
bpenn200@outlook.com
808-652-9478



January 30, 2025

Members of the House Committee on Labor:

Chair Jackson D. Sayama
Vice Chair Mike Lee
Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett
Rep. Jeanne Kapela
Rep. Sam Satoru Kong
Rep. Julie Reyes Oda

Re: HB755 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the House Committee on Labor:

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 25 member programs statewide, I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support** of this measure.

HB755 requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program **that includes safe leave for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking** and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance the payment of benefits by 1/1/2028. The Department must also start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program by 1/1/2029.

This critical policy is not only beneficial for Hawai'i's caregivers and families but also to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking (all forms of gender-based violence) who need to take time off to receive victim services, make court appearances, seek medical services, or relocate themselves and family. Rhode Island, Connecticut, Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, and Maine currently include safe leave in their paid family leave laws.

Paid safe leave provides survivors of violence with options:

- ways to navigate safety;
- time to maintain their economic security; and
- the chance to find healing without fear of job loss, leading to increased abuse and homelessness.

Survivors who have already faced immense trauma should not be forced to choose between personal and family physical safety or financial stability. **Survivors and their loved ones in Hawai'i need paid safe leave to manage their safety, care for their families, and remain in the workforce.**

Maintaining economic independence is critical to survivors' immediate, intermediate, and long-term safety and ability to recover from trauma. However, many survivors struggle to remain connected to the workforce as they face numerous challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment as a consequence of the abuse or violence.

A safe leave policy, as proposed in HB755, allows survivors to take paid time away from work to heal, recover, and make themselves and their families safe promises to strengthen survivors' ties to the workforce and allow them to meet critical needs in the wake of violence. Gender-based violence presents a concern for public health and safety, as well as for the economy, and victimization has serious repercussions for workers:

- More than half of survivors of all types of violence report difficulty with work or school as a result of victimization.¹
- Survivors and their loved ones miss over 6.7 million work days yearly.²
- A 2022 national survey of victims of all types of violence found that one in six violence survivors reported losing a job or being demoted when they needed time off from work due to victimization.³
- An overwhelming 83% of survivors of domestic violence report an abusive partner has disrupted their ability to work; of those, more than half have lost their jobs because of abuse.⁴

By establishing pathways to stay in the workforce and effectively support survivors of violence, Hawaii's economy benefits from reduced lost productivity and retains talented, innovative workers.

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

Sincerely,
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director

¹ Alliance for Safety and Justice, "Crime Survivors Speak: National Survey Of Victims' Views On Safety and Justice" (September 2022), <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Alliance-for-Safety-and-Justice-Crime-Survivors-Speak-September-2022.pdf>.

² Alliance for Safety and Justice and Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, "Lost Work, Pay, and Safety: Victims of Violence Urgently Need Safe Leave" (April 2024), <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/LostWorkLostPayLostSafety.pdf>.

³ Alliance for Safety and Justice, "Crime Survivors Speak: National Survey Of Victims' Views On Safety and Justice" (September 2022), <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Alliance-for-Safety-and-Justice-Crime-Survivors-Speak-September-2022.pdf>.

⁴ Cynthia Hess & Alona Del Rosario, "Dreams Deferred: A Survey on the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Survivors' Education, Careers, and Economic Security" 9, Institute for Women's Policy Research (2018), https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/C475_IWPR-Report-Dreams-Deferred.pdf.



HOUSE BILL 755, RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

JANUARY 30, 2025 · LAB HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HB 755, relating to paid family leave, which by 1/1/2028, 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 1/1/2029, requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

Hawai'i needs to pass paid family leave to uplift hardworking families. Here is why.

Paid family leave saves the lives of our keiki. A study published in *Contemporary Economic Policy* in October of 2022 found that when California mandated six weeks of paid parental leave from 2004 to 2008, 339 fewer infant deaths occurred on average when compared with states that did not mandate paid parental leave. The researchers estimated that three months of paid parental leave for the whole U.S. would save nearly one thousand infant lives per year.

Another study published in *Children and Youth Services Review* in 2020 concluded in 35 countries that belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that have launched or expanded paid leave policies, paid leave was associated with a decrease in mortality

of infants and all children under 5. Specifically, paid maternity leave was associated with a 5.2 percent decrease in newborn death rates, a 2.4 percent decrease in infant death rates, and a 1.9 percent decrease in death rates for children under 5 years.

Paid family leave is essential for the physical and mental health of parents. Paid leave has been linked with improved blood pressure, healthier BMI, and less pain in mothers. Research has found that infants of women with paid leave are 47 percent less likely to end up back in the hospital and mothers are 51 percent less likely to end up back in the hospital compared to women with no paid leave or women with no leave at all. Family leave is also linked with a lower risk for depression and psychological distress.

Paid family leave has long-term benefits Researchers from the Institute for Labor Economics have concluded that when parents have paid leave, children are more likely to graduate high school, attend college, and even earn more money as adults. Other analyses have found that paid family leave results in parents spending increased time with their infants—**not only during the leave period but also after returning to work, up until 3 years of age.** This includes mothers spending increased time reading to, talking to, and helping with homework and fathers playing with children for more hours per week.

Paid family leave does not negatively impact employers. One of the only arguments against paid leave is that harms employers, especially small businesses, and the overall economy. Yet, women with paid leave are persistently shown to be less likely to leave the workforce, which saves businesses the high expense of finding and training new employees. Furthermore, employers in numerous studies have reported that paid leave increased their ease of dealing with extended employee absences. After California enacted a paid family leave policy, for example, 90 percent of employers reported no negative impacts on their profitability, turnover, or employee morale.

According to an analysis performed by PN3 Policy Center at Vanderbilt University, instituting paid family leave in Hawai'i would cost just 0.7 percent of payroll. **A worker earning \$62,000/year would pay \$217 per year in premiums for a return of \$930 per week in benefits.**

Contact: educationcaucusdph@gmail.com



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Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2025
House Committee on Labor

Testimony by IATSE 665
January 30th, 2025

HB 755 - Relating to Paid Family Leave

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the House committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee and president of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i.
Local 665 strongly supports HB 755.

In 2022, of the estimated 493,567 households, 11% earned below the federal poverty line and an additional 33% were ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). ALICE households have earnings higher than the FPL, but not enough to afford the basics in the communities where they live. At a time when approximately 44% of the working families of Hawai'i are barely scraping by, no one should have to choose between missing a paycheck or taking care of a family member. The working families of Hawai'i are the backbone of this state and we need your support.

IATSE 665 strongly supports HB 755. We hope your committee will do the same.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tuia'ana Scanlan'.

Tuia'ana Scanlan
International Trustee
President, IATSE 665
(he/him/his)



Testimony on H.B. 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave
Hawaii House of Representatives Committee on Labor and Government Operations
January 30, 2025

Written Testimony of
Vicki Shabo, Senior Fellow for Gender Equity, Paid Leave and Care Policy and Strategy
Better Life Lab at New America

As a paid leave policy expert, I write **to provide comments on H.B. 755**, which would establish a statewide paid family and medical leave program (PFML) in Hawaii. I commend the effort to create a statewide paid leave program and suggest some modifications to ensure that this proposal is as effective as possible at meeting the needs of Hawaii's workers and families based on other states' experiences and a large body of research.

Why Paid Leave?

Before discussing specific program parameters, it is important to outline the value of paid leave policies to workers and families, businesses, and the public. In Hawaii, the need for paid leave and the constituencies that high-quality paid leave will disproportionately help are outlined [here](#).

Well-designed paid leave programs support the [financial security of families](#), [women's labor force participation rate](#) and [women's earnings](#), and paid leave for men supports both women's earnings and [fathers' engagement](#) with their children. Paid leave is also associated with improved health, including improved [infant](#) and [child development](#), increased [breastfeeding rates](#) and [early-month immunizations](#) among first children, reduced [infant mortality](#), improved [maternal health](#), better [ability to manage and afford cancer treatment](#) and a [better likelihood of cancer patients staying employed](#), and reduced [occupational injuries](#).

Paid leave also benefits businesses, from [supporting recruitment](#) to reduced turnover to increased productivity and [firm performance](#). In states with the longest-standing paid leave programs small employers are supportive of paid leave programs and most report positive or neutral effects on productivity, morale, loyalty, and the ease of dealing with employees' leaves (see studies evidence on each of [California](#), [New Jersey](#), [Rhode Island](#), and [New York](#)). In New York and New Jersey, academic research shows that small businesses [became even more favorable](#) toward paid leave programs in those states over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that larger employers who had an employee take a paid leave became more favorable too. Nationally, small

businesses are [overwhelmingly favorable](#) toward the idea of public paid leave programs, and the same is true in states where businesses have been surveyed.

Access to paid leave also associated with [reduced poverty rates](#), [reduced use of public assistance programs](#) and receipt of lower dollar amounts in public assistance; paid sick leave has also been linked to [less need for other forms of public assistance](#). All of these affect government spending and the economy overall.

H.B. 755 and Suggested Modifications

If enacted, Hawaii would join 13 other U.S. states and the District of Columbia in guaranteeing workers access to paid leave. A resource guide with an overview of state paid leave programs can be found [here](#), including the states in which these programs exist, the utilization of these programs as a share of the workforce, and the distribution of parental, family caregiving, and personal medical claims. An overview of the benefits provided, the funding mechanisms used, and the family members covered, please see this [explainer](#) and the charts and tables therein.

H.B. 755 is in line with most other state bills in terms of wage replacement, duration and best practice for employment protections, and I commend the drafters for this. To make Hawaii's program as effective as possible, however, I would recommend some modifications:

- **Family member – include non-blood relatives.** Many states include family caregiving leave for people that are close, like family, but are not blood relatives. This disproportionately helps seniors, LGBTQ people, and people with disabilities.
- **Health care provider certification.** To meet the needs of Hawaii workers with relatives in need of caregiving in other countries, health care certifications should also be accepted from the country or jurisdiction in which the family member with a serious health condition resides or if that jurisdiction is outside of the United states.
- **Timeline for filing claims.** The bill should specify that claims can be before a qualifying family OR medical leave begins when the need for leave is foreseeable to lessen burdens on people who are anticipating a qualifying event.
- **Timeline for determining and paying claims.** Language on the payment of family and medical leave claims should include a time period for determining whether a claim is approved, denied, or incomplete (perhaps the 5 days also included for notifying employers of a filed claim) and an expedited process for notifying an applicant if additional information is needed. The clock for processing payment should begin when a claim is complete (which should be determined quickly once all documentation is received as noted above), or within the two weeks from when a leave has commenced, as is included in the bill draft now.

Hawaii is the only one of the original five U.S. states that guaranteed temporary disability insurance to its workers not to have already taken this step; of those states, California (enacted 2002), New Jersey (2008), Rhode Island (2013) and New York (2016) all added paid family leave

benefits to its TDI program or requirement and each has expanded their PFL programs since then to be even more inclusive of workers' needs and realities.

I commend Hawaii for considering a program like the one outlined in H.B. 755 and look forward to providing any technical advice or policy expertise that would be helpful.



COMMITTEE ON LABOR
Rep. Jackson Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

January 30, 2025, at 9:00 A.M.

RE: HB 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committee:

The Society of Human Resource Management – Hawaii (“SHRM”)¹ respectfully opposes HB 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave.

While we appreciate the legislature’s overall goal in addressing the needs of our community, we have serious concerns that this measure is not a manageable or an affordable approach for either employers or employees in addressing those needs.

As presented, the bill prematurely places burdens upon virtually all businesses and employees in the State in 2028 without an advance and full understanding of what the financial and operational impacts upon the businesses and employees would be.

Essentially, this bill would require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions on January 1, 2028, to finance payment of benefits, one year prior to actually taking claims under the act commencing January 1, 2028. The proposal also specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

¹ 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.



Similar bills were proposed in prior sessions, the result of which was that the legislature determined that a study needed to be conducted to determine the impact of such a program, especially as to smaller employers.

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.

Further, the proposed bill does not provide leave minimums. Rather, the leave may be taken intermittently and in any increment without regard to the employer's workplace needs. This 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 employees.

We also have concerns about the impacts this bill will have on employees and small businesses that are struggling inasmuch as the bill requires half the contribution to come from the employees themselves. However, given the lack of substantiated data on the adverse impact of mandatory paid family and medical leave on Hawaii employers and employees, we respectfully request that the committee hold this bill and review the findings of the more recent study before enacting a one-size-fits-all policy.

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.

Erin Kogen and Rosanne M. Nolan
Co-chairs, SHRM Legislative Affairs Committee





Date: January 29, 2024

To: House Committee on Labor
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
And members of the Committee

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for HB755, which would establish a family and medical leave insurance program

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS strongly supports passage of HB755, which would establish a family and medical leave insurance program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance payment of benefits.

Paid family and medical leave provides working 'ohana with **paid time off from work** to care for and bond with a new keiki or to address caregiving needs for loved ones. Paid family and medical leave supports workers in **balancing work and family responsibilities** by allowing workers to take time off **without sacrificing income**.

Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

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**.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB755** which would establish a family and medical leave insurance program. This measure will help all of the people working hard to raise keiki here in Hawai'i.



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**The State Legislature
House Committee on Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2025
Conference Room 309, 9:00 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Jackson Sayama, Chair
FROM: Keali'i Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawaii
RE: Strong Support for H.B. 755-Relating to Paid Family Leave

Aloha Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

I am Keali'i Lopez, State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, social impact organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families. On behalf of our nearly 140,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony.

AARP is in strong support of H.B. 755 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 that will allow workers to receive paid leave to care for a loved one at home.

As noted in AARP's 2023 report, *Valuing the Invaluable: Strengthening Supports for Family Caregivers*, an estimated 154,000 family caregivers in Hawai'i provide \$2.6 billion of unpaid care. Many of these caregivers work full- or part-time jobs while supporting their loved ones. Nationally 60% of family caregivers of adults worked either full-time or part-time in 2023. 40% of caregivers cite the emotional stress of juggling caregiving with paid work as biggest challenge. Many of these family caregivers, including adults sandwiched between caring for older family members and children at home, are struggling to manage both their caregiving responsibilities and the jobs they need. 30% of all caregivers are caring for two generations. Many family caregivers must cut back their work hours or even leave the workforce to care for loved ones. Career disruptions and breaks due to caregiving can lead to substantial economic risk and even long-term financial struggles for caregivers.

H.B. 755 will provide support for working family caregivers to better balance their job and family responsibilities, reducing their stress and allowing them to better support their loved ones. Establishing a paid family leave program in Hawaii would allow workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for the health needs of their loved

one(s), or to bond with a new child. Paid leave would provide a critical lifeline to working family caregivers, yet just 21 percent of workers have paid family leave through their jobs.¹

H.B. 755 also supports Hawaii businesses. A Paid Family Leave Program in Hawaii will benefit workers, employers, and the economy by helping family caregivers remain at their jobs. According to AARP's Valuing the Invaluable report, "when caregivers are unable to continue balancing work and caregiving responsibilities, employers are faced with the loss of valuable, experienced workers and the cost of hiring new employees."

Results of a 2024 AARP Hawaii survey of voters 40 years of age and older, indicated that most voters (88%) support some amount of paid family leave for working family caregivers. And a majority of voters (56%) want government to do more to support family caregivers. H.B. 755 demonstrates Hawaii's commitment to helping working Hawaii residents and their families, supporting small businesses and will benefit workers, employers, and the economy by helping family caregivers remain at their jobs. H.B. 755 comes to the Thirty Third Legislature after years of hard work to propose an effective program that will fit our state. We urge you to vote in favor of H.B. 755 so that Hawaii can finally support our working family caregivers.

Additionally, we appreciate the Committee's consideration of the amendments recommended by the Paid Family Leave Coalition, of which AARP is a member.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in **Strong Support of H.B. 755**.

¹ US. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Department of Labor. (2020, September) National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2020, Table 31: Leave Benefits. Retrieved 15 July 2021 from <https://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2020/employee-benefits-in-the-united-states-march-2020.pdf>



HB 755, RELATING TO RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

JANUARY 30, 2025 · LAB HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: Imua Alliance supports HB 755, relating to paid family leave, which by 1/1/2028, 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 1/1/2029, 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 family leave insurance 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 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 Hawai'i, who are more likely to be Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, are the least likely to have paid family leave, while they need 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.

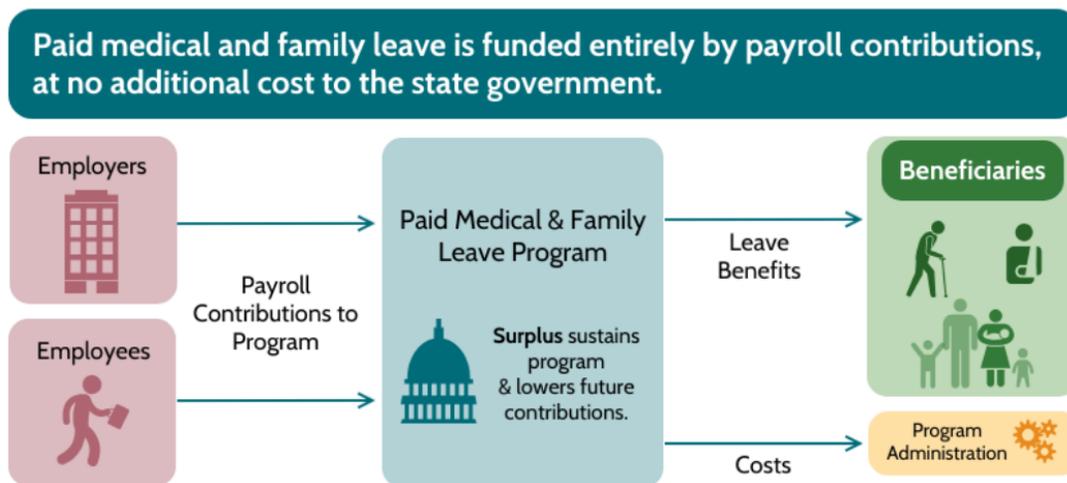
This program would help Hawaii's businesses. Family leave insurance increases worker retention and loyalty. Workers who have access to family leave benefits are more likely to return to work after their leave is over. In a 10-year study of the California family leave insurance program, businesses reported 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 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. 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.

According to a study conducted by Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at Vanderbilt University, instituting paid family leave in Hawai'i would cost just 0.7 percent of payroll. **A worker earning \$62,000/year would pay \$217 per year in premiums for a return of \$930 per week in benefits.** Critically, the cost to administer a paid family leave program is minimal according to the Vanderbilt analysis, at between \$8 million and \$10 million, **which would be entirely financed through revenue generated by premiums paid by workers and/or employers.**



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.

Contact us at imuaalliance.org/contact.



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

Rosalee Agas Yuu, RN
President

1600 Ala Moana Blvd Suite 100
Honolulu, HI 96815

Tel: (808) 531-1628
Fax: (808) 524-2760

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i State House
Committee on Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Nurses Association
January 30, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 755 – RELATING TO PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Hearing: Thursday, January 30, 9:00 AM, Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309

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

The Hawai'i Nurses' Association is in **strong support** of HB 755, which would establish a statewide paid family and medical leave program. As frontline healthcare professionals, nurses understand the critical importance of ensuring that every worker can take time off to care for themselves or a loved one without the worry of losing a paycheck.

1. Nurses Already Sacrifice Significant Family Time

Nursing is a demanding profession. Long hours, overnight shifts, and unpredictable schedules often require nurses to spend precious time away from their own families. Despite these sacrifices, nurses remain deeply committed to providing the best possible care for their patients. We see firsthand how vital it is for individuals to have the ability to address health and caregiving needs without additional financial stress. Paid family and medical leave would help safeguard the well-being of nurses themselves, who are often caregivers both at work and at home, ensuring they can fully recover from illnesses or care for family members.

2. Preserving Health and Economic Stability

Medical needs can arise unexpectedly, whether it's a serious illness, an injury, or the birth of a child. Paid family and medical leave ensures that when these moments come, families can take necessary leave without jeopardizing their livelihoods. This crucial safety net:

- **Supports patient recovery:** By allowing caregivers—including nurses—to rest and recover properly or to tend to loved ones, preventing long-term complications and stress.
- **Prevents financial hardship:** Giving workers the confidence that they will still receive a portion of their income, reducing the burden of unexpected medical bills or care costs.

3. Benefits for Employers

From our perspective on the frontlines of healthcare, we recognize that healthy employees are productive employees. Paid leave promotes a workplace culture that values well-being. Research from other states with paid leave policies shows that such programs:

- Improve retention and reduce turnover costs.
- Increase morale and loyalty, which can lead to higher productivity.
- Build a healthier, more resilient workforce overall.

4. Broad Health, Social, and Economic Gains

States that have enacted paid family and medical leave have seen positive outcomes, including lower rates of infant and maternal mortality, faster patient recovery times, and stronger family bonds. These benefits align with the core mission of the Hawai‘i Nurses’ Association—to support the health and wellness of our communities.

For Hawai‘i’s families—and for nurses who juggle demanding work schedules with caregiving responsibilities—HB 755 is a necessary step toward ensuring our state prioritizes the health and economic security of its workforce. It is time to recognize the invaluable contributions of workers across every sector by providing them the option to care for themselves and their loved ones when it matters most.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 755. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill, and for your continued commitment to the well-being of Hawai‘i’s working families.

Sincerely,

Rosalee Agas-Yuu RN
President, Hawai‘i Nurses’ Association

Jan. 30, 2025, 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 309 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Labor
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice-Chair

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

RE: TESTIMONY OPPOSING HB755 — RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice-Chair Lee and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its **comments in opposition** to [HB755](#), which would establish a family leave insurance program funded by employer and employee contributions.

The idea of being able to take paid leave from work 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.¹

¹ 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.

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 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.²

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.³

Family leave policies in San Francisco⁴ and New Jersey⁵ have seen similar results, with low-income families far less likely to utilize leave policies than high-income earners.

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 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 had 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.⁶

Before embarking on an ambitious paid-leave program such as the one proposed by HB755, 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 would not become a fiscal nightmare.

² 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.

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

⁴ 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.

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

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

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

Because the proposed program is very broad — it even includes small businesses with fewer than 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.

If Hawaii workers knew that state-mandated family leave would equate to higher taxes or cause them to forgo raises or promotions, support for family leave probably would go down.

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 potential effects and fiscal impact of mandatory 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

To: House Committee on Labor
Re: **HB 755 – Relating to Paid Family Leave**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
January 30, 2025, 9:00 AM

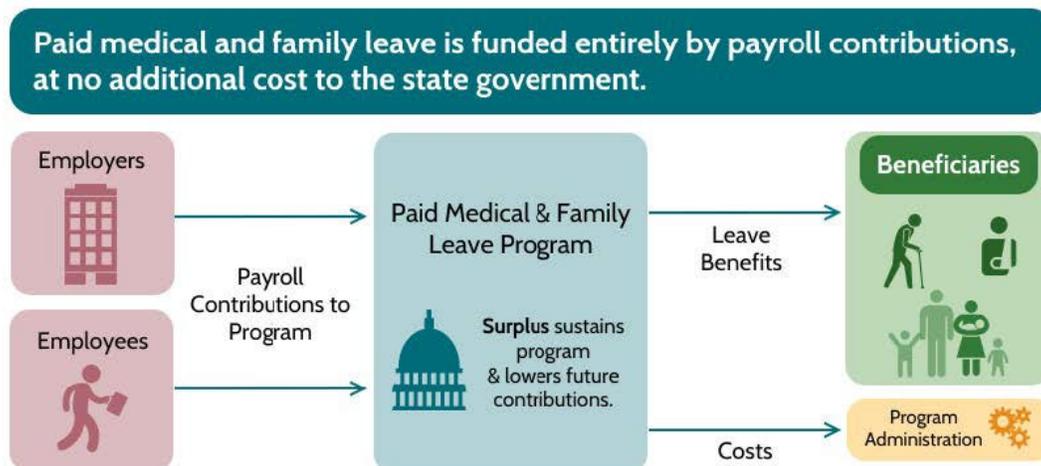
Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB 755**. This bill requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program by certain dates 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.¹ The average amount of paid family leave in OECD nations is about one year. **To fill that gap, thirteen states plus the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws.**² California was the first state to pass paid family leave, about 20 years ago. Hawai'i should join them.

This chart shows how a statewide paid family and medical leave program works:³



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.**

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

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

³ "Analysis Model of Paid Family & Medical Leave Programs in Hawaii," December 18, 2024, Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

A paid family and medical leave program would include:

- Parental leave – for parents, including fathers and adoptive 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.
- Deployment leave – to handle arrangements for military service
- Safe leave⁴ – to deal with domestic violence, such as seeking a restraining order or relocating.

Employers could choose to cover all of the payroll deductions, just as some employers choose to cover all of their employees' health insurance premiums. The bill places a cap on the portion of the premiums that employees would pay, at 50%. It is likely that most employers and employees would split the payroll deductions 50/50, which is how Social Security and Medicare are financed.

Employers with fewer than five employees would pay only half of the standard percent of payroll, and they could ask their employees to cover the entire contribution. Self-employed workers could opt into the program, and they would pay only half of the standard level as well.

Employers also would no longer need to purchase and administer private Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) 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.

Vanderbilt University researchers recently analyzed the language of this bill and determined that it would require **0.7% of payroll to provide worker benefits as well as cover DLIR's costs of administration** of the program.⁵ Anecdotally, we have found that employers are currently paying about 0.5% for TDI, which they would no longer need to pay if this bill became law.

In other words, employers would pay between 0.35% and 0.7% of payroll for the much more robust benefits of a paid family and medical leave program, while no longer needing to pay about 0.5% for TDI.

How would paid family leave work in Hawai'i?

- Employers currently pay **0.5%** of payroll for **TDI alone**
- A state-run **PFL program** would cost **0.7%** of payroll
- Employers could cover the cost of PFL premiums or have their employees to pay up to half
- The state's administration costs are included in the 0.7%

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**.⁶ Families who have access to paid leave – especially

⁴ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023/>

⁵ Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, op.cit.

⁶ https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML_Health-Case_Fact-Sheet_11.30.21.pdf

working women – are healthier, more economically secure, more likely to stay in the workforce, and **less likely to need public benefits**.

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.⁷

The wage replacement rates in this bill are as 90 percent of pay for workers earning less than 50 percent of the state average weekly wage (SAWW), 75 percent of pay for those earning between 50 and 100 percent of the SAWW, and 50 percent of pay for those earning at least 100 percent of the SAWW.

That means that a minimum wage worker would pay less than \$2 per week into the program (assuming that their employer matches that amount) and receive \$504 per week in benefits. And average wage worker, earning about \$62,000 per year, would pay a little over \$4 per week and receive \$930 per week in benefits.⁸

<i>A worker earning:</i>	<i>Would pay:</i>	<i>And receive:</i>
Minimum wage (\$29,000 per year)	\$102 per year	\$504 per week
Average wage (\$62,000 per year)	\$217 per year	\$930 per week
	<i>in premiums</i>	<i>in benefits</i>

Paid family leave is good for business. According to research that looks at how paid family leave works in other states,⁹ employees with paid family leave are more productive, which can help increase profits, and loyal, which lowers turnover costs.

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.¹⁰

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 2023, more than 25,000 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that have passed paid leave laws.**¹¹ When young couples are deciding where to start a family, paid family leave may be an important deciding factor for them.

⁷ https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07_Ch0346-0398/HRS0392/HRS_0392-0023.htm

⁸ Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, op.cit.

⁹ https://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/PFML_Business-Case_Fact-Sheet_5.10.22.pdf

¹⁰ <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/small-businesses-support-bold-investments-child-care>

¹¹ <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/geographic-mobility/state-to-state-migration.html>

We also respectfully request the following amendments to this bill. These amendments were developed in consultation with a national expert who has worked on all 14 of the existing state paid family and medical leave laws¹² in response to DLIR's submitted written testimony regarding HB 2757 HD1 (2024) as well as to address state income taxation and update the language on federal income taxation given recent IRS guidance:

- Proposed bill amendment to page 10, lines 1-3:

(d) Claims may be filed up to forty—five days in advance of the family **and medical** leave, if anticipation of the family **and medical** leave is possible. **Claims shall be filed within ninety days after the commencement of the need for family and medical leave or as soon thereafter as is reasonably possible.**

- Proposed bill amendment to page 11, lines 1-3:

(c) Family and medical leave insurance benefits shall not be payable **to the covered individual** [~~for less than~~] **until the individual accumulates at least** eight hours of family and medical leave **insurance benefits** [~~taken in one work week~~].

- Proposed bill amendment to page 9, lines 17-20:

(c) The first payment of benefits shall be made to a covered individual within two weeks after **the family and medical leave claim is filed or** the family **and medical** leave begins, **whichever is later**, and subsequent payments shall be made every two weeks thereafter.

- Proposed bill amendment to page 1, lines 9-12:

~~["Application year" means the twelve-month period beginning on the first day of the calendar week in which an individual files an application for family and medical leave insurance benefits.]~~

"Benefit year" means the one-year period beginning with the first day of the calendar week for which the individual files a valid claim for family and medical leave insurance benefits. A subsequent benefit year is the one-year period following a preceding benefit year, beginning either with the first:

(1) Day of the first week of family and medical leave with respect to which the individual files a subsequent claim for family and medical leave insurance benefits; or

(2) Workday following the expiration of the preceding benefit year if a need for family and medical leave for which family and medical leave insurance benefits are payable during the last week of the preceding benefit year continues and the individual is eligible for further benefit payments.

- Proposed amendment to page 8, after line 2:

"Wages" means all remuneration for services from whatever source, including commissions, bonuses, tips or gratuities received in the course of employment from others than the employer to

¹² Jared Make, Vice President, A Better Balance (www.abetterbalance.org)

the extent that they are customary and expected in that type of employment and reported to the employer for payroll tax deduction purposes, and the cash value of all remuneration in any medium other than cash. The director may issue regulations for the reasonable determination of the cash value of remuneration in any medium other than cash.

The director shall issue regulations regarding the determination of wages for those who elect coverage pursuant to section -13.

Wages do not include the amount of any payment specified in section 383-11.

- Proposed amendment to page 13, line 17 to Page 14, line 5:

(b) During any leave taken pursuant to section -2, the employer shall maintain any health care benefits the covered individual had prior to taking such leave for the duration of the leave as if the covered individual had continued in employment continuously from the date the covered individual commenced the leave until the date the family and medical leave insurance benefits terminate; provided that the covered individual shall continue to pay the covered individual's share of the cost of health benefits as required prior to the commencement of the leave. **Nothing in this subsection shall be interpreted to conflict with chapter 393 or 29 U.S.C. Section 1144 (b)(5)(A) or to modify chapter 393.**

- Proposed amendment to page 22, beginning on line 5:

§ -15 **State and** Federal income tax. ~~[If the Internal Revenue Service determines]~~ **(a) To the extent** that family and medical leave insurance benefits under this chapter are subject to federal income tax, the department shall advise a covered individual filing a new claim for family and medical leave insurance benefits **wholly or partially subject to federal income tax**, at the time of filing the claim, that:

(1) The Internal Revenue Service has determined that **family and medical leave insurance** benefits ~~[are]~~ **may be** subject to federal income tax;

(2) Requirements exist pertaining to estimated tax payments;

(3) The individual may elect to have **applicable** federal income tax deducted and withheld from the individual's payment of benefits in the amount specified in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended; and

(4) The individual is permitted to change a previously elected withholding status.

(b) Family and medical leave insurance benefits under this chapter are not subject to state income tax.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy



Hawai'i

Committee: Labor
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, January 30, 2025
Place: Conference Room 309 & Via Videoconference
Re: ***Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HB755 Relating to Paid Family Leave***

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

The ACLU of Hawai'i **supports HB755 Relating to Family Leave**, which by 1/1/2028 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 1/1/2029, the bill requires DLIR to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program. The bill also specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

ACLU National and ACLU of Hawai'i have a longstanding commitment to redressing the adverse effects of racism and sexism and other forms of invidious discrimination. 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."

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)¹ with a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor**. The second was conducted by the **Legislative Reference Bureau² in response to ACT 109 (2018)**.

The U.S. 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.³

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

¹ https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Leave-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf

² https://lrb.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019_PaidFamilyLeaveProgramImpactStudy.pdf

³ https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WHF_FMLA2018SurveyResults_Appendices_Aug2020.pdf

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.

“As of March 2023, only 27 percent of civilian workers had access to paid family leave through their employer,” according to the U.S. Department of Labor.⁴ What’s more, that number drops substantially when looking at “the lowest-wage earners, just 6 percent” of whom have access to paid leave through their employers. **Those most likely to have access to paid family leave are higher-wage earners, who also happen to be white.** During the COVID pandemic, those were the same workers 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 12 weeks of paid leave. And because a public insurance program would cover all workers in the state, it could cost as little as \$58 a year for each worker.⁵ **When split with the employer, that amounts to just \$0.56 a week.**

A more recent study conducted by researchers at Vanderbilt University determined a universal paid family leave program could be funded with just 0.7% of payroll (0.35% paid by the employer, 0.35% paid by the employee).

How would paid family leave work in Hawai‘i?

- Employers currently pay **0.5%** of payroll for **TDI alone**
- A state-run **PFL program** would cost **0.7%** of payroll
- Employers could cover the cost of PFL premiums or have their employees to pay up to half
- The state’s administration costs are included in the 0.7%

⁴ <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/wb/wb20241121>

⁵ https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/senate/LBR/LBRfiles/DOL_Hawaii-State-Paid-Family-Leave-Analysis-Grant-Report.pdf

<i>A worker earning:</i>	<i>Would pay:</i>	<i>And receive:</i>
Minimum wage (\$29,000 per year)	\$102 per year	\$504 per week
Average wage (\$62,000 per year)	\$217 per year <i>in premiums</i>	\$930 per week <i>in benefits</i>

- Of note, the lack of public paid family leave insurance exacerbates sex and gender inequality:
 - A gender wage gap emerges after a child, known as the Motherhood Penalty.
 - Wage gaps mean significantly lower earning potential over the course of someone's career.

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

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.



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Mike Lee, and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of Hawai'i Appleseed in **favor** of **HB 755**, which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to create a family and medical leave insurance program in Hawai'i.

Over the past seven years, our state legislature has debated the prospect of a paid family leave program through economic analyses, eligibility modeling, cost breakdowns, feasibility studies, and public opinion polling. Hawai'i has more than enough data to justify this program, and the need for relief on the part of working families is only growing.

The lack of paid family leave in the United States underscores the need for comprehensive action at the state level. Current offerings, such as the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the Hawai'i Family Leave Law, fall short, leaving a significant portion of our workforce without adequate protection.

Low-wage workers, who often need paid leave the most, face the highest barriers to access. While some companies provide this benefit, it typically caters to higher-income employees. Only 6 percent of low-wage workers in the US have access to paid family leave, imposing a financial burden on those who need it most.

The consequences of this absence are profound, especially in Hawai'i, where a significant percentage of children live in households where both parents work. For the well-being of our communities and the sustainability of our workforce, it is crucial for the state to establish a robust safety net for families facing caregiving responsibilities.

To address this gap, HB 755 proposes a family and medical leave insurance program that follows in the footsteps of successful models in 11 states and the District of Columbia. This approach involves contributions from both employees and employers into a dedicated insurance fund, spreading the burden fairly.

Experts across the political spectrum agree that a social insurance model, similar to programs like Social Security and Medicare, is highly effective in reducing costs, administrative expenses,

and preventing discrimination against leave-taking workers. This kind of system keeps workers, especially women, in the workforce while reducing their reliance on public benefits.

Research shows that job-protected paid family leave ensures that more workers are able to return to the labor force. In California, where a similar program has been in place for over 15 years, mothers with access to family leave showed increased work hours and higher average incomes than before the law's enactment. Studies have also highlighted the positive impact of paid leave on public assistance and SNAP reliance, with beneficiaries being significantly less likely to depend on these services.

HB 755 would provide up to 12 weeks of leave for parental, caregiving, deployment, or safety concerns (such as situations involving domestic violence). In addition, it provides up to 26 weeks of medical leave. This wide range of coverage ensures that workers who need leave are able to take it. These leave provisions are further reinforced by partial wage replacement. In this way, it would support their health and well-being, while reducing the burden on the health care system.

Public sentiment strongly supports the implementation of paid family leave, as evidenced by a statewide poll for Hawai'i showing a 94 percent favorable perception. Nearly 60 percent of respondents were willing to contribute to a monthly paid leave program, with an average comfortable contribution of just over \$41.

We would also like to call for the following amendments that would strengthen the impact of this bill and bring it in line with Hawai'i's Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) law:

- Adding hanai family—which for many of Hawai'i's families is akin to biological family—to the definition of family member
- Expanding the scope of safe leave to include situations where the worker needs to take leave to assist a family member who is a victim of domestic violence
- Limiting the maximum penalty for erroneous payments and misrepresentation to 100% of benefits paid instead of 150%

In conclusion, HB 755 would mark a massive leap forward for the well-being of Hawai'i's working families, giving them the time they deserve to adjust to significant changes in their life.

Mahalo for your attention and consideration.



HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS
Chair

John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

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State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender

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Misty Pacheco, DrPH
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Justin Puckett, CPA, MBA
Humana

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 Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: January 30, 2025

To: Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor

RE: Support for HB 755, Relating To Paid Family Leave

Hrg: Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 9:00 AM, Conference Room 309

The Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, convened by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute, **supports HB 755**, relating to paid family leave. This bill would provide employees with up to 12 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 to care for a newborn, newly adopted or foster child, ill family member, or other unexpected health emergency. Paid family leave guarantees that employees can cover their basic living costs, while also providing care to family members when they need it most. Thirteen states and Washington, D.C., have passed similar legislation providing partial wage replacement for family and medical leave purposes.¹

Improved Health for Mothers and Babies

Studies have shown that paid family leave is associated with a reduced risk for medical conditions that put children at risk. For example, a 2015 study in the Journal of Health Economics found that paid family leave was correlated with a 3.2 percent reduced risk of being low birthweight and a 6.6 percent lower risk of an "early term" or premature birth.²

Paid family leave is essential in uplifting the health of parents and infants. It has been linked with improved blood pressure, healthier BMI, and less pain in mothers. Researchers found that infants of women with paid leave are 47 percent less likely, and mothers themselves are 51 percent less likely, to end up back in the hospital after birth compared to women without access to paid family leave or other paid leave programs.³

1

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

2 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0167629615000533>

3 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10995-017-2393-x>



Financial Stability

Studies have found that paid family leave significantly impacts the economic security of families after a child is born. A 2019 report published in *Social Science Review* concluded that for families of 1-year-old children, paid family leave decreased the risk of poverty by an estimated 10.2 percent and increased household income by an estimated 4.1 percent. The analysis found that these gains were especially concentrated for low-income mothers, who have fewer social supports for caregiving than more affluent families.⁴

Kūpuna Care

As our kūpuna population continues to grow, paid family leave will be a vital tool in empowering families to care for their loved ones without jeopardizing their financial well-being. Our state has a rapidly aging population. According to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, almost one in five residents is now at age 65 or older and more than one-third of all households include at least one person age 65 or older.⁵ The elderly population is expected to continue increasing at a much faster rate than the overall population until 2030, when all baby boomers will be over the age of 65.

We support HB 755 and urge your committee to pass this important measure.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nate Hix' in a cursive style.

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy

⁴ <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/703138>

⁵ https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/Elderly_Population_in_Hawaii-Housing_Dec2021.pdf



January 29, 2025

TO: Hawai'i House Committee on Labor

RE: House Bill 755, Relating to Paid Family Leave- SUPPORT

Chair and members of the Committee.

I am Adam Zarrin, the Director of State Government Affairs for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Our organization's mission is to cure blood cancers and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

We support HB 755, on behalf of blood cancer patients and their families.

Paid medical leave helps blood cancer patients pursue medical treatment earlier without fearing job loss or financial disaster. And for parents of children with cancer, they can focus on their child's care without additional financial stress.

Without access to job-protected paid medical leave, cancer patients and caregivers can face crushing choices between their physical and emotional health and well-being. A 2021 American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network survey found that the following experienced financial hardship resulting from lack of paid leave access:

- 1 in 2 cancer patients,
- 1 in 3 cancer survivors,
- 1 in 2 caregivers .ⁱ

It is estimated that more than 40% of working cancer survivors have had significant changes in employment because of their condition, including switching to part-time status or retiring early. These changes are more likely to happen to women and minority individuals.ⁱⁱ Comprehensive paid leave policies would help to relieve these pressures.

We appreciate your consideration of this important policy, and urge your support.

Thank you.

ⁱ American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. (n.d.). Paid Leave is an Important Component of Cancer Care for Working Patients, Survivors and Caregivers. *Fightcancer.Org*. Retrieved September 10, 2021,

from <https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/Paid%20Leave%20External%20Factsheet%20Final%2010-23-20.pdf>

ⁱⁱ De Moor JS, et al. Employment Outcomes Among Cancer Survivors in the United States: Implication for Cancer Care Delivery. *J Natl Cancer Inst*. Mary 2021; 113(5): 641-644. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jnci/djaa084>

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:21:52 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Ryan	Highway Inn	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Highway Inn opposes House Bill 755 as currently drafted.

Small businesses generally oppose any legislation that increases costs, as this ultimately leads to higher consumer prices, contributing to inflation and hindering growth and sustainability. Customers ultimately bear the burden of all business expenses and go elsewhere if prices are too high.

Moreover, small businesses often lack the administrative capabilities to track the necessary qualifying information for this bill and many others triggered by hourly or weekly thresholds. This results in a general lack of compliance. Even those who have invested in outsourced HR systems struggle to gather the required data, as these systems are not designed for such reporting, leaving many businesses unaware of their obligations.

Additionally, the State must enforce this law, but it faces challenges obtaining timely data to address employees' urgent family needs.

Furthermore, small businesses like ours already implement a Paid Time Off (PTO) system that allows employees to earn time off for various events, including vacations, medical needs, or family matters. It raises the question of how the State would assess the adequacy of each employer's plan and determine whether it is sufficient, partially sufficient, or insufficient, as well as how much qualifying employees in those companies would need to contribute.

Lastly, the nature of the restaurant industry means that only a few employees consistently work for 14 weeks. If an employee takes a break, such as for a school holiday, and only works 19 hours in one week, should we wait another 14 weeks before they qualify again under this bill?

If the State intends to pursue this initiative, it may find greater success by allocating funds from employees' paychecks and employers' payroll taxes for funding.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:58:32 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Miller	Tiki's Grill & Bar	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Sayama and members of the House Committee on Labor.

We strongly **oppose H.B. No. 755**, which mandates a state-run Paid Family Leave program funded by employer and employee payroll contributions. While the intent is to support workers, **this bill places an unnecessary financial strain on small businesses** in Hawaii, particularly in the hospitality industry, where staffing and operational costs are already high.

At Tiki's Grill & Bar, we **already provide Paid Time Off (PTO)**, allowing our employees to use it as they choose. If this bill passes, we would be **forced to eliminate PTO** and cut other valuable employee perks like discounts and incentives just to comply. Instead of a **one-size-fits-all mandate**, businesses should have the **freedom to structure benefits that align with their workforce and financial sustainability**.

We also believe employees should have the **freedom to choose** where they work. If someone values a specific benefit, they can **seek out an employer that offers it**, rather than forcing all businesses to comply with a rigid government program. Let **businesses decide how to attract and retain employees**, and let **workers choose the employer that best meets their needs**.

For the sake of **Hawaii's small businesses and workforce stability**, we urge you to **reject H.B. No. 755** and allow businesses and employees the freedom to decide what works best for them.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Michael Miller | Director of Operations / Partner



Hawaii Legislative Council Members

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Hanalei

Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
Hilo/Kona

Dr. Andrew Johnson
Niko Niko
Family Dentistry
Honolulu

Robert H. Pahia
Hawaii Taro Farm
Wailuku

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
Honolulu

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Kihei

L. Malu Shizue Miki
Abundant Life
Natural Foods
Hilo

Tanya Aynessazian
Principal Contractor

Chamber of
Sustainable Commerce
P.O. Box 22394
Honolulu, HI 96823

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair

Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

Committee on Labor

Thursday, January 30, 2025

9:00 Am in Room 309

RE: **HB 755** Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - **Strongly Support**

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

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 450 small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity. As small business owners who believe we can strengthen Hawaii's economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment, we urge this committee to vote in favor of passing HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave insurance program in Hawaii. The United States is the only developed country without a national paid family leave program. Thirteen states plus the District of Columbia have already passed family leave laws to close that gap.

Only 1 in 4 private sector workers has access to paid family leave. The federal FMLA and state family leave law provide for time off - *without pay*. Most workers do not qualify for unpaid leave or can't afford to take unpaid leave. Hawaii has 154,000 unpaid caregivers, providing 144 million hours of unpaid care annually.

Employees with paid family leave are more productive, which helps increase company profitability and employee job satisfaction. Employees with paid family leave are more loyal, which lowers turnover costs for businesses. Working parents are more likely to stay in the workforce, and are less likely to need public benefits.

A state-run paid family and medical insurance program that replaces existing temporary disability insurance (TDI) helps level the playing field for small businesses, helping them compete for the best workers. Paid family leave allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own health needs or those of a dependent or loved one, or to bond with a new child. Employers would not need to pay workers while they are on leave, as the program is funded by small payroll contributions similar to social security or Medicare at no cost to Hawaii state government. Surplus collected sustains the program and covers cost of program administration.

Currently, employers pay 0.5% of payroll for TDI alone, which would be replaced by a state-run Paid Family and Medical Leave program, which is estimated to cost 0.7% of payroll, resulting in only a 0.2% additional cost. Employers could cover the full cost of the PFML premiums or have their employees contribute up to half of the premiums. A minimum wage worker earning \$29k annually would pay in \$102 per year in premiums, and be eligible to receive \$504 per week in benefits. Average wage earners at \$62k annually would pay \$217 in premiums per year, resulting in \$930 per week in benefits. Swapping existing temporary disability insurance for a comprehensive paid family and medical leave program is a cost-effective, high-benefit solution that strengthens families and businesses, which in turn contribute to community resiliency.

Paid family and medical leave enables caregivers to attend doctors' appointments and provide care for their loved ones. The number of baby boomers requiring care is growing daily. Guaranteed paid leave helps shore up our direct care workforce, many of whom do not make a living wage already, by allowing paid caregivers to attend to their own health and families. State programs like Paid Family and Medical Leave have already been proven to reduce nursing home utilization, and helps to recruit and retain care workers.

The demands of our state's aging population and related caregiving crisis was already underway in Hawaii by the time the pandemic hit in Spring 2020. What we have learned since then is that unpaid caregivers for siblings, parents and older adults living with chronic conditions, including Alzheimer's, are often excluded in other forms of dependent care policies. In a recent poll by UsAgainstAlzheimer's, nearly two-thirds of dementia caregivers think Congress would make paid family and medical leave a policy priority. Caregivers and business owners alike agree: No one should have to choose between their loved ones and their paycheck.

Again, we urge the committee to support HB755. A state-run paid family and medical leave insurance program is a win for workers, a win for Hawaii employers, a win for families and a win for our loved ones from keiki to kupuna.



TESTIMONY FROM THE STONEWALL CAUCUS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

January 29, 2025

Testimony in Support of House Bill [755] Relating to Paid Family Leave

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and esteemed Members of the Committee:

Aloha, my name is Abby Simmons, Chair of the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, and I am writing in strong support of HB755, which would establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program in Hawaii.

This bill is a crucial step toward ensuring that workers in our state do not have to choose between their financial security and caring for themselves or their loved ones during critical life events. The passage of HB 755 would bring Hawaii in line with other states that have recognized the economic, social, and public health benefits of paid family and medical leave.

The Need for Paid Family and Medical Leave in Hawaii

1. Supporting Working Families & Caregivers

- Many working families in Hawaii struggle to balance job responsibilities with caregiving for newborns, aging parents, or ill family members.
- Without paid leave, too many workers—especially women and low-income individuals—are forced to leave their jobs or forgo necessary medical care due to a lack of financial support.

2. Strengthening Economic Security

- Workers without paid leave often face lost wages, increased debt, or even job loss, which can have long-term consequences for their financial stability.
- This bill ensures that no one has to choose between a paycheck and providing care, reducing the economic strain on families.

3. Improving Public Health Outcomes

- Paid leave improves maternal and infant health, leading to higher vaccination rates, lower infant mortality, and better postnatal care.
- It allows workers to recover fully from serious health conditions rather than returning to work prematurely out of financial necessity.

4. Helping Small Businesses Stay Competitive

- Many small businesses in Hawai'i cannot afford to offer paid leave on their own. This program levels the playing field by creating a shared fund that allows small businesses to compete with larger corporations in offering essential benefits.
- Paid leave policies have been shown to reduce employee turnover, which lowers costs associated with recruitment and training.

5. Boosting Workforce Participation & Gender Equality

- States with paid leave programs have seen higher workforce retention rates, particularly among women who are often forced out of jobs due to caregiving needs.
- This bill promotes gender equity by ensuring all workers—regardless of gender—have the ability to take leave when needed.

Why HB 755 is a Strong Policy Solution

- **Financially Sustainable:** The bill establishes a statewide insurance program, funded by shared payroll contributions, ensuring financial viability.
- **Comprehensive & Inclusive:** It covers various caregiving and medical needs, including bonding with a newborn, serious illnesses, military family needs, and survivors of domestic violence.
- **Protects Workers' Jobs & Benefits:** Employees can return to their jobs after leave without fear of retaliation, ensuring economic stability.
- **Modeled After Successful Programs in Other States:** States like California, New Jersey, and Washington have already implemented paid leave programs with positive economic and social outcomes.

Paid family and medical leave is not just a social benefit—it's an economic necessity for Hawaii's working families, businesses, and economy. HB 755 ensures that no worker has to choose between their paycheck and their health or family's well-being.

Stonewall Caucus Testimony in Strong Support of House Bill [755] Relating to Paid Family Leave

I respectfully urge this committee to pass HB 755 and move Hawai'i toward a more just, compassionate, and resilient workforce.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Abby Simmons (she/her)
Chair & SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus
Democratic Party of Hawai'i
<https://linktr.ee/stonewalldph>
(808)352-6818



January 29, 2025

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

Members of the Committee on Labor

604 Hospitality Group LLC strongly opposes H.B. No. 755, which proposes a state-run Paid Family Leave program funded by payroll contributions from both employers and employees. While this bill intends to support workers, it places an undue financial burden on small businesses in Hawaii, particularly in the hospitality sector, where staffing and operational costs are already high. Ultimately, all employees will receive a new benefit while losing others. Also, this will negatively affect those who will not benefit from this bill.

Our industry continues to face challenges due to a soft economy. Double-digit inflation in food costs, high utility and fuel expenses, rising medical and insurance premiums, and increased labor costs tied to the last minimum wage hike all contribute to the strain we are experiencing. If these core economic issues were addressed, our employees would have more financial stability to save and plan for such leave.

At 604 Hospitality Group, we already offer generous Paid Time Off (PTO), allowing employees the flexibility to use it as needed. If this bill passes, we will be forced to reduce or eliminate valuable benefits such as PTO, meal discounts, and other incentives simply to comply. Additionally, in our tight labor market, an unintended consequence of extended leave will be the difficulty in covering shifts when employees are absent. Our small and medium-sized restaurants are already struggling and cannot absorb any more mandated costs.

Rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all mandate, businesses should have the flexibility to design benefits that suit their workforce while maintaining financial stability. Employees should have the freedom to choose where they work. If workers value a specific benefit, they can seek an employer who provides it rather than forcing a rigid government program on all businesses. Let businesses decide how to attract and retain employees, and allow workers to choose the employer that best suits their needs.

Sincerely,

Matthew Asato

Vice President of Operations

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 4:56:35 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEITH MALLINI	Kuleana Rum Works	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Sayama and members of the House Committee on Labor.

We strongly **oppose H.B. No. 755**, which mandates a state-run Paid Family Leave program funded by employer and employee payroll contributions. While the intent is to support workers, **this bill places an unnecessary financial strain on small businesses** in Hawaii, particularly in the hospitality industry, where staffing and operational costs are already high.

At Kuleana Rum Works, dba Kuleana Rum Shack we **already provide Paid Time Off (PTO)**, allowing our employees to use it as they choose. If this bill passes, we would be **forced to eliminate PTO** and cut other valuable employee perks like discounts and incentives just to comply. Instead of a **one-size-fits-all mandate**, businesses should have the **freedom to structure benefits that align with their workforce and financial sustainability**.

We also believe employees should have the **freedom to choose** where they work. If someone values a specific benefit, they can **seek out an employer that offers it**, rather than forcing all businesses to comply with a rigid government program. Let **businesses decide how to attract and retain employees**, and let **workers choose the employer that best meets their needs**.

For the sake of **Hawaii's small businesses and workforce stability**, we urge you to **reject H.B. No. 755** and allow businesses and employees the freedom to decide what works best for them.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Keith Mallini

VP of Hospitality

Kuleana Rum Works



Where LGBTQIA+ Rights Meet the Labor Movement
A constituency group of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO

January 29, 2025

House's Committee on Labor
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 9:00 AM

RE: **SUPPORT the Intent for House Bill 755**

Aloha Chair Garrett, Vice-Chair Kapela and fellow committee members,

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. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work - Hawai'i submits this testimony in support of the intent of House Bill 755, which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program to provide essential benefits to Hawaii's workforce. By creating a sustainable, paid leave system, this bill ensures that workers will no longer have to choose between financial stability and taking time off to care for a loved one or recover from a serious illness.

As an organization dedicated to advocating for the rights and well-being of LGBTQIA+ workers and their families, we recognize that access to paid family and medical leave is critical for our community. Many LGBTQIA+ individuals rely on chosen family rather than traditional family structures for caregiving support. Without paid leave protections, these workers are disproportionately at risk of financial hardship when they need to care for a partner, child, or aging family member.

While we support the overall intent of HB 755, we strongly believe that the cost of this program should not fall on the shoulders of workers. **Healthy employees with Paid Family Leave are productive employees**, and it is in the best interest of employers and the state to invest in a system that supports workforce well-being without placing additional financial burdens on workers.

The need for paid family and medical leave is more urgent than ever. Hawaii's working families, especially those from marginalized communities, deserve the peace of mind that they will be supported during life's most challenging moments. States that have implemented similar programs have seen positive economic and social benefits, including increased workforce participation and improved health outcomes for workers and their families.

We urge the committee to amend HB 755 to ensure that workers are not responsible for funding this crucial program. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of this important legislation.

In solidarity,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)
President
[Pride at Work – Hawai'i](#)



HAWAII WORKERS CENTER

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: P.O. Box 29969, Honolulu, HI 96820 ✉

hawaiiworkerscenter.org 🌐

January 29, 2025

**Executive Board
Committee**

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Board Chair

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Vice Chair

Dr. Arcelita Imasa
Secretary

Kami Yamamoto
Treasurer

Board Members

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Kami Yamamoto

CJ Johnson

Executive Director

Sergio Alcubilla III, Esq.

Hawaii State House of Representatives

Committee on Labor

Rep. Jackson Sayama, Chair

Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

RE: STRONG SUPPORT for H.B. 755 Relating to Paid Family & Medical Leave

Dear Chair Rep. Sayama, Vice-Chair Rep. Lee, and Members of the Committee on Labor:

The Hawaii Workers Center (HWC) envisions a Hawaii 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. 755** which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to establish a family and medical leave insurance program.

Our base of workers include immigrant and migrant low-wage workers who often risk losing their jobs if they are sick or need to care for a loved one. Many work in restaurants as cooks and dishwashers, preparing food in the kitchen for the general public. With employers not offering paid sick days, most will go in sick, knowing that they could lose their job if they're not able to work that day. This not only puts employees at risk but also the public.

The United States is the only developed country without national paid family and medical leave. We cannot rely on this current administration to bring us to par with other developed nations. Hawaii should at least take the step that our federal government is unable to do and join the 13 other states that have implemented paid family and medical leave.

We ask that the DLIR be adequately resourced, staffed, and have all the necessary tools to implement this much needed and long awaited program. There was a time when Hawaii led the nation in progressive legislation that put the well-being of its people first. It's time we take that step again towards a Hawaii where people matter, where they can care for themselves or their loved ones without fear of retaliation or fear of losing their livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration in support of H.B. 755.

Sincerely,

Sergio Alcubilla
Executive Director

January 29, 2025

House Committee on Labor
Representative Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair, Chair
Representative Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair, Vice Chair

Thursday January 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Rm. 309 and via Videoconference



Working together for Kapolei

RE: HB 755 – Relating to Family Leave

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committee:

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Nānakūli, Wai'anae and Mākaha. The Chamber works on behalf of its members and the business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and help West O'ahu businesses thrive. We are a member-driven, member-supported organization representing the interests of all types of business: small, medium or large, for profit or non-profit businesses or sole proprietorship.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce offers comments of concern and consideration on **HB 755**, which effective 1/1/2028 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; and by 1/1/2029, requires the Department to start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program; and specifies eligibility requirements and employee protections under the program.

While we appreciate the intent of this measure, the tumultuous economic climate for our small businesses and the timing of this measure brings concerns to the forefront. **Our small businesses, especially those with less than 100 employees, and our locally owned businesses may face unintended consequences as a result of this measure.**

Consider the existing conditions and the potential results:

The economic climate impact: Many of ***our small businesses are struggling financially to keep their doors open*** with the higher cost of goods and services, rising healthcare and employee benefit packages, inflationary impacts and future supply chain concerns are just some of the existing conditions.

Increased cost burden on the horizon: The small business loans doled out during the pandemic are soon reaching maturity and many small businesses are bracing for the minimum wage hike January 2026. Future tariffs along with other federal legislative changes will impact some. ***The Tax Cut and Jobs Act is scheduled to expire at the end of 2025. Congress has yet to extend or amend the pass-through legislation and per the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 38.6 percent of the employers in the State of Hawai'i are pass through businesses that currently receive a 20% tax cut.***

<https://www.uschamber.com/taxes/impact-of-the-20-percent-pass-through-deduction?state=hi>

The labor shortfall: Our restaurants and retailers especially have been forced to limit their hours of operations and close shop simply because they don't have the staff to cover shifts. ***Finding more temporary replacements due to the mandate will add to the burden and may lead to other disruptions to operations, reduced productivity and potential closure.***

Regulations force price increases: When a small business must take on additional cost burdens as a result of government mandates, they must pass on the cost to the consumer. There is a ripple-effect, and ***goods and services will be even more expensive than they are today where Hawaii has the highest cost of living in the nation.***

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 309
Thursday, January 30, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.

To The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
The Honorable Mike Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor

OPPOSE HB755 RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **OPPOSES HB755** 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.

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, either from an employee or employer perspective.

Hawaii employers already pay TDI premiums based on payroll up to the allowable wage base. Expanding benefits to now include family leave will not only increase administrative compliance, but, more importantly, employers will be shouldered the burden of funding yet another insurance program, namely, the proposed family leave coverage.

The majority of businesses with whom the Chamber is speaking already have a large to severe worker shortage. These small businesses are barely able to get by without having the extra insurance burden; this on top of a proposed continuous increase of minimum wage based on existing pending legislation.

It is important to note that many businesses already offer paid leave programs as a means for attracting and retaining their workforce. In a poll conducted last year, Chambers found that a majority of business provide some type of leave, such as PTO, paid sick leave, vacation, paid family leave, etc.

We need policies that will help Hawaii bring new businesses and support those in existence by encouraging businesses to adopt their own innovative paid leave programs rather than by placing yet another mandate on employers and businesses as well as increasing the size of government in order to administer these extra burdens on businesses.

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-755

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 5:38:28 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin K. Holu	Hawaii Teamsters Local 996	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Teamsters & Allied Workers Local 996 fully supports HB775

To: LAB Chair Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair Mike Lee, and committee members

Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB755 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Hearing: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309, Jan. 30, 2023, 9 AM

Thank you Chair, Vice Chair and Committee members for considering this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB755** regarding Paid Family Leave.

The United States remains the only industrialized nation in the world without paid family leave. By establishing paid family leave in Hawaii, we would join the states of California, Colorado, Connecticut, D.C., Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin who have paid family leave. I note I added 4 states since the last time I submitted this testimony.

The Family Leave and Medical Leave Act was passed in 1993 and provides leave but no wage replacement. For many workers, that meant taking time off for the birth of a baby or to care for a family member was economically impossible. This burden falls heavily on women who are the often care givers and who, more often than men, are heads of single parent households, yet are still earning 83% of males doing the same work.

I note that many, similar bills have been introduced and referred for further study. It is time we enact a paid family leave. Please support the passage of this bill because Hawaii's families need paid family leave. Thank you for allowing me to testify in SUPPORT of this HB755.

Sincerely,

Amy Monk

Legislative Volunteer, Indivisible Hawaii



House Committee on Labor
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports HB 755
Thursday, January 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m., Conference Room 309

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice-Chair Lee, and members of the committee,

HAPA strongly supports HB755, which would establish a paid family and medical leave program for Hawai'i's families. 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 currently only provides a four-week extension of unpaid leave to employees of large employers with more than one hundred employees. The existing gap in adequate leave time burdens not only families but also our local economy and community.

The average income of a family in Hawaii is \$62,000 and would contribute about \$4 per week in payroll deductions. When that same family is eligible for benefits, they would receive over \$900/week, providing 12 weeks for parental leave and up to 26 weeks for caregiving.

In 2018, only 17 percent of workers in the United States had access to paid family leave through their employers. Women, who are often 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.

In just the past 6 years, two analyses of the potential establishment of a paid family leave program in Hawai'i have been conducted and presented to the legislature. The 371 pages of these two reports include an economic analysis, Hawai'i-based eligibility modeling and cost breakdowns, a feasibility study, opinion polling and focus groups, and options for compliance and enforcement of a paid family leave program. FMLA is supported by 94% of Hawaii's workers.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Carol', written in a cursive style.



Anne Frederick
Executive Director

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:17:59 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Samonte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support** this bill. Hawai'i families need paid leave.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:49:16 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Paid family leave is a crucial policy that supports the well-being of workers, families, and communities. It allows employees to care for a new child, ailing family members, or their own health without the fear of losing income or job security. Without paid leave, many workers—especially low-income individuals—are forced to choose between their financial stability and their loved ones' well-being. Providing paid family leave promotes economic stability, improves public health outcomes, and strengthens the workforce by increasing employee retention and productivity. By investing in policies that prioritize families, we create a healthier, more resilient society where no one has to sacrifice their livelihood to care for those they love.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:26:14 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Missy Saiki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Piikea Keyes-Saiki. I am in strong support of HB 755 which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program for working family caregivers.

Hawaii's family caregivers provide countless hours of care, and many of them do so while juggling jobs and other family responsibilities. This proposed paid leave would allow working family caregivers to care for their loved ones without sacrificing their job and income.

Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB 755. They certainly deserve our support.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

Piikea Keyes-Saiki

Kapaa, Hawaii

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:48:51 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krystal Baba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:40:01 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zane K Lacaden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly support HB755.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:46:44 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Mossman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Strongly Support this Bill

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:55:25 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Calizo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:27:57 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB755 which would provide paid family and medical leave. When residents in Hawaii are forced to take unpaid leave or quit their job to take care their new born or their elderly parents, many face financial insecurity. Hawaii becomes more unaffordable that it is now for them. Please pass this measure to protect families and keep Hawaii's workforce in Hawaii. Mahalo for hearing this measure.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:44:40 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Daly Block	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: January 28, 2025

To: The Honorable Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong, and Reyes-O
Committee on Labor and Public Employment (LAB)

From: Colleen Daly Block, M.A., LMFT

Position: Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist

Subject: Support for the Establishment of a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program

Dear Honorable Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong, and Reyes-O,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed bill that requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance the payment of benefits. As a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, I have witnessed firsthand the profound and long-lasting impact that access to paid family leave can have on families, as well as the broader community.

The foundation of our society is rooted in strong families. When families receive the support they need, particularly during critical life events such as the birth of a child or when caring for a loved one, it strengthens the fabric of our communities. Unfortunately, the lack of access to paid family and medical leave continues to exacerbate systemic inequalities, putting tremendous strain on families who are already under-resourced. As a therapist, I have seen how stress, financial instability, and limited social support can severely impact family functioning, often setting off a domino effect that impacts not only the individuals involved but also the broader social structure.

The ability to take time off work to care for a newborn, a sick child, or a family member without the fear of losing income is not a luxury—it is a fundamental right. Families who are forced to choose between earning a living and caring for their loved ones often find themselves trapped in a cycle of stress that diminishes their overall well-being and their ability to fully contribute to their communities and workplaces.

From my clinical experience, I can tell you that when families are under-resourced from the start, it leads to significant challenges in family functioning and long-term stability. When parents are unable to take the time they need to bond with their children or care for their loved ones, it disrupts the foundation of the family unit. This not only affects the immediate family members

but has ripple effects throughout the community, as these individuals are then less able to contribute to society in the way they otherwise would.

By establishing a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program, we are ensuring that families can stay strong during times of need—whether it's the arrival of a new child, the serious illness of a family member, or other significant life events. This bill is a crucial step toward improving the well-being of individuals and families, ultimately benefiting our entire society.

Investing in this program is an investment in the future of our communities. When families are supported, they are in a better position to contribute meaningfully to society, their workplaces, and their communities as a whole. I strongly urge you to support this bill and move it forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. I am happy to provide any additional information if needed.

Sincerely,
Colleen Daly Block, M.A., LMFT
Phone: 808.640.4889
Email: colleendalyblock@gmail.com

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:47:21 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dan Gardner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee: My name is Dan Gardner and my wife Deborah and I are both in **strong support of HB 755 which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program for working family caregivers.** Family caregivers are the mainstay of Hawaii's long term care system. They provide countless hours of loving care ranging from bathing, preparing meals and escorting loved ones for medical visits. Many do this as they juggle their family responsibilities while working to pay for their household expenses and to keep a roof over their heads. Some are caring for both aging kupuna and younger keiki in school. This proposed paid leave would allow working family caregivers to continue caring for their loved ones without sacrificing their job and income. It also will enable those receiving necessary care to remain in their known family environment. Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB 755. They all deserve our support.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:31:55 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Representatives,

My name is Joell Edwards. I live and work in Wainiha, Kaua'i. I am a small business owner, community organizer and current Chair of the Kauai Democratic Party and I flew here this morning to once again show my support for HB755 Paid Family Leave.

As a young mother, I was hired for my first corporate job at a large telecommunications company and in my letter of acceptance was asked to provide the names and number of four people who I would call if my children or any family were ill, so that I would not miss work or meetings. I was reluctant to sign, but did so as the job would provide a generous income and allow us to finally purchase a home. I was terrified while my children were growing up that I would be let go if anything happened to them.

Fast forward 12 years later and my strong 44 year old husband who was self employed began having seizures, paralysis and small strokes. He was diagnosed with Spinal Meningitis, but also had multiple blood clots on his brain. There was a lengthy hospital stay and a year of specialist visits. Had it not been for State Paid Family Medical Leave, I would have been let go and we would have most definitely lost our home during this stressful time.

I was able to use the leave for full days and also intermittently which allowed a true work/home life balance at a very stressful time.

A year or so later, my mother became critically ill, and as her primary caregiver, I was once again able to utilize this benefit to tend to her medical appts.

Now as a small business owner, I proudly pay my employees well above the 2028 target minimum wage, as my part to keep local young families here. But as we all know, all of us are just one catastrophic event from being able to keep a roof over our heads. Should one of my employees have an emergency with their families, the added safety net of Paid Family Leave would assist them as well as give peace of mind.

I believe in this benefit so much that we would cover the minimal payroll deduction costs for our employees.

Hawaiian residents are about Ohana first. This love and care for one another and our kupuna and keiki is part of the culture here in Hawaii. It is time for the State of Hawaii to bring this added benefit onboard to show families across the islands that they too believe in Ohana over anything.

Mahalo for you time and dedication to our working families

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:15:58 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Kwon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Sayama and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Aloha, my name is David Kwon, and I am a family caregiver. I am a young voter that is writing today in strong support of HB 755, a vital bill that would establish a family and medical leave insurance program for working caregivers in Hawaii.

Family caregivers are the cornerstone of Hawaii’s long-term care system, quietly and selflessly providing essential support to our kupuna, keiki, and other loved ones. Family caregiving has a tremendous effect on people of all ages in Hawaii.

The burden is particularly heavy on those in the “sandwich generation,” who find themselves simultaneously caring for aging parents and raising young children. Without access to paid leave, these caregivers are often forced to make impossible choices between caring for their loved ones and keeping their jobs.

HB 755 offers a compassionate solution, giving caregivers the opportunity to provide the care their families need without the fear of losing their income or livelihood. By supporting this measure, you are not only recognizing the invaluable role of family caregivers but also ensuring a more humane and sustainable future for Hawaii’s working families. I urge you to pass HB755 as this year legislations will be crucial to the well-being of Hawaii in the next 10 years. Mahalo.

David Kwon

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:27:26 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annette Kim	AARP	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony on House Bill No. 755
RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE
THURSDAY, January 30, 2025 at 9:00 am
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Annette Kim, and I fully support *HB 755*, which seeks to create a family and medical leave insurance program for working caregivers.

I was raised in a Korean-Japanese household where tending to elderly family members is considered a responsibility. That cultural value became a personal reality when I helped my single-mother care for my grandparent, even though she held a full-time job and had two minor dependants. We balanced long work hours, late nights providing hands-on support, financing, and the cumbersome process of arranging medical appointments. Through this journey, I discovered just how few resources are available to families facing similar challenges.

My mother regularly put her own well-being and us aside for my grandparent’s sake, and as I stepped in to help, the emotional strain and financial costs hit home. On average, caregivers spend around \$7,200 each year—a burden that can weigh heavily on an entire family. As it did for us.

This situation doesn’t just affect one generation; it can repeat itself if we fail to offer meaningful support. When caregivers are left without adequate help, they’re often forced to set aside personal goals, health needs, and financial security to care for loved ones. Unfortunately, our story is far from unique—millions of households face the same difficult trade-offs and has an effect on society. While caregiving stems from love and devotion, it shouldn’t leave families struggling to make ends meet.

Passing *HB 755* would go a long way toward easing that burden. Paid family leave would allow caregivers to take necessary time off without sacrificing their jobs or their paychecks. I respectfully urge you to support and pass this measure, acknowledging the countless individuals who selflessly devote their time, resources, and compassion to caring for our kupuna.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my testimony.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:48:03 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Hennessy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Lisa Hennessy from Princeville. I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo , Lisa Hennessy

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:02:43 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Karjala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Comittee on Labor,

I am writing to SUPPORT HB755. It is well past time that Hawaii support our new families who are working hard to raise newborn children.

Please SUPPORT this bill!

Sincerely,

Patrick Karjala
Mililani, HI 96789

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:10:53 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debbie M Aurellano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Paid leave Supports families. Parental leave is beneficial for child development and infant health; it strengthens the parent-child bond; it increases family stability; and at a time when maternal health is worsening in the US, it aids new mothers' mental and physical health. Workers with access to Paid leave are less likely to experience material hardship and financial instability

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:34:36 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair, and Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair, and members of the House Committee on Labor:

I strongly support passage of HB 755 relating to paid family leave. Our kupuna and keiki deserve to be cared for by family members in times of need, and 'ohana should not be forced to choose between income and caring for infants, the elderly, and other family members needing care during sensitive times.

Providing family and medical leave to more people, especially those in small businesses has significant, positive economic, social, and health benefits. Please support families and help our children be able to raise their children in Hawaii. Pass HB 755.

Sincerely,

Karen Worthington, Maui

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:35:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee and members of the House Committee on Labor,

It is high time that we finally pass Paid Family Leave legislation. Once and for all. We have been advocating this for years now and we need to do whatever is necessary to get it done, whether that's working with DLIR to figure things out and/or getting all of our lawmakers on board.

Our working families are desperately needing this and we all know it.

Mahalo nui to our champion PFL legislators who get it and to all the other supporters who have been advocating a Paid Family Leave policy for our people.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:53:39 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
K.M	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB755.

Paid family leave in Hawai'i is long overdue, and if enacted, would greatly benefit working families caring for members of the family most in need, from young children and infants to the elderly.

This bill is important to me as I would have loved to have access to paid family leave during my maternity leave period rather than having to use paid sick and vacation leave to ensure my continued income and medical coverage.

Please pass this bill for the future well-being of Hawai'i's families.

K.M

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:08:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristy Arias	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB775. Two years ago, I was in a horrific car accident. My two children were in the car too. As I couldn't live my life due to trauma, I heavily depended on my husband, daughter and son. In unfortunate times like this, paid medical family leave is SO important. Please don't wait for an unfortunate traumatic event to empathize with me. Prevent it by supporting this bill!!!! This bill supports settling with a newborn baby, taking care of a loved one. Please, It is so needed and it won't cost employer/employee a lot of money. Please listen to our testimonies. Thank you.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:43:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia J. Goto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

Testimony on House Bill No. 755

RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE

THURSDAY, January 30, 2025 at 9:00 am

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

My Name is Sai Peng Tomchak, and I strongly support Bill HB 755 relating to paid family leave. I am a caregiver myself and have seen many co-workers who suffer financially after having to quit their jobs in order to take care of their loved ones.

My husband and I are caretakers of my mother-in-law. Because my husband has been having a lot of health issues, I have been taking on the caretaker role. We have a tight family budget, and I still need to work full time while trying to take care of mom – taking her to doctor appointments, lab testing appointments, adult daycare, etc. I also need to take care of her laundry and personal hygiene and make arrangements for her daily meals. Bill HB 755 will tremendously help me perform these tasks for mom without taking costly leave without pay from work.

I know I am already one of those ‘lucky’ caregivers who can still keep their jobs. However, the financial and mental stress is mounting every day. Bill HB 755 will tremendously help us to receive some relief.

I urge you to support and pass this bill. We are desperately in need of some relief!

Much mahalo.

Sai Peng Tomchak

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:52:15 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Merle Minami-Shima	AARP Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Merle Minami-Shima. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 755 which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program for working family caregivers.

At some point in their lives, many people become caregivers. A majority of these people will be full-time employees. Many already live paycheck to paycheck so taking time off from work without pay is financially burdensome. Adding to this strain, some employees are also part of the sandwich generation who support their children and aging parents. Given this, employers should support their employees with paid family leave to ease the pressure of caregiving financial responsibilities. Having paid family leave benefits will also enhance an employer's recruiting efforts as an employee friendly workplace. Please support these caregivers.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Merle Minami-Shima - Wailuku, Maui

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:47:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Broderick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:49:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bev Brody	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Bev Brody and I strongly support HB755, which would establish a paid family and medical leave program in Hawaii. Working families don't have control over when medical or family needs arise, but they should be able to maintain their income and job security during those times. For example, a household earning an average of \$62,000 per year would contribute just around \$4 per week in payroll deductions to the program yet could receive up to \$900 per week in benefits when eligible. Supporting workers through programs like this will not only help them care for themselves and their families, but it will also strengthen our economy by allowing workers to remain employed while managing life's challenges.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:00:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Matson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

As a mom, as a daughter, as a wife, I am begging you to pass this legislation this session. The times I have had to miss work to care for my children, parents, and partner are far too numerous to mention. My own sick leave is not supposed to cover those things, and rarely would it be sufficient for an extended illness or injury. As a society that values 'ohana we need to put our money where our mouth is and provide support for people to be able to take time off when necessary to care for their loved ones through sickness and injury.

Mahalo,

Shannon M.

Hawai'i Island Resident

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:02:49 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Shaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support Hawaii's families, they are the backbone of what makes Hawaii everything we love and cherish and they are so worthy of all forms of support they can be provide.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:03:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daphne Kahawai-Tom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:06:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Staci Hanashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Sayama, Representative Lee, and committee members,

Mahalo for taking the time to read and hear our community’s mana‘o and ‘ike on HB755 relating to Paid Family Leave. I am submitting testimony in **strong support of HB755**, as a mother of 2 (who are now 18 and 13 years old), an Infant Mental Health endorsed Family Specialist, and a social worker who has been working with pregnant mothers and parents of young keiki for the past 17 years.

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

I worked in various agencies and experienced what it’s like to feel overwhelmed, anxious and depressed being forced to return to work (due to not having enough leave and needing the income) after 2 months of TDI following a cesarean birth. I was not able to focus as I felt immense guilt of leaving my baby, some resentment towards my supervisor, and anxiety for the first couple of weeks following my return. As I reflect upon that period, I can say that I was not at my best for my company and for my baby.

However, I was also blessed to experience what it was like to return to work with the option of extending my leave to 12 weeks total, given I had enough PTO. As a mother, I had the time to bond with my 2nd baby, while also caring for my then 4 year old. And returning to work was a much smoother transition for all of us. As a worker, I felt more dedicated to my work, my supervisor and the company.

I humbly ask for your support in passing HB755 in order to support our parents who are raising our next generation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Staci Hanashiro

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:26:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherrie Galdeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo,

Sherrie Galdeira

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:37:49 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Amy Jindra from Wailua . I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

If you have a personal story about how Paid Family leave Act would help you now or in a past situation, please add that here

Mahalo , Amy Jindra

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:40:06 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ricardo Molero Bravo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support a Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program in Hawai‘i because no one should have to choose between their job and caring for a loved one. The United States remains the only developed nation without a national paid leave policy, leaving millions of workers—particularly those in lower-income jobs—without the financial security to take time off for medical needs or family care. In Hawai‘i, only about one in four private sector workers have access to paid leave, and the workers who need it most, including many Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander families, are the least likely to have it. PFML is a proven tool to improve health, economic stability, and workforce participation, especially for women, who often bear the burden of caregiving. By ensuring access to paid leave, Hawai‘i can support working families and promote financial security while reducing reliance on public assistance programs.

Beyond its benefits for families, PFML is also good for businesses and Hawai‘i’s economy. States with PFML programs have seen increased employee productivity, lower turnover, and stronger business growth, as workers with paid leave are more likely to stay in the workforce and contribute to their employers' success. A statewide PFML program would level the playing field for small businesses, allowing them to compete with larger companies that already offer paid leave, ensuring that all businesses have the opportunity to attract and retain top talent. Additionally, as Hawai‘i faces a growing challenge in retaining its working-age population, offering PFML would make our state more competitive with places like California, Washington, and Oregon, which already provide these essential benefits. Enacting PFML is not just a moral imperative—it is a smart economic policy that strengthens Hawai‘i’s workforce, supports businesses, and ensures the well-being of our families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:41:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan Gentaro Fujitani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB755.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:52:03 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carol lee kamekona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support hb755 which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

mahalo!

carol lee kamekona

kahului, maui

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:52:42 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Culten Arroyo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone born and raised in Hawaii, we all know the importance of Ohana. The first few months and years are so crucial to the well-bring of both the child and the family. The entire system benefits from paid family leave. No more burning PTO to make ends meet while the mother is recovering/nursing. No more worrying if bills will be paid because of unpaid family leave. No more choosing between career and family.

Please consider passing this bill for the betterment of our people, our community, and set and exmaple for the country.

Culten Arroyo

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:54:40 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mamiko Carroll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the committee, I am testifying in SUPPORT of HB755, Relating to Paid Family Leave.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this measure.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:12:17 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liz Elliott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Liz from Wainiha . I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo ,

Liz

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:14:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this bill to care for our families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:27:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Celeste Rojas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Sahara, and members of the committee:

My name is Celeste Rojas and I am a supporter to caregiver agencies .I strongly support HB755 which establishes a family and medical insurance program for working family caregivers. Having these caregiving agencies are a must to help families to deal with a hospice patient. It will take planning a schedule while budgeting to pay for household expenses while the patient is at home for their quality of life. Meanwhile the family members working have support from different medical agencies. Plus needed support on how to adjust to the phase.

This proposal paid leave would allow working family caregivers to care for their loved ones without sacrificing their job and income ,even risking a job delay for a promotion. Please support these hero's by passing HB 755.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Celeste Rojas

Mountain View, Hawaii

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:40:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison DeYenno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda:

My name is Allison DeYenno from Kaua'i. I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Families need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families. I know many families that this program would have helped tremendously, especially given the high cost of living here in Hawai'i, so let's help families weather the storm in the future.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:46:51 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julianna Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sayama and Vice Chair Lee,

My name is Jules Davis and I am writing in strong support of paid family and medical leave. This bill would prioritize the health and well-being of our working families in Hawai‘i. We should not have to worry about losing a paycheck when medical needs such as caring for a family member arises. The United States is the only developed country, and richest in the world, and yet it doesn‘t provide paid family leave for our working people. Hawai‘i should follow after the many other states that have enacted paid family leave and provide this vital service to our people.

I urge you to pass HB 755. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jules Davis

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:55:18 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Higbee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I testify on behalf of myself. I am in support of HB 755. It's important to have paid family leave. Our families are multigenerational in Hawaii. We depend on each other for showing up at work every day in order to pay rent or mortgage since the cost of living is through the roof. We absolutely need paid family leave in case one of our family members needs us to care for them. How sad that some families cannot provide the care needed and then their beloved mom dies!?! That's a tragedy that far too many must live with!!! Not to mention all the locals and Hawaiians and working class people I know who lost their house they scrimped and saved for and tried their hardest to work to make those mortgage payments, only to lose it when they were hit with a illness or their family was hit with an illness or accident that required their care.

We are all living paycheck to paycheck, unable to save money so every paycheck matters! We need this paid family and emergency leave. Our very survival depends on it. Think of the children! They need our income so their opu can be filled and they don't need to push our car because we can't put food on the table or fill the gas tank because something must give when we are hit with illness!

There were so many times as a single mother that I had to give my child cough and flu medicine and send them to school because I couldn't afford to take off work to care for my own child. This shouldn't be happening. This is how whole schools get sick and teachers can't work anymore due to their health because parents can't afford to stay home with their sick child. This is how children lose their lives because if they are a child with an immune compromised condition, they can't survive cold after cold, flu after flu, that they get from their sick classmates who parents can't afford to stay home with them since they don't have family leave! Hawaii was one of the very few states who do not have this humane right. We need to catch up with the times and treat our workforce with dignity and respect. Think of the families! Think of the children!

With Aloha,

Kanani Higbee

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:58:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Matsunaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Save Medicaid Hawaii **strongly supports HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:07:37 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
chelsea pang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:10:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcela Montalto	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

“Ensuring paid medical and family leave is not just a matter of worker rights—it is a fundamental investment in public health, economic stability, and family well-being. No one should have to choose between their paycheck and caring for a sick loved one or recovering from illness

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:10:38 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:28:15 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jane jamison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support paid family and medical leave to support Hawai'i's working families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:32:55 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I **strongly support HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Molly Mamaril

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:45:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Bickel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

America is one of the few countries that does not have a family leave insurance program. Let us catch up with the rest of the world and pass this bill. Hawaii should take the lead and hopefully America will follow.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:06:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avery Olson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha all,

As a healthcare provider in the state of Hawaii, I consistently work with patients, caregivers, and birthing persons. I hear their stories, and I hear how the amount of leave they are given affects them. For many people, the amount of leave they are given directly affects their health outcome or the health outcome of their loved one.

One of my patients had an infection after her delivery. It required wound dressing changes multiple times per day, for which she relied on her husband. After her husband went back to work (a few weeks after the delivery), she had to try to make it to the hospital for help changing dressings. With a newborn and an infection, she was only able to do this a few times. She ended up back in the hospital, which meant additional healthcare dollars spent and a huge setback for her returning to work. If her husband would have had more leave available, this complication could have been avoided.

Please consider supporting HB755 for the health of the families of Hawaii!

Mahalo,

Dr. Avery

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:09:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an OBGYN and new parent. I strongly support paid family leave.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:23:25 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leah Ann Gross	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Leah Ann Gross. I am a resident of Kauai, and I am in support of HB755 which would give much needed paid family leave to our residents when a medical emergency arises. I am the mother of twins who are now almost 5 years old. We spent 84 days at Kapiolani when they were born prematurely. My family and my children would have benefited from a bill such as this in our time of need. I am writting you today to show my support so that mothers and fathers in future situations such as mine can focus on the more pressing matters of human life. No one should have the burden of chosing time away from work or time away from loved ones in a medical situation. Thank you for listening to my testimony. Mahalo for your work in taking care of the people of this great state.

Aloha

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:25:22 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and **I strongly support HB 755**, which would establish a statewide paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i. As someone deeply invested in the well being of our communities as well as a board member of Hawai‘i Workers Center, I believe every workers should have the ability to care for themselves or their loved ones without the fear of losing income or job security.

Medical emergencies, family caregiving, and the arrival of a new child are moments that shape our lives. Yet, many working families in Hawai‘i are forced to choose between financial stability and their health. HB 755 would provide essential support by allowing workers to receive a portion of their income while taking necessary leave, ensuring that no one has to make the impossible choice between a paycheck and their family’s well-being.

Paid family leave is not just a matter of compassion—it is an economic necessity. When employees have access to paid leave, businesses benefit from increased productivity, higher employee retention, and reduced turnover costs. Additionally, states that have implemented paid family leave programs have seen improved health outcomes, stronger families, and a more resilient workforce.

Hawaii’s high cost of living already places immense pressure on working families. Without a paid leave program, too many are left vulnerable during times of crisis. By passing HB 755, we can take a meaningful step toward a more just, supportive, and thriving Hawai‘i.

I urge you to pass this bill and stand in solidarity with Hawai‘i’s workers and families.
WORKERS RIGHTS ARE OUR RIGHTS!

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:27:51 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dan Tomchak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For the last 35 years, I have worked as a teacher, skills trainer, and administrator for programs working with people with special needs in Hawai`i. My work was at times with youth that were rejected from other programs who needed more intensive care, with families who could not afford care for their special needs children, and I have worked with families who have seniors who are not able to live independently. In all of these areas there has never been enough funding from the state to help these people.

Private for profit organizations who offer services for special needs people in Hawai`i employ about 1100 workers. Our state has about 11,000 special needs individuals and 55,000 disabled people. Companies who offer skills trainers and other nursing adjuncts don't pay a living wage to their workers, and that is why, even if families could afford them, there are no caregivers for many who need them.

There are families in Hawai`i struggling to care for parents and children they truly love, who are confronted with the impossible choice of working and abandoning care, and abandoning wages to care for family. I implore you to grant your fellow citizens paid relief so they can keep their families intact and retain their households. Paid family leave will allow ohanas to take care of their own - it, after all, just a continuation of the Hawaiian way of family taking care of all.

Testimony on House Bill No. 755
RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025, AT 9:00 A.M.
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christina Enoka, and I am a former caregiver for my father who had stage 4 cancer. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 755. The bill establishes a family and medical leave insurance program for working caregivers who need 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 help 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 often in addition to our own household needs.

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 must 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 HB755.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Christina Enoka
Mililani, Oahu
Ncsmn150@gmail.com

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:29:16 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Witeck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure! A workable system is urgently needed to provide paid leave for workers unable to work due to illness, injury or the need to care for a sick, injured or disabled family member. Public employees and unionized workers have paid vacation and sick leave. But most private sector workers do not have paid leave save for industrial injury leave and perhaps some family leave. This means about 80 % of Hawaii's workers lack paid leave for illness, personal or family emergencies, or vacations. This is not equitable nor is it beneficial to public health.

Workers who are ill should not be compelled to work in order to feed their families or pay the rent; this only helps to spread illnesses.

I urge the Legislature to pass this long overdue measure for the sake of Hawaii's working families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:45:11 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:08:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as many employers do not offer paid maternal leave, leaving parents in unfortunate positions of being forced to choose between their paycheck or their keiki. This bill would help address this. Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Kevin Faccenda

Honolulu

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:40:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Finnegan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is XXX from XXX . I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

If you have a personal story about how Paid Family leave Act would help you now or in a past situation, please add that here

Mahalo , Erin Finnegan

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:47:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caitlin Kryss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committee on Labor,

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration,

Caitlin Kryss

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:58:39 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
dennis boyd miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support paid family leave.

Dennis B Miller

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:09:12 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlene Rodrigues	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support this bill as a working person who has had to take time off to take care of family members and myself. I would have benefitted from a statewide family and medical leave program. I have lost wages and job benefits because of unseen circumstances of family members medical emergencies. The passing of this bill would help the people of Hawaii have a better quality of life.

Mahalo for the chance to testify.

Testimony of House Bill No. 755
RELATING TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE
THURSDAY, January 30, 2025 at 9:00 am
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lynnette Sakamoto, and I am a former caregiver. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 755 which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program for working family caregivers.

From 2001 to 2014 I took care of both my parents. After my mom passed, I took care of my dad for 4 more years, a total of 17 years. While the physical and mental aspects of caregiving took its toll on me while I was caregiving, the financial toll is an ongoing challenge. I retired early from my primary job with the airlines which resulted in my retirement income being reduced, and I had to quit my secondary job in real estate because it was impossible to be on top of that while facing the daily challenges of caregiving.

The high cost of hiring caregivers to relieve me prevented us from using them as often as needed, and I'm amazed that I survived all those years of caregiving. I now watch as my cousins and friends struggle as I did as they care for their loved ones. Unfortunately, they, too, will experience future financial hardships because of the sacrifices they made for their loved ones.

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. Many are juggling their family responsibilities while working to pay for their household expenses to keep a roof over their heads. Some are the sandwich generation caring for both aging kupuna and younger keiki in school. This proposed paid leave would allow working family caregivers to care for their loved ones without sacrificing their jobs and future retirement income. Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB 755. They all deserve our support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Lynnette Sakamoto
Kailua, HI

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:13:37 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chloe Pua'ena Vierra-Villanueva	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

To: Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
House Committee on Labor

From: Chloe “Pua’ena” Vierra-Villanueva

Subject: Measure H.B. No. 755 – Relating to Paid Family Leave

Position: Strong Support

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and committee members,

My name is Pua’ena and I believe Hawai‘i families need paid family and medical leave.

I am testifying in strong support of HB755. In Hawai‘i, where many families are living paycheck to paycheck, it is critical that Hawai‘i implement programs like this so that families are able to thrive, not just survive.

I strongly support HB755 because it establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i. Working families don’t get to choose when or how medical needs happen, but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

This program is for working families and ALICE families like mine who struggle to provide care for our medically complex child and sick, elderly parent without paid leave. My son was in the NICU for over 5 months after his early birth and I only had 2 weeks of parent leave (which my employer did not need to provide) before I had to go back to work full time. I only saw my baby 4 hours every week day between work and my commute home. As a Hawaiian immersion toddler teacher, I was spending 9 hours a day caring for other children and sacrificing bonding with my baby for some sense of financial security. We lost our rental apartment and we were drowning in medical bills due to the high cost of living in Hawai‘i. This program is not only for

the economic stability of Hawai‘i, but for better health outcomes for babies, growing keiki, parents, caregivers, and survivors.

As a parent, Early Childhood Education professional, and concerned community member, I hope that our legislators can do this to help all of the people working hard in Hawai‘i for Hawai‘i.

Mahalo,
C. Pua‘ena Vierra-Villanueva
‘Ohana Leadership Council

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:23:42 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Kawabata	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in opposition of this bill, HB755. There is no stated amount to be paid for by the employer or employee to the family and medical leave insurance program. So, the amount is left to interpretation with no ceiling and this can be dangerous as if providing a blank check. Employee payroll is already taxed by the state and federal governments. This program is another "tax" on paychecks thereby reducing take home pay and creating additional hardship for families who would not be needing the benefit of the family and medical leave insurance program.

Thank you.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:27:04 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monisha Das Gupta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing is strong support of HB755. Paid family and medical leave insurance will transform the lives of so many individuals who cannot take time off to take care of themselves and their loved ones when they are faced with a serious health condition or are taking care of a child or an adult family member because they simply cannot afford to do that. I have heard countless heartbreaking stories of colleagues, parents, and caregivers who continued working despite serious health needs because they needed to put food on the table. They are unable to adequately take of themselves or their family members (including newborns and keiki) in need of care. When medical crises happen, the last thing people should need to worry about is their paycheck.

Research has shown again and again that paid family and medical leave improves people's well-being and this well-being brings with it social and economic benefits. We only need to look to California for a success story. HB755 proposes a contributory plan and should be passed.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:12:20 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
shani cosma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Shani Kimie Cosma. I am a preschool teacher at Tūtū and Me Traveling Preschool a program under Partners in Development Foundation. I am a full time lead teacher. I gave birth to my first keiki at 33 weeks and 2 days. My son arrived 7 weeks early. Shortly after being born, he was flown to Kapi'olani Hospital and was admitted to the NICU. Dad and I flew to be with him the very next day. We spent about 3 weeks in the hospital. Those 3 weeks were the hardest days of my life. I was in the hospital with my baby everyday by myself because dad had to work. It tore my heart because he had to sacrifice going to work to help support us instead of spending it with his newborn son while in the NICU. While in the hospital with baby, I received the date my doctor ordered me to return to work. My heart shattered to see that I would only have 6 weeks at home with baby. When informing my work, they informed me about the Hawai'i Family Leave Law, where people are able to take 4 weeks of UNPAID leave to care for loved ones. Learning that Hawai'i has that as a law blow me away. I felt defeated, helpless, sadness, and guilty for returning to work after only 6 weeks. I NEEDED to return because I cannot support my family if I didn't return or if I took the 4 weeks of UNPAID leave. We NEED better family leave laws for BOTH parents. We NEED the financial support while taking time off from work to care for our baby. Hawai'i needs to DO BETTER! I felt ZERO support for our government as a mom. I felt like i was failed as a citizen of this state. Please help us!

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:53:40 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Hagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We know families in Hawai‘i are strongest when we have time to heal from serious illness or injury, welcome a new child, or help a loved one recover or ease their passing. Everyone should be able to take time off to care for themselves or a loved one without risking financial precarity.

I urge you to support HB755 to bring paid family & medical leave to Hawaii.

Mahalo

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:35:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani Kailiawa	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha! My name is Leilani Kailiawa. I am in strong support for HB755. My family and I could have benefited from this bill if it had been passed many years ago. My family is from Hawaii Island. I was pregnant with my 3rd child and went through complications before and after my son was born at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children. I needed to take off work, be on bed rest, and be closely monitored before my son was born. I was away from my family for an extended 7-month stay due to my son's medical condition. My husband took off from work without pay and traveled back and forth from Hawaii Island to Oahu every two weeks during the weekend so that he could give me a break and bond with his first child. We both did not have the benefit of paid family and medical leave. We struggled financially, but it was important for us to stay near his bedside to help with his developmental changes and overall quality of life and well-being and to give me a break from taking care of our son.

Please pass HB 755. It is not just a policy. It is a way for families like mine to heal and thrive. Families should not have to choose between their health, family, and income.

Mahalo nui loa for your time

Leilani Kailawa

Member of Ohana Leadership Council

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:54:45 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bevin Parker-Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

January 28, 2025

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda:

My name is Bevin Parker-Evans and I am a resident of Omao, Kaua'i. I strongly support House bill HB755 which will help to establish a PAID FAMILY and MEDICAL LEAVE package program in Hawai'i. This bill matters to Hawai'i because key research from the 14 states in the US which have already passed similar bills shows that it will not only improve newborn children's development, but it can also have a very positive impact on maternal health, employee mental health and the general health of all employees and their immediate family. It is meant to reduce economic stress, increase workforce participation, and boost employee morale and retention.

Paid Family and Medical Leave programs are vital public policies across the United States and also in many nations for promoting large scale improvements that will boost our state economy and actually help employers of small businesses improve employee loyalty due to decreased stress and economic fear. Support for this critical policy is growing across the United States due to this type of bill being commonly found in many other countries. Since the United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without universal paid family and medical leave, our global competitiveness, businesses, and employees are hurt and suffer from the lack of this wonderful asset.

This bill is important for many reasons, but luckily it has been proven to be self-sustainable and is growing in support across the nation by both small companies, their employers, and also by unions. The funds begin to grow in value and security with each passing year. The cost for each employee will be roughly between \$2-9 dollars per week, with the average employee in Hawai'i paying into the Leave fund accounts approximately only \$4.00 per week. By contributing each week, it is possible for an employee to benefit with a \$900.00 payment per week when a needed paid leave reason occurs within his family..

This type of employment leave benefit can protect all workers, not just women who have given birth, but the goal is to support any worker who may need time off due to poor children's health, poor personal medical health, and for all employees that may need to caretake for ill, disabled, or aging family members. By allowing parents to fully engage with newborn babies at the most crucial point of a child's development, children's general health can be improved. And,

also, employees who may suffer sudden health issues or who may need medical treatment such as chemotherapy, a paid leave program from their daily job can quickly support their own health and wellness including lack of economic stress and mental wellness. Additionally our Kupuna who need caretaking may benefit hugely when their children or relatives are able to take time off of work to make certain their elderly family is well cared for.

The goal of this bill is to protect worker's jobs and our economic security as well. With the high cost of living in Hawai'i, this bill will protect all employees and guarantee that they are able to remain at their jobs and stay here in Hawai'i as residents instead of being forced to leave their native home due to poor benefits for employees in our state. For any person who has had to choose between keeping a job in Hawai'i and caring for a family member's health, the benefit of this program is obvious. It not only strengthens the employee's loyalty to his job, but it protects small businesses from frequent employee loss due to medical or health reasons.

There simply is no excuse for anyone in Hawai'i to suffer such a horrific and catastrophic decision of having to give up their job to protect their own health and wellness or the health of an immediate family member. Hawai'i legislators need to support our businesses, our unions and our employees by offering protections for employees and keeping them from undue stress and job loss. Please support this bill and prove to our community that you care about our employees and that you also care for our small businesses by showing up and making sure our community is stronger and has much less cost-of-living mental stress.

Mahalo for joining me in supporting this most important

HB755 bill,

Aloha, Bevin Parker-Evans, Omao, Kaua'i Resident

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:21:57 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Betsy Baker Morrigan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of paid family leave. This increases the bond between parents and children, and may reduce stress and mental health issues that children and teens suffer from now. Children should be with their parents after birth and not dumped into daycare. Please pass this bill.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:26:24 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Kapon Nakamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou, 'o Jordan Kapon Nakamura ko'u inoa, and I'm a kama'aina worker in strong support of this bill. Caring for ourselves and our loved ones is a virtue and a human right that should be upheld, supported, and encouraged for every worker. A strong and considerate paid family and medical leave program established across the pae 'Aina is a long overdue marker of a functional society with leaders who put their community at the heart of their governance. Mahalo nui.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:20:44 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noreen Dougherty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support our local families. They need support.

Please pass this bill with your support.

Noreen Dougherty, Kapaa, Hawaii

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:24:07 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Support HB755

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair

Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Thursday, January 30, 2025

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

RE: HB 755 RELATING TO FAMILY LEAVE

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

My name is Linda Dorset, and I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 755. 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. With Hawaii's high cost of living, few can afford to quit their jobs. They shouldn't have to choose between their own financial security and caring for a loved one.

Please support SB2474 SD2. Caregivers deserve this help. We know probably all of us will be needing this help.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

**Linda Dorset
Wailuku, Maui**

Hearing Date: Thursday, January 30, 2025, 9:00 am, Conference Rm. 309

To: House Committee on Labor
Chair, Representative Jackson D. Sayama
Vice Chair, Representative Mike Lee

Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 755

From: Jean Evans, (Individual)

Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2474, SD2 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee and Members of Committees,

My name is Jean Evans and **I am Strong support of HB 755 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.

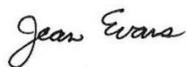
The proposed bill for family and medical leave is based on the successful insurance model which includes a large pool of companies and employees to make it affordable. The leave may be taken to care for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, or a qualifying service member who is 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 755 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-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:57:49 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aleeka Morgan	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee,

My name is Aleeka, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB755, which would establish a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Two years ago, while experiencing severe postpartum depression, I sought care from an OB-GYN. Instead of receiving the compassionate care I desperately needed, she entered the room, did not examine me or ask any medical questions, and said, "I'm sorry, you're not a good fit." That moment was not only traumatic for me but also reflective of a larger issue- Hawai'i's shortage of doctors, particularly those who nurture women. Yelp reviews from other patients echoed my experience. I realized that if I wanted to survive here- and help other mothers do the same- I needed to advocate for stronger systems of support. Paid Family and Medical Leave is one of the most effective ways to do that. It ensures caregivers know they are supported, without the added stress of financial insecurity. At Nurturing Wahine Fund, we are doing an educational initiative on paid leave in partnership with small local businesses. Through a card game, players learn about the issue, and winners receive prizes from local companies. The biggest takeaway from our outreach? Most business owners assume Hawai'i already has paid family leave. Once they learn that we don't, they overwhelmingly support it. Paid leave would improve maternal and infant health at a time when the U.S. has one of the world's worst maternal mortality rates. I was almost one of those statistics.

Moms First, a national organization led by experts of this issue, has strong data on the benefits of paid leave:

- Women are **20% more likely to stay in the workforce** if they have access to paid leave, which could boost GDP by as much as **\$1 trillion**.
- Without paid leave, workers are more likely to leave their jobs, and replacing them costs employers at least **one-fifth of an employee's salary**.
- It has been proven that paid leave helps **reduce the wage gap** between men and women.

Paid Family Leave can become a reality, not just a game, in Hawai'i, joining the 13 states and D.C. that already have it, because nothing is truly hard to achieve, it's just unfamiliar.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:57:13 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Bilyk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Rep Jackson Sayama, Chair, Rep Mike Lee, Vice Chair

Labor Committee Members

FROM: Patricia Bilyk, RN, MSN, MPH, IBCLC (Retired)

DATE: Thursday, January 30, 2025

TIME and PLACE: 9am Room 309

RE: Paid Family Leave HB 755

Good Morning. I am Patricia Bilyk, an advanced practice nurse with a specialty in Maternal Infant Nursing. I stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 755 Paid Family Leave.

During my 52 year career in the State of Hawai'i, I've worked with many families before and after the birth of their infants. Almost all of these families were determining how much paid leave they had to be with their infant and when they had to return to work often 2-6 weeks because they needed the money. When they returned, the women had not fully recovered from birth, had not established a full milk supply for her infant and barely gotten to know her infant.

As a society, I feel we need to support families taking time away from work to establish a primary relationship with their newborn yet provide a wage to allow the family to continue to live!

The program in this bill would provide just that and for **ALL** workers in public and private companies through employee contributions not State funds.

I strongly encourage this Committee to see it is good business for for both the employer and employee to have such a plan in the workplace. I further encourage this Committee to pass this bill out of Committee.

Mahalo.

Jennifer L Stotter, PhD
Kea'au, HI 96749

January 29, 2025

Re: HB.755 Relating to Paid Family Leave

Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 755, which would establish a comprehensive paid family and medical leave (PFML) program in Hawaii. As our population ages and caregiving needs continue to grow, it is crucial that we implement policies that allow workers to maintain their economic security while fulfilling essential caregiving duties. Currently, 154,000 unpaid caregivers in Hawaii provide an estimated 144 million hours of care annually, valued at \$2.6 billion – a tremendous contribution to our communities that often comes at great personal and financial cost to these caregivers.

The evidence supporting paid family leave is compelling and comprehensive. States that have implemented PFML programs report significant health, social, and economic benefits across multiple dimensions. These programs have demonstrated improved chronic disease management – a critical consideration given that 691,000 Hawaii residents live with at least one chronic condition. Furthermore, research shows that paid leave programs lead to better maternal health outcomes, healthier keiki, and enhanced ability to provide quality care for both ohana and kupuna. The economic case for PFML is equally strong. Research by Maya Rossin-Slater and others has consistently shown positive impacts on businesses. For example, after implementing PFML, New York employers reported improved ability to manage workers' absences with no adverse effects on productivity, workplace cooperation, or attendance. This demonstrates that PFML can be a win-win policy that supports both workers and businesses.

I urge you to support HB.755 and help establish a paid family and medical leave program that will strengthen our families, support our workforce, and enhance our economy. Hawaii's workers shouldn't have to choose between their family's well-being and their economic security. This legislation represents a crucial step forward in supporting our communities and upholding our values of ohana and mutual care.

Sincerely,



Jennifer L Stotter, PhD

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:26:06 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joan Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML). PFML allows workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for a loved one, bond with a new child or have a serious health issue of their own. PFML includes parental, caregiving and medical leave.

If this legislation was approved, the state of Hawaii would run the PFML benefit program funded by small employee payroll deductions and contributions from employers, similar to the way that social security and medicare are funded. Workers would apply when leave was needed and employers would not pay employees while on they were on leave since they would be paid by the state PFML fund.

No one should have to choose between caring for a loved ones or themselves and a paycheck to help support their family. Thank you in advance for supporting Hawaii's working families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:33:04 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 755 and urge you to support it as well. This bill would establish a statewide paid family and medical leave program. I imagine you have benefited from paid leave before and we should want the same for others.

When my dad was sick with cancer, he had the opportunity to receive a bone marrow transplant but required a caretaker. My mom was able to go with him to Seattle where they both had to stay for several months for the procedure. They were both employed at the time but able to take time off without significant detriment to their jobs, which would've had major impacts on the rest of our family and living situation.

Every worker should be able to take time off to care for themselves or a loved one without the worry of losing a paycheck. No one should have to choose between a job and caring for themselves or their loved one. Caring for workers is good for business in the long run.

Please support HB 755.

Mahalo,

Kristen Young
Honolulu resident

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:00:10 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Gaylord	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the House Committee on Labor:

As a domestic violence advocate working with victims for over a quarter century, I have witnessed and walked with victims and child witnesses surviving the abuser and the abuse without a safety net. I have found our communities to be sorely lacking in empathy and support for victims among them. Instead, they uphold a system (perhaps unwittingly) that keeps victims trapped and revictimized. Therefore, I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of this measure.

HB755 requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to establish a family and medical leave insurance program that includes safe leave for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking and begin collecting payroll contributions to finance the payment of benefits by 1/1/2028. The Department must also start receiving claims and paying benefits under the program by 1/1/2029.

This critical policy is not only beneficial for Hawai'i's caregivers and families but also to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking (all forms of gender-based violence) who need to take time off to receive victim services, make court appearances, seek medical services, or relocate themselves and family. Rhode Island, Connecticut, Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, and Maine currently include safe leave in their paid family leave laws.

Paid safe leave provides survivors of violence with options:

- ways to navigate safety;**
- time to maintain their economic security; and**
- the chance to find healing without fear of job loss, leading to increased abuse and homelessness.**

Survivors who have already faced immense trauma should not be forced to choose between personal and family physical safety or financial stability. Survivors and their loved ones in

Hawai'i need paid safe leave to manage their safety, care for their families, and remain in the workforce.

Maintaining economic independence is critical to survivors' immediate, intermediate, and long-term safety and ability to recover from trauma. However, many survivors struggle to remain connected to the workforce as they face numerous challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment as a consequence of the abuse or violence.

A safe leave policy, as proposed in HB755, allows survivors to take paid time away from work to heal, recover, and make themselves and their families safe promises to strengthen survivors' ties to the workforce and allow them to meet critical needs in the wake of violence. Gender-based violence presents a concern for public health and safety, as well as for the economy, and victimization has serious repercussions for workers.

By creating pathways to remain in the workforce and adequately support survivors of violence, Hawai'i's economy benefits from a reduction in lost productivity and retains talented and innovative workers.

Mahalo Nui Loa for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:13:33 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Achuela	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I firmly support HB755, which creates a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i. Medical needs can arise unexpectedly, and working families shouldn’t have to choose between their health and financial stability. Under this program, a household earning the average income of \$62,000 per year would contribute just \$4 per week through payroll deductions but could receive over \$900 per week in benefits when eligible. By ensuring workers can care for themselves and their families without sacrificing their livelihoods, we can build a stronger, more resilient economy.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:20:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Fuhrmeister	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:27:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB755 by Rep Sayama to establish paid family leave in Hawaii. This is much needed for working families. If we want to maintain our workforce, we must look to establish programs that provide incentives for people to stay. Paid family leave will help.

Mahalo,

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

Big Island

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:04:16 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharde Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:21:33 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael C Fahey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support paid family and medical leave were the citizens of Hawaii. HB755.

Michael C Fahey

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:35:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Momi Vee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Please Support HB 755

Every single worker should be able to take time off to care for themselves, children or a family member, Without the worry of losing a paycheck or their job. Paid sick or family leave gives workers time to take off and still receive **part of their income** when they need to be responsible for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to have special time with a newborn. We don't get to choose when a medical need arises, but we need to validate and secure economic stability for when they do come up.

Paid family leave is good for business, employees are more productive AND loyal (which lowers turnover costs). States with paid family leave, see **significant health, social, and economic benefits. Mahalo and Thank You**

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:58:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i.

Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen -- but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible.

As a small business owner and a mother of two children, I believe our economy would be stronger if we support workers through programs like paid family leave that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

It's time for change in Hawai‘i to support our families, as well as our businesses, and create a more family-friendly, ‘ohana-centered culture of care in our state.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:08:11 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marija Colic	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!!

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:05:35 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gemma Medina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support HB755**, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. As a working parent, I don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but I would need to preserve my income and work stability when issues arise. a few years ago, my husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor. I had to take time off for medical appointments and care. I believe that our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:51:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Maupin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Paid Family Leave script from Joell Edwards is written for tomorrow's LABOR committee meeting looks like this..."Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Margaret Maupin from Kalaheo. I am also a member of Kauai Indivisible and I am a primary care nurse practitioner. I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

If you have a personal story about how Paid Family leave Act would help you now or in a past situation, please add that here

Mahalo, Margaret Maupin, APRN

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:00:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimie Korenaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kimie Korenaga and I write in firm support of HB755.

Our working families deserve to spend time with their loved ones when needed without adding to their stress or anxieties about missing pay-- especially when many of us are 1 paycheck away from losing housing.

I often find myself and my husband regretting going back to work so soon after having our only child when she needed us, but economically, we had no choice.

Allowing mothers and fathers to spend crucial first-moments with their new born should be normal, not a luxury.

Allowing mothers this time with their newborns also allows for stronger nursing opportunities-- good for children's physical health & connections that develop into children's foundations for trust and attachment essential for growth.

I believe that something as simple as paid family leave can be a catalyst for positive change in the dynamics of our communities, households, and ultimately how we love each other as human beings.

Please see this bill through.

Mahalo.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:22:19 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvette Amshoff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Yvette Amshoff employee of The County of Kaua'i and Kaua'i Community College . I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

As a mother of two young children Paid Family leave would have strongly benefited me after giving birth to my first son. In fact I was so scared of not being hired on to a full time position at my former employer because I was pregnant and did not know if they would still want to hire me. This fear should not be in the fore front of a pregnant women's mind. Let's instead help new families with a PFML so they can feel truly supported and WANT to come back to work!!

Mahalo for your time,

Yvette

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:32:40 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelly Tokunaga May	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou

I am in strong support of HB755 which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i.

We live in one of the most expensive states and need working parents in order to live here. We also value taking care of our ‘ohana. No one wants to have to choose between caring for their family and keeping their job. This bill will help to ensure families have safeguards in place so they can have secure income/employment and care for their family when issues arise.

When I gave birth to my keiki, I had severe Postpartum Anxiety and Depression. I went back to work quickly without taking the mental health care I needed because I was trying to keep up with my job. Thinking back, I wish moms and other caregivers would have better options and normalize taking medical leave without worrying about income/employment.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Dr Shelly Tokunaga-May

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:33:21 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keaolani Yogi	AAUW	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support paid family and medical leave to support woking familes in Hawaii.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:52:36 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christen Zulli	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Christen Zulli from Hilo, Hawai'i. I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen, like when prenatal depression and anxiety created an unsafe environment for myself, my unborn baby, and my 1 year old, or the multiples times I randomly found my father, who has dementia, walking along the busy highway and I needed to stop what I was doing and where I was going to pick him up and take care of him. AND 'Ohanas need to preserve their incomes and work stability when these issues arise, or face severe consequences, such as losing their job, like my husband did as a result of paternal postpartum exhaustion and caretaking his sick pregnant wife because he did not have an option to rest & recover with pay. Now, I am forced to solo-parent two young children for sometimes over half of the year while my husband sails on cargo ships in the merchant marines. To say this has negatively affected our marriage and our two young children would be an understatement. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy AND our family units can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families. We need this Paid Family and Medical Leave program now.

Mahalo,

Christen Zulli (and my entire 'Ohana)

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 6:14:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rev. Samuel L Domingo	Hawaii Workers Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB755 because:

- 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. We don't get to choose when medical needs arise, but we need to **ensure economic stability** for when they do.
- Paid family leave is **good for business**— employees are more productive (which can help increase profits) and loyal (which lowers turnover costs).
- States with paid family leave have seen **significant health, social, and economic benefits**.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 6:59:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Ebata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong & Reyes-Oda,

I strongly support HB755 which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawaii.

Regardless of when medical needs arise, working families need to preserve incomes and work stability. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Helping workers care for themselves and their families while staying at their jobs makes for a more resilient and stable economy.

My sisters and I took care of our elderly mom for years. The demands of caregiving are, without exaggeration, BRUTAL. Financial woes on top of this can break the strongest spirit.

In the midst of random federal cuts and freezes of aid that people have come to depend on to provide at least a minimally decent level of living, Hawaii families must have this family and medical leave program in place. The cost of living here is prohibitive and this program has been a long time coming.

Thank you for your kind consideration of the needs of our families.

Sincerely,

Ellen Ebata

Indivisible Kauai

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:17:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Alice	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

It's long past time to implement paid family and medical leave. Especially with the uncertainty of federal funding thanks to the president's executive orders, we need our local leaders to step up and defend the dignity of our people by providing a safety net. Please do the right thing and pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Kristen Alice

Hilo

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:01:11 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha / please support this important bill. If you despise to have young well educated families to stay in Hawaii now and in the future, then you must support paid family leave. Otherwise they will move ro the mainland where the job market willl support this need.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Dr. Casandra Simonson, MD

Regarding: Paid Family and Medical Leave

1/30/2025

My name is Dr. Casandra Simonson. I am here today to represent myself, my family, and the families of all of my patients. The view I express are my own. I have been a pediatrician for over ten years in Maui and I am urging the legislature to support HB755 for Paid Family and Medical Leave. We are facing the threat of decreased federal funding for programs that help those most in need. One thing we can do right now to offset these funding cuts is to pass paid family and medical leave in our state. PFML is a very well-studied way to improve lives, as well as a way to decrease the gender pay gap. It would also help Hawaii attract and retain talented individuals, including healthcare workers and educators, who might otherwise head to states with paid leave programs already in place. I am not here to speak on the extensive economic benefits, I am here to speak as a pediatrician. In my job I see newborns, infants, and children all-day every day. I see mothers just days after delivery, right after discharge from the hospital. Which means I see mothers who arrive sometimes alone, carrying a heavy awkward car seat and diaper bag. I see moms who are bleeding, in pain, with stitches, struggling to walk, and they are often alone. They are not usually alone because they don't have family or a partner that cares but because their loved ones absolutely have to work. These new mothers aren't supposed to be lifting anything let alone everything. These moms haven't slept since they went into labor and in case you haven't heard, babies are hard. They cry a lot, they make a lot of doo-doo, they grumble and make scary noises, they breathe funny, they fuss, and then they oversleep when they need to eat. Sometimes they are sick, and sometimes there are complications for mom or baby. Studies of parenting styles of villagers in the Amazon rainforest have shown that in one day, a child has 8-12 different adults assisting with their caregiving. Raising a child in most of the world is a team effort. In the US, we expect a bleeding, in pain, exhausted mom to do it all, often alone. What are the effects of modern US caregiving for mom and baby? It might mean trouble bonding or trouble breastfeeding, or worse, falling asleep holding the baby and accidentally smothering it. It could mean the baby doesn't get enough nutrition or affection during crucial brain development periods. It could lead to the mom becoming depressed. It could lead to short tempers and fights with partners, breakups, evictions, it could lead to relying on substances to cope, it could lead to child abuse. I won't speak to the economic benefits of paid family and medical leave as that's not my expertise but I can tell you there are severe consequences to inadequate support of families and I see it every day. Parents are facing agonizing choices in order to make ends meet. Imagine your child gets very sick. Imagine having to choose- stay by their side and risk losing your housing? Or in order to keep making enough money you leave your child alone, scared and hurting in a hospital

wondering where you are? It's cruel and it's shameful to not have a better system when one is available. I urge each legislator to consider your legacy, your impact, what you want your voting record to reflect. Your record will reflect that you either supported, rejected, or ignored a compassionate plan to change lives. It will reflect what you did or didn't do to attract and retain talented workers. How can you vote to shore up our state against the dismantling of our federal safety net programs? How can you vote to support families? What side of history will you be on? A proven program is before you now. It's been before you before, and you let it go. What will be your excuse for not supporting it this time? How will you answer to your constituents who are now terrified that the government will no longer help them?

How can Hawaii set an example and be a success story through these dark times?

Paid Family and Medical Leave isn't even a small step in the right direction, it's a huge leap, one you can take right now. Please vote yes for paid family and medical leave. I look forward to taking pride in our state thanks to your actions.

Thank you to the chair and the committee and all of you for your time.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:24:41 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lahela correa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda

My name is Lahela Correa from Hā'ena, Kaua'i. I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo for your time ,

lahela Correa

A Māmā and her Keikikāne

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:44:12 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deanna Espinas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill. Thank you.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 9:04:55 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julianne Byun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident physician of Hawaii Pacific Health, I suport this bill.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 9:44:27 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlene Johnston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Representatives Sayama, Lee, Garrett, Kapela, Kong and Reyes-Oda,

My name is Charlene Johnston. I am a Hawaii Professionally Licensed Civil Engineer, whom worked for County of Kaua'i until FMLA ran out. I strongly support HB755. I currently have no income of any kind. I am currently living on a loan from a family member.

I am unable to work and awaiting a SS Disability response to my disability application submitted nearly a year ago. I have not had income for more than 3 months because of the nature of my rare diseases and my memory. I do not have Alzheimer's but have a hard time holding on to time frame and words. I have been up and down for years now. However, it all got worse after I contracted COVID too many times. Unfortunately, through a variety of circumstances, I did not act quickly enough to get assistance; mostly thinking I could turn around my circumstances on my own.

Now, all of my retirement is gone, as are the earnings from the sale of my residence. Note, **I am not yet 60**. All those years of dedication to my profession and the communities which I lived in is gone.

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. People whom worked their whole lives don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they deserve to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise.

The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families. May this all prevent others from what happened to me

Mahalo for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Charlene Johnston

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 10:04:54 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joanna Galingana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai‘i. Working families don't get to choose when or how medical needs happen - but they need to preserve their incomes and work stability when issues arise. The rise of living in Hawaii has its challenges. I stand for myself as a working mother of 3 young children and an advocate of families who have children with disabilities and economic needs. Our economy can be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

HB-755

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 10:58:50 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/30/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Star Kemfort	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB755, which establishes a paid family and medical leave program in Hawai'i. As a wife and mother who could have used this type of program it is crucial that when medical emergencies arise families have access to help. A program like this could have benefited my family when my husband was out of work due to a on the job injury that left permanent damage and minimal compensation.

The average income household of \$62,000/year would contribute only about \$4/week in payroll deductions to PFML, and would be able to receive over \$900/week in benefits when eligible. Currently this would be enough compensation to cover all financial obligations for my family of 5 so we would definitely benefit from help like this if needed.

Our economy cab be stronger if we support workers through programs that help them obtain and stay at their jobs while being able to care for themselves and their families.

Mahalo,

Star Kemfort