

Testimony for LBR/HMS 2/17/2009 2:15:00 PM SB905

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
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Comments:

LATE TESTIMONY
The Hawaii State Capitol
C/O The Senate
Chair Dwight Y. Takamine
Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland
Vice Chair Brian T. Taniguchi
vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr.

TO: The Right Honorable Members
Senate Labor Committee
& Committee on Human Services

Greetings members of the Committees, hearing testimony on SB 905 Relating to the Office of Community Services.

I would provide a brief commentary on the feasibility of effecting a transfer of the Office of Community Services from the current Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to the Department of Human Services.

First has the measure being consulted with the public sector unions representing the employees who will either have to geographically relocate to a new work site, and is their job guaranteed? Or is SB 905 a short-form method of consultation?

Personally, I feel that the morale of the workforce would be improved at a new Agency, but is the parking situation adequate? I have been in that building where the majority of the Department of Human Services branches are housed. All visitors (clients) must pay for parking, and the Reserved parking for the staff are limited. Are the reserved parking adequate to provide a parking place for the current workforce equal to that provided to the employees at the Punchbowl location? If not, that would add to the waiting list for those from the Office of Community Services lacking a Reserved Parking, meaning the entire office, except the senior staff.

Between the two Directors of the individual Departments, I have in the past provided testimony in support of their confirmation. But not all appointments are equally consequenced. Both Directors have shown streaks of independence from the Administration. But SB 905 and the companion bill HB 1087 are GOV Package bills introduced by request by Senator Hanabusa and Speaker Say.

If the Unions and the individual workers are in accord with the inconvenience which may personally prove to be advantages, the measure should be reported out with a "defective date" ILO of what is in the draft. Any relocation of personnel, administrative attachments, moving expenses involve substantial appropriation burdens to the money committees. If the recession and the so-called extreme budget balancing difficulty doesn't improve appreciably, the matter should be held, or deferred until the next session or the special session because The Office of the Community Services is a very critical branch.

I have testified in person at the House Finance Committee for funding this Office when Mr. Mark Foreman, Esq. was its Executive Director. I have kept track of this critical service while under a watchful stewardship of Sam Aiona. In all seasons, the Office of the Community Services serves a community involved in deep pockets of poverty and social justice needs, i.e., Kalihi-Palama and Kalihi-Vally, not to mention at least 4 other deep pockets of human need for their services Statewide. A relocation will have merit, perhaps in the immediate near future.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide a late testimony in opposition to SB 905 Relating to the Office of Community Services.

"1 of 16,588 local voices"