



SHOPO
STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS
"A Police Organization for Police Officers Only"

LATE

February 11, 2009

House of Representative
 State of Hawaii
Committee on Labor
 Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
 Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

Date: Friday, February 13, 2009
 Time: 8:30 am
 Place: Room 309 State Capitol

Re: Testimony on House Bill 1725 Relating Hawaii Employee-Union
 Health Benefits Trust Fund

My name is Tenari Ma'afala and I am the President of The State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers ("SHOPO"). We represent over 2700 police officers in the State of Hawaii. SHOPO opposes House Bill 1725 which from 07/01/2009 to 06/30/2015: (1) prohibits health benefits plan of the employer-union health benefits trust fund from providing prescription drug coverage; and (2) allows board of trustees to make prescription drug benefits available through drug coverage plans that are paid for entirely by employee-beneficiaries.

When the legislature adopted the Hawaii Employer-Union Benefit Trust Fund ("EUTF") in 2001, it eliminated the option of obtaining health coverage through union-sponsored plans. The premise of the EUTF was to provide a single health benefit program for public employees to strengthen the bargaining power which the Health Fund lacked.

Furthermore the amount of contributions which the States and Counties are required to make under Section 87a-32 through 87a-37, HRS, toward the payment of cost for health benefits plan is subject to collective bargaining. This measure is in direct conflict with collective bargaining rights.

Finally, drug coverage is an important component of health benefits. Therefore, placing the total cost of drug benefits on the workers is in direct conflict with the intent of the EUTF and collective bargaining.

SHOPO strongly opposes HB 1725.



HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO
2305 S. BERETANIA ST., RM. 202, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826-1493
TEL: (808) 949-1566 FAX: (808) 952-6003
www.hawaii firefighters.org

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature
House of Representatives
Committees on Labor and Public Employment
February 11, 2009

LATE

Testimony by
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

H.B. No. 1725 Relating to Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

My name is Robert H. Lee and I am the President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO and also an active-duty fire captain with the Honolulu Fire Department. On behalf of the 1,800 active and 1,000 retired professional fire fighters throughout the State, the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association strongly opposes H.B. No. 1725.

H.B. No. 1725 removes the requirement that prescription drug benefit plans be afforded to public employees and if available, the cost of the entire premium shall be borne by the public employee. This bill could result in the entire public employee workforce without access to drug coverage. Furthermore, as this bill also requires the public employee to pay for the entire cost of the premium, the uncertainty of enrollment would most likely increase the premium cost. This measure is bad public policy.

The Kaiser Family Foundation's September 2008 report says "[P]rescription drugs are vital to preventing and treating illness and in helping avoid more costly medical problems." An April 2008 survey revealed alarming statistics on the adverse effect of not having prescription drug insurance coverage. That survey "found that uninsured nonelderly adults (ages 18-64) are more than twice as likely as insured nonelderly adults to say that they or a family member did not fill a prescription (45% vs. 22%) or cut pills or skipped doses of medicine (38% vs. 18%) in the past year because of the cost."

HFFA vehemently opposes H.B. No. 1725, as this bill compromises the welfare of the public employees and will have far reaching negative effects on Hawaii's entire health care system.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA
Executive Director
Tel: 808.543.0011
Fax: 808.528.0922

NORA A. NOMURA
Deputy Executive Director
Tel: 808.543.0003
Fax: 808.528.0922

DEREK M. MIZUNO
Deputy Executive Director
Tel: 808.543.0055
Fax: 808.523.6879

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

LATE

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 13, 2009

H.B. 1725 – RELATING TO
THE HAWAII EMPLOYER –
UNION HEALTH BENEFITS
TRUST FUND

The Hawaii Government Employees Association opposes H.B. 1725. This bill prohibits the health benefits plan of the EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage at no cost to employers from July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2015

Under Chapter 87A-15, HRS, the EUTF Board of trustees has the authority to determine benefit plans "at a cost affordable to both the public employers and the public employees." As drafted, H.B. 1725 will adversely affect both active and retired employees by making prescription drug coverage unaffordable for many.

Many of our 3,167 retiree members are more than 75 years old and depend on a small pension to pay bills and make necessary purchases. Eliminating prescription drug coverage for retirees and active employees will mean that health care costs continue to eat away at their pension benefits and threaten the benefits of future retirees during this six-year period.

When the retirees and active employees came to work for the state and counties, they were promised medical, drug, dental and vision coverage while employed and during retirement. These benefits were a condition of employment and that is why, despite their lower pay, many stayed on and retired from public employment. State or county employees should not be asked to pay for their prescription drugs, especially during these difficult economic times when so many people are struggling to make ends meet.

Further, this proposal is extremely shortsighted as it will result in possibly thousands of employees and retirees forgoing their medications simply because it will cost too much. As a result, people with conditions that are manageable with the appropriate medications may deteriorate to the point where they will require expensive hospitalization or additional doctor visits further escalating health care costs. It will also

Hawaii State House of Representatives, Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Re: H.B. 1725 – Relating to Hawaii Employer – Union Health Benefits Trust Fund
February 13, 2009
Page 2

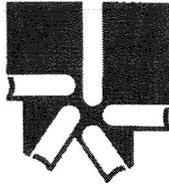
make recruiting and retaining new employees much harder. Benefits that attract and retain highly skilled employees to the public sector help build good government and good public policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RyR', is written over the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



LATE

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

February 13, 2009

8:30 a.m.

H.B. 1725 Relating to the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly does not support this proposed legislation. Prohibiting the EUTF from incorporating prescription benefits into a health care fund is not a cost saving measure. Prescription drug benefits help keep costs down by preventing other costly measures such as surgical or hospital services. They are an essential element of sound health care practices and should be maintained as part of the EUTF health benefit program provided employees.

Allowing EUTF to provide a prescription program paid for by employees is problematic. It is unclear that any insurance company will provide a plan without assurances of significant participation. Further the cost to the employee may be prohibitive thus forcing families to go without essential health coverage.

UHPA requests the bill be filed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman
Associate Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

1017 Palm Drive · Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 · Facsimile: (808) 593-2160
Web Page: <http://www.uhpa.org>



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:17 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: JuanitaLauti@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Juanita Lauti
Organization: Individual
Address: 1440 Ward Avenue Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone: 808-531-4364
E-mail: JuanitaLauti@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:
Should apply changes to only new employees moving forward and not existing employees.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:36 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: gtatsuyama@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Grady Tatsuyama
Organization: Individual
Address: 565A Mananai Pl. Honolulu, HI
Phone: 529-3159
E-mail: gtatsuyama@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear the entire burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage. Please vote "NO" on all these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: chefdevo@gmail.com on behalf of Devan Rosen [rosend@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:58 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 1725

LATE

From:
Dr. Devan Rosen
Assistant Professor
University of Hawaii

To: COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

DATE: Friday, February 13, 2009

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 309, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Measure number: House Bill 1725

3 Copies Requested

Testimony:

I do NOT support the passing of HB 1725. This bill prohibits EUTF from providing prescription drug coverage. Allows EUTF to have a prescription benefits paid by the employee. The impact of this could be to increase premiums since access to prescription drugs often prevents other costly services like surgery. Finding an insurance carrier may be difficult because there needs to be assurances that a large number of employees will participate.

From: Kathy Yamashita [kathy@uhpa.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:40 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: testimony against HB 1725

LATE

Forwarding per Graham Crookes

The Honorable Representative Rhoads,
Chair, Committee on Labor and Public Employment

You will not be surprised to learn that I, like most state employees, view with extreme disfavor House Bill 1725 (and similar bills on your agenda for Feb 13). The costs of medical treatment are very high for retirees. As a member of UHPA, I am glad that (until now) my retirement benefits include health benefits. Perhaps House Bill 1725 is intended to press public sector members who are near retirement to retire now. However, it is likely to affect young and mid-career faculty as well. Most UHPA members are nationally mobile and are in Hawai'i for various reasons; the more you whittle away at their retirement coverage, the less likely they are to stay. If you wish to get rid of the best teachers and professors in the State, this is one way to do it.

Respectfully,

Graham Crookes
Professor, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

From: Ginny Meade [gmeade@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 2:59 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725 Testimony

LATE

Testimony regarding HB 1725

February 12, 2009

From: Ginny Meade, retiree beneficiary, wife of John W. Cater, retired Dec. 31, 2007

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. I speak both for myself and my husband, John W. Cater, who retired as an administrative hearings officer from the State Judiciary on Dec. 31, 2007, with over 16 years of service.

He is 77 years old, and I am 66. We live on a fixed income that includes his State pension and our Social Security payments only. We both take daily prescription medication to control several different chronic medical conditions, and, as we age, can anticipate more such needs. HB 1725 will eliminate the Trust Fund coverage of prescription drugs on a temporary basis. HB1725, which is planned for the next six years, will take us to the ages of 83 and 69, respectively. Six years at our ages is a lot longer than it might be for younger, stronger, healthier people. It is not expected that our medication needs will be less during that time, given the natural aging process.

Although John is an attorney, licensed to practice law in both Hawaii and California, he chose to work for less pay as a civil servant, in order to contribute to the community. We mutually chose this route after much discussion. Our expectation was that he would come to a safe retirement. He retired with the belief that we would be able to maintain our health and welfare, as long as we lived a simple, low-cost life.

The loss of prescription drug coverage at this stage of life is more than an unexpected burden. It is a life and death threat to our survival in today's economy, especially with the cost of prescription drugs escalating at an alarming rate. We very possibly may find ourselves unable to pay for life-saving or life-extending drugs, as we near the end of our lives. This bill deprives us of the quality of life that we were given to expect when entering public service. We are elderly and have no children to look after us, and deserve the protection we had carefully planned to have to live out our lives.

Please vote "NO" on this bill that will remove a planned-for safety net for older citizens and State retirees.

Ginny Meade & John W. Cater

LATE

I oppose this bill that may take away or reduce the benefits (including vision, dental, drug, and medical coverage) of the average state employee and/or the average state retiree. Taking away our medical coverage will cause many employees and their family members to live without medical insurance. Aging retirees can also not afford to pay for benefits. Please balance the budget with greater compassion.

Valerie Ota

HB 1725

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Lisa_Yamane/WAIKIKIE/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:03 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 1725

LATE

I oppose HB 1725. Retirement will be very bleak if we need to cover all cost for prescription drugs, dental and vision. Please do not make life harder than it is. Thank you for your consideration.

Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice-Chair
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

LATE

Jeannie Lum, Associate Professor
University of Hawaii
citizen
808- 227-6752

Feb 13, 2009, 8:30am

I object to HB 1725 Relating to te Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund

My name is Jeannie Lum. I am an Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii., College of Education. The State has no right to propose a bill which is under the authorization of UHPA labor union negotiations.

I strongly do NOT support Bill HB 1725!!!

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:32 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: cstark@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Chris Stark
Organization: Individual
Address: 1255 Nuuanu Ave #3204 Honolulu, HI
Phone: 808-545-1526
E-mail: cstark@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

All these cuts in benefits are only going to make the brain-drain worse. The lowest paid and poorest of the State employees will continue to scrape by, many of them likely working second or third jobs. However, the professional and technical employees are not going to sit back idly and just take it. We will move on to greener pastures, leaving the State with a disastrous talent shortage.

While a cut in prescription drug benefits may be an effective short term fix to the legislature's inability to balance the budget, the long term health implications will be far more costly. I encourage lawmakers not to take the easy way out by choosing a short term band-aid fix instead of burdening the employees that make the State function.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:46 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: rlinzy@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Chris Linzy
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 253-1823
E-mail: rlinzy@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

I am opposed to this bill as well as HB1737, HB1719, HB1718, and all the other bills that would reduce or eliminate benefits for State/County retirees and employees.

Although some people may applaud your efforts to be fiscally responsible, this is being done at the expense of employees'/retirees' efforts in simply making ends meet in these difficult economic times. These benefits are the only reprieve from the high cost of expenses here in Hawaii. Personally speaking, my husband & I count heavily on these benefits in our retirement since we still have a small mortgage to pay. I understand that it was our choice to retire when we did and we did so only after very careful calculations of retirement income vs. anticipated expenses. However, we made the choice to retire now for health considerations. Drastically reducing or eliminating benefits would be devastating, not only to us but to current employees.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:48 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: rlinzy@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Chris Linzy
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 253-1823
E-mail: rlinzy@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

I am opposed to this bill as well as HB1737, HB1719, HB1718, and all the other bills that would reduce or eliminate benefits for State/County retirees and employees.

Although some people may applaud your efforts to be fiscally responsible, this is being done at the expense of employees'/retirees' efforts in simply making ends meet in these difficult economic times. These benefits are the only reprieve from the high cost of expenses here in Hawaii. Personally speaking, my husband & I count heavily on these benefits in our retirement since we still have a small mortgage to pay. I understand that it was our choice to retire when we did and we did so only after very careful calculations of retirement income vs. anticipated expenses. However, we made the choice to retire now for health considerations. Drastically reducing or eliminating benefits would be devastating, not only to us but to current employees.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:50 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: ctoguchi@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Charlotte Toguchi
Organization: Individual
Address: 4303 Diamond Head Rd HI
Phone: 808 734-9179
E-mail: ctoguchi@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

This bill is punitive to public employees. As a life long resident, responsible taxpayer, and public employee for more than 28 years in higher education, this bill follows the rob Peter to pay Paul principle. I believe that State Legislators need to be more fiscally responsible in spending our taxes so a bill such as this one would never be proposed.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mmorita@hsta.org
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:55 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 1725 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

LATE

From: Debbie_Anderson/HONOKAHI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
[mailto:Debbie_Anderson/HONOKAHI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:37 AM
To: LABtestimony@hawaii.capitol.gov
Subject: HB 1725 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

My name is Debbie Anderson and I am a teacher at Honoka'a High and Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1725 which prohibits the EUTF health benefits plan providing prescription drug coverage from 07/01/2009 to 06/30/2015. Given our goal of universal health coverage for all, our state should be encouraging all employers to provide prescription drug coverage for employees. The state should model its expectations of others. It is in the best interest of the employer to ensure adequate prescription drug availability to meet employee needs. Accessibility of prescription drugs protects our public patrons from the spread of disease. The financial burden would be much harder for employees to bear. If this bill should pass, it could discourage current employees from accessing necessary prescription drugs for quality job performance. It could actually increase the costs to the state of substitutes required because of employee absenteeism.. The ripple effect could damage our pharmaceutical support system, which already faces a shortage of pharmacists. It would discourage incoming applicants. It could endanger our children and community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Adrienne Sentell [sentell@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:50 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725

LATE

Dear State Government,

I am emailing regarding *HB1725*, which affects prescription drug coverage for EUTF members.

I have asthma and allergies and I already pay high copays for some of my meds and some asthma treatment is not even covered. And now they want to reduce coverage even more? Control of my asthma has a direct impact on my ability to teach my students well, as breathing is ESSENTIAL!

All of the bills that are being presented that will affect EUTF members, if passed, will have a negative impact on the State's economy. I say this because it is already difficult to attract and keep high quality educators. Educators who would contribute to our economy by training students and also spending their income on local goods and services. Cutting more and more benefits will only result in UH becoming a substandard school, which will in turn affect our economy because it will be less attractive for students from the mainland to want to come and spend their money on education in Hawaii.

I regret my vote for Governor Lingle and my vote in the next election will be affected by the outcome of these bills.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Aloha,
Ms. Adrienne Sentell
Lecturer CC, Math and Science Division
Leeward Community College
96-045 Ala Ike
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
(808) 455-0416

Testimony re: Take away Bills

HB 1725

LATE

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair Labor Committee
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair, Labor Committee,
Members of the Committee on Labor,

PLEASE DO NOT PASS THE SIX YEAR RECESSION EXTENSION PACKAGE OF 2009

The proposed take away bills are counterproductive to the philosophy that the government should be doing everything in it's power to stimulate the economy, and not to drag it down.

The numerous attacks that these bills have on government employees pay and benefits are short-sighted and foolhardy.

Let's look at just a few ways that these legislative proposals in question stimulate Hawaii's economy:

- 1) Drastically reduce the take home pay of the 40,000+ government employees in the range through furloughs that equal a 5% reduction in pay per day for each furlough day
- 2) Reduce the workers take home pay by an additional \$250+ monthly to cover an increase to proposed family plan medical insurance premiums. This would also cause a severe reduction in spending by the largest employee group in the state. These draconian reductions are GAURANTEED to further drag down the state's economy as nearly ALL 40,000 employees who are presently scrapping by will restrict their spending.
- 3) Force the workers who retire after 6-30-09 to incur huge increases in the cost of medical insurance premiums due to non-payment by the state. This will result in no spending (economic stimulus) by anyone retiring in the near future due to lack of affordability. This is also a great way to thank workers who have given decades of service to the State of Hawaii who will now be on fixed incomes.
- 4) The state will need to pay out millions of dollars in cash to buy out the exodus of employees that will retire before 6-30-09. The state still owes them their vacation pay, up to 112 days of wages for each forced retirement.

The state and county governments do not produce widgets and gadgets that we sell to the residents and visitors to Hawaii to generate revenue for the government. We provide critical services to the people of Hawaii by taking care of the less fortunate, protecting our food and water supplies, and saving people's lives from criminals and disasters alike. In other words, governments' role is to allow the people of Hawaii to live in a manner to which they have become accustomed. The HGEA had no role in creating any of the governments programs or personnel in State or City government, this was the role of our lawmakers who decided that the people of Hawaii needed some type of service in order to make life in Hawaii better for all our visitors and residents.

Therefore the product we sell is shared by all the people in Hawaii, and we should ALL share in the costs of this economic downturn. This means that all residents and visitors must share equally in the "pain" that the lawmakers speak of.

Balancing the state's budget on the backs of government employees is not "sharing the pain". If the proposed cuts go through all that will be accomplished is to extend the recession in Hawaii until 2015.

Aloha,
Peter Oshiro, HGEA Member
95-1076 Pikoeka St.
Mililani, HI 96789

LATE

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on H.B. No. 1725.

As a public employee for 3 years and my husband being a public employee for 15 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB No. 1725

This bill says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear the entire cost of prescription drug coverage. Fixing the state's economic problems should not be the burden of state employees due to "bad government."

I urge you to oppose this bill, it is discriminatory and dangerous to the health and well-being of our children

Dawn Shimabukuro

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1719 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1719

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rose
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

do you people realize how much these hard working individuals worked for so many years and you have the audacity to even concider such a thought. Did you ever stop to think this could have been your parent your trying to cut the fat at? Lead by example...I am a state worker but I have a long ways to go. My co-workers who have served the judiciary so faithfully do not deserve their rewards to be snatched away just to save much more less than if you were to cut off the immigrants whom we support through our pay checks. Taking away from the government employee's will have a devastating outcome. Please reconcider.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 5:38 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rose
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

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yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:21 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rose
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: silvaboscoe@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

do you people realize how much these hard working individuals worked for so many years and you have the audacity to even consider such a thought. Did you ever stop to think this could have been your parent your trying to cut the fat at? Lead by example...I am a state worker but I have a long ways to go. My co-workers who have served the judiciary so faithfully do not deserve their rewards to be snatched away just to save much more less than if you were to cut off the immigrants whom we support through our pay checks. Taking away from the government employee's will have a devastating outcome. Please reconider.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 6:24 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: roseluecke@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Loke
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: roseluecke@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: Eva Ponte [epontev@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 7:49 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony against measure HB1725

LATE

FROM: EVA PONTE, Assistant Professor, UH Manoa

TO: COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: HEARING TO TAKE PLACE ON Friday, February 13, 2009 AT 8:30 A.M.

MEASURE NUMBER:

* HB1725 Relating to Employer-Union Health Benefits

I am writing this email to express my opposition to measure HB 1725. This measure will significantly reduce or eliminate public employee's access to health prescription drugs, having a negative effect on the state employees and the overall financial health of the state employees and the system.

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:08 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: makaneole@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: laurie makaneole
Organization: Individual
Address: p.O. BOX 438 Hanapepe HI
Phone: 808-241-3387
E-mail: makaneole@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

From: Jared Yurow [drjyurow@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:21 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: drjyurow@msn.com
Subject: Opposition to HB 1725 and HB 1727

LATE

2/12/09

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of HB 1725 and HB 1727. My name is Dr. Jared Yurow, and I am a Hawaii licensed psychologist. As a public employee for over fifteen years and a citizen of this state, I am deeply troubled by bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1725 and HB 1727.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear the entire burden of prescription drug coverage. HB 1727 prohibits vision and dental coverage. Both bills will place an undue hardship on my family and may prove injurious not only to me but to other public workers. Although HB 1725 is only temporary, it affects significantly the cost of prescription medications. This is especially important to me, as I have glaucoma, high blood pressure and acid reflux. With chronic diseases that require medication, these bills, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is shameful for a state that prides itself on taking care of ohana and calling itself "The Health State." It may well prove catastrophic for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. Both bills will deter a number of employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to maintaining health and may ultimately prove more costly because conditions are treated after they have progressed. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

Sincerely,

Jared Yurow, Psy.D.

Hawaii Licensed Psychologist PSY #573

510 Iliaina Street

Kailua, HI 96734

(808) 224-6507 (Cell)

yamashita2 - Kristen

From: fccadizpal@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 8:29 PM
To: LABtestimony; Rep. K. Mark Takai; Lisa Vargas; Rep. Karl Rhoads; Rep. Kyle Yamashita; Rep. Kymberly Pine; Rep. Joey Manahan; Sen. Will Espero
Subject: HB 1725

February 12, 2009

To: The Honorable Representatives and Senator Espero

Fr: Fred Cadiz
A State Employee

RE: HB 1725

I have had the privilege and honor to work during Legislative Sessions and have insider experience to know that my "voice" can be heard through my elected officials.

Unfortunately, my representative (Representative Takai) is on a greater mission serving with our own National Guard overseas and I am unable to express MY voice through him.

Therefore, I express to each and all of you directly and to all your colleagues, my EXTREME OPPOSITION to ANY and ALL House "takeaway" bills introduced to alter the present conditions and benefits of employment for all State employees.

State employees serves the public in a manner not greatly appreciated, and working for even less than what we now have, will be the "straw that will break the camel's back."

I urge you and all your colleagues to NOT SUPPORT HB 1725/

Respectfully,

Fred Cadiz
256-4111

Nothing says I love you like flowers! [Find a florist near you now.](#)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: angela_pahia@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Angela Pahia
Organization: Individual
Address: 45-303 Kulauli St. Kaneohe, HI 96744
Phone: 808 239-3125
E-mail: angela_pahia@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:17 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: eric.nadinegomes@hawaiiintel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: oppose

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Nadine N. Gomes

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: eric.nadinegomes@hawaiiintel.net Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:15 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: michele.ikeda@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michele Ikeda
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: michele.ikeda@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: alicam@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 10:09 AM
To: LABtestimony

LATE

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Alison Cameron and my husband is Greg Cameron. I have been a public employee with the DOE for 8 years and Greg in the Hawai'i County Fire Dept for 14 years. Greg has recently been diagnosed with Stage 4 Metastatic Colon Cancer and is fighting for his life. He is only 49 and we have 2 children. We are deeply upset about the bills introduced by Speaker Say as they would deeply impact our family's ability to survive. Specifically the bills related to our medical, drug, dental and vision coverage, bills HB 1723, 1727, 1725.

HB 1719 is also of concern to us. As civil servants, we chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement. Speaker Say's bill, which disregards my years of service and reduces medical benefits until the Medicare retirement age, is irresponsible. Instead of supporting public service, Speaker Say is telling us that public employees don't mean much and promises to us can be broken mid-stream. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to force people into early retirement.

Speaker Say is backing us into a corner, and it's not irresponsible for him to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being of our family. Also, by forcing people into retirement before July 1, 2009, we are gambling with the future of state programs. The loss to institutional knowledge and expertise that we could experience is putting our families in Hawai'i at risk. State programs that protect Hawai'i's children, elderly and public will loose a wealth of knowledge that is not easy to recover when state hiring freezes are overburdening our already overburdened workforce. We strongly encourage this committee to vote "no" on HB 1719 and to send a strong message to Speaker Say, that he cannot punish civil servants for their dedication and commitment to the state of Hawai'i.

HB 1723, which limits the employer contribution to medical coverage to 55 % is of great concern for us. As stated, my husband Greg is currently undergoing treatment for Stage 4 cancer. We talk every day about how blessed we are to have such good medical coverage that we can afford to get treatment for him. If we had to pay more, we wouldn't be able to afford the treatment that he is getting and he would die, leaving a widow with young children to bring up on her own. Then I would really be in trouble trying to pay for my children's medical coverage as a single mother on a State salary. Please think about how these bills not only impact the greater health of our state workers and state as a whole, but also how it will impact individual families. Please vote NO for this bill and all the bills introduced that take away rights and benefits from public workers.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. If this bill is passed, our family is down the tubes as Greg's cancer treatment involves many medications to help him with nausea, blood clots etc. He will not make it without these drugs, we cannot afford them on our own and we have two children to raise up. Without drug coverage, we are sunk.

Also HB 1727, taking away coverage for vision and dental. While not a lot is covered under dental plans, cleanings are and those are a preventative measure which is important to families, especially those with children. Dental benefits are very important for us, as are

vision benefits. Why not continue to provide this coverage to help with prevention of problems through allowing us to get teeth cleanings and dental exams and thus cut down on the amount of expense and problems that in happen if we don't get these preventative measures?

We understand that the state is in trouble and that things must change to pull us through. But don't cut out the benefits of those that really help to keep the State running and provide essential services to those in need. I work in school as a Behavioral Health Specialist, helping children with behavioral and emotional problems, thus helping to care for the future of our state. My husband Greg saves lives as a paramedic and rescue specialist. We have lived and worked here our whole lives. We struggle. We can't afford to struggle anymore as our medical benefits are taken away and our salaries cut or capped.

I strongly feel that these bills will cause more problems and economic hardship in the State of Hawai'i, not less. More families will be in trouble. Then what?

I beg you to vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees. Please!

Sincerely,
Alison Cameron
Greg Cameron

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Fay Ann Chun. As a public employee for almost 6 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. Specifically: HB 1725, 1723, 1727.

- HB1725 - Halt prescription drug coverage under EUTF
- HB 1723 - Limit employer contribution to 55% and make it non-negotiable
- HB 1727 - Prohibits provision of dental and vision coverage

Among graduating from high school, college and graduate school – being hired as a state employee was one of the proudest moments to my family. As a civil servant, I chose to work for less pay to be able to contribute to the community in a meaningful way. On balance, I believed that I would be able to count on a safe retirement and more importantly to me at this stage of my life - safe and reasonable health care coverage.

Below are the claims from the state's website:

From <http://hawaii.gov/hrd/main/EEBenefits/> [Employee Benefits]

The State of Hawai'i is one of Hawai'i's largest employers and offers a competitive compensation package. In addition to salary, which is an important part of the compensation package, an employee may be eligible for a broad range of valuable benefits, such as comprehensive health care insurance, life insurance, retirement programs, sick leave, vacation leave and paid holidays. The benefits information provided below is not a contract or binding agreement. It does not supersede laws, rules, collective bargaining agreements, policies and procedures, and benefit plan documents pertaining to the various subject matters covered. Benefits vary by type of employment appointment and applicable collective bargaining agreement, and are subject to change.

From <http://hawaii.gov/hrd/main/EEBenefits/HealthLifeInsurance/> [HEALTH INSURANCE]

The State offers eligible employees a choice of health insurance plans - medical, drug, chiropractic, dental, and vision - through the Hawai'i Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF). The EUTF is administratively attached to the Department of Budget and Finance and is under the direction of a Board of Trustees. For more information on the State's health care plans, please visit the EUTF website at...

These statements will become obsolete or "false advertisements" if Speaker Say's bills were allowed to become a reality.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage. This is similar for HB 1727 and the related HB 1723.

Please vote "no" on all of these bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Fay Ann Chun [thefayproject@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:35 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Submitting written testimony for HB 1725, HB1723, HB1727
Attachments: Oppose to HB 1725 1723 1727_ FAC.doc

LATE

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

I am submitting written testimony for HB 1725, HB1723, HB1727. Attached is a MS Word Document.

Thank you for your consideration.

Fay Ann Chun

From: Cindy's E-Box :o) [cindysebox@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:50 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony in Opposition of HB 1725

LATE

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1725. As a public employee since 1994, I am deeply disturbed this bill has been introduced by Speaker Calvin Say. HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear **THE ENTIRE** burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

I am against this and any bill that takes away benefits from public employees and feel it is irresponsible for Speaker Say to suggest that this economic crisis should be resolved by sacrificing the health and well being at the expense of public employees.

Cindy Yee

From: Debbe Lee [manoadebbe@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:48 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1725
Attachments: stat8444.jpg

LATE

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony this morning. My name is Deborah Lee. As a public employee for 9 years, I am deeply upset by the bills introduced by Speaker Calvin Say, specifically HB 1725.

HB 1725 says that from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2015, public employees will have to bear THE ENTIRE burden of prescription drug coverage. This is literally a bill that is playing with the life and death of public workers. Although the bill is only temporary, we are gambling with six years of prescription medication. With rising chronic diseases that require medication, this bill, coupled with talk of salary cuts and rises in our premiums is like a death sentence for our elderly, sick, or recovering public workers and retirees. It will deter some employees and retirees from accessing medicine that is essential to long and healthy lives. This is a regressive bill when the rest of the nation is talking about improvements to our health care coverage.

Please vote "no" on all bills that take away benefits from public employees.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:09 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jolynnhumel@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Jo Lynn Humel
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jolynnhumel@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Maria Plott [mariaplott@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:01 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB1725

LATE

To Whom It May Concern:

I am opposed to HB1725 because prescription drug coverage is important to help keep employees healthy and able to work.

Maria Plott
Senior Probation Officer
First Circuit
Adult Client Services Branch

Windows Live™: Keep your life in sync. [Check it out.](#)

yamashita1- Kathy

From: Debbie_Anderson/HONOKAHI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:05 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: HB 1725 - RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

LATE

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Friday, Feb. 13, 2009
Conference Room 309
8:30 a.m.

My name is Debbie Anderson and I am a teacher at Honoka'a High and Intermediate School. I strongly oppose HB 1725 which prohibits the EUTF health benefits plan providing prescription drug coverage from 07/01/2009 to 06/30/2015. Given our goal of universal health coverage for all, our state should be encouraging all employers to provide prescription drug coverage for employees. The state should model its expectations of others. It is in the best interest of the employer to ensure adequate prescription drug availability to meet employee needs. Accessibility of prescription drugs protects our public patrons from the spread of disease. The financial burden would be much harder for employees to bear. If this bill should pass, it could discourage current employees from accessing necessary prescription drugs for quality job performance. It could actually increase the costs to the state of substitutes required because of employee absenteeism.. The ripple effect could damage our pharmaceutical support system, which already faces a shortage of pharmacists. It would discourage incoming applicants. It could endanger our children and community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

yamashita1- Kathy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:16 AM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: jolynnhumel@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1725 on 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for LAB 2/13/2009 8:30:00 AM HB1725

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Jo Lynn Humel
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jolynnhumel@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/12/2009

Comments:

There has to be a way to offset the budget without taking away important benefits like prescription coverage. Many of the retirees have chronic health conditions that require routine medications. They have dedicated their best working years to the State. Requiring these individuals to pay for all their prescriptions will gravely jeopardize their health. These individuals may be forced to sign over assets, declare poverty, & apply for medicaid assistance, just to make ends meet. This will ultimately create another State burden. The state should allow individuals who have worked to earn their benefits to continue to collect these benefits.