

The Twenty-Sixth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Rep. Robert N. Herkes, Chair  
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 325  
Wednesday, February 23, 2011; 2:05 p.m.

## **STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 1134, HD1 RELATING TO PREPAID HEALTH CARE**

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 1134, which repeals the sunset provision, enacted in 1994, of the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act. The sunset was included to allow the chapter to terminate when federal legislation provides for voluntary prepaid health care for Hawaii residents "in a manner at least as favorable as the health care provided by this chapter" or when federal law provides "for mandatory prepaid health care."

Although federal health care reform legislation has been adopted by Congress and the President, it is still far from what the Hawaii law provides. In Hawaii, all employers must provide health plan coverage to employees who work more than 20 hours a week for four consecutive weeks. The law also provides a standard for the coverage provided. Federal health care reform provides for individual mandates, not employer mandates, and the coverage standard is well below what Hawaii requires.

H.B. 1134 will remove the sunset provision from the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act and remain silent on any federal legislation. We think this is a prudent measure because no one can deny that the Hawaii law is superior to federal health care reform enacted thus far. For federal law to accomplish what Hawaii law has done is likely to take a while, especially in light of the opposition being mounted by Republicans and several states.

In the event that federal legislation is enacted that exceeds coverage that Hawaii law provides, we are confident that Hawaii's congressional delegation will ensure that Hawaii residents will not be shortchanged.

The ILWU urges passage of H.B. 1134 with an appropriate effective date. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this issue.