



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

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The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii  
The Senate  
Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts  
Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association  
March 22, 2021

**S.C.R. 168/S.R. 133 – URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
DEVELOPMENT TO REEXAMINE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR STATE  
POSITIONS THAT ARE CURRENTLY VACANT**

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO would like to provide comments on S.C.R. 168 and S.R. 133 which urges the Department of Human Resources Development to re-examine the qualifications for vacant state positions and replace the qualification of a bachelor's degree with an associate degree or certificate where applicable.

The preamble of S.C.R. 168 and S.R. 133 identifies that our state government has over 27,700 current vacant positions and cites that the Department of Human Resources and Development (DHRD) has not conducted a comprehensive review of these positions to verify whether the job qualifications are current. The high vacancy rate is a serious problem both for the public to which government provides critical services, as well as current employees who are overburdened with fulfilling departmental missions with extremely limited resources. While we strongly support quickly filling all vacant positions, we respectfully question whether modifying minimum qualifications will yield the desired result, if the modification will result in a change of bargaining unit status and/or compensation for prospective employees, and the impact on existing employees who were hired with the existing qualifications.

We have consistently advocated that the state's recruitment process needs fundamental reform in large part because of its antiquated classification system. There are simply too many job classifications and the class specifications that exist are often outdated and no longer describe actual duties and responsibilities. Therefore, there is an urgent need to conduct a detailed review of the thousands of job classifications that comprise the state's workforce and figure out which ones warrant elimination, consolidation, or revision. DHRD must review and evaluate its and departmental hiring processes to streamline, coordinate, and prioritize must-fill positions. This will start a paradigm shift needed to create a leaner and more nimble classification and recruitment system. Other public sector employers have successfully reduced their classifications into consolidated job families where prospective employees can easily identify the occupational area in which they wish to work.

We share the concerns raised in S.C.R 168 and S.R. 133, however we prefer a holistic remedy that makes systemic and long-lasting changes.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Executive Director