JOSH GREEN LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JOANN A. VIDINHAR DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS 830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321 HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813 www.labor.hawaii.gov

March 19, 2021

- To: The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair, The Honorable Les Ihara, Jr, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts
- Date: Friday, March 19, 2021

Time: 3:10 p.m.

- Place: Via Videoconference
- From: Anne Perreira-Eustaquio, Director Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

<u>Re: S.C.R. No. 97 REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS</u> <u>TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII</u> <u>RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM.</u>

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee,

The DLIR recognizes that the erosion of retirement income insecurity is significantly impacting workers as a result in the decrease of unionization and more insecure employment relationships. The growing reliance on independent work has long-term consequences for workers. These workers are much less likely to have a workplace retirement plan and as a result they do not benefit from employer savings matches or from the behavioral "nudges" toward participation that employers have learned to incorporate into workplace retirement plans, such as automatic enrollment with default contribution rates.

Many workers may enter retirement with insufficient savings and may cause some to be unable to retire. They are also more likely to turn to means-tested government programs that strains state and federal budgets during a time of increasing pressure on government finances.

BLS data from 2017 show that 23.4 percent of contingent workers (using the BLS' broadest definition of contingent work) were eligible for employer-sponsored pension or retirement plans in 2017. This is about half the rate for workers in more traditional and permanent employment arrangements, among whom about 47.6 percent were eligible for employer-sponsored retirement plans. Even when they are offered a workplace retirement plan, contingent workers were much less likely to participate than other

workers. The same BLS data show that about 18.4 percent of contingent workers about 78.6 percent of contingent workers who were eligible for their employers' plans were included in the plans. By comparison, 43.4 percent of "noncontingent" workers—or 91.2 percent of eligible noncontingent workers—participated in their employers' plans.¹

It is for these reasons that the DLIR supports this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this vital matter.

1 <u>https://www.bls.gov/news.release/conemp.nr0.htm</u>

TESTIMONY OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LIFE INSURERS IN OPPOSITION TO SCR 97, REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM

March 19, 2021

Honorable Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts State Senate Hawaii State Capitol, Room 225 and Videoconference 415 South Beretania Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SCR 97, relating to the convening of a task force to assess the feasibility of establishing a Hawaii Retirement Savings Program.

Our firm represents the American Council of Life Insurers ("ACLI"). ACLI is the leading trade association driving public policy and advocacy on behalf of the life insurance industry. 90 million American families rely on the life insurance industry for financial protection and retirement security. ACLI's member companies are dedicated to protecting consumers' financial wellbeing through life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, reinsurance, and dental, vision and other supplemental benefits. ACLI's 280 member companies represent 94% of the industry assets in the United States. Two hundred eighteen (218) ACLI member companies currently do business in the State of Hawaii; and they represent 94% of the life insurance premiums and 99% of the annuity considerations in this State.

SCR 97 mandates the establishment of a retirement savings task force to assess the feasibility of a Hawaii retirement savings program.;

THE TASK FORCE STUDY IS UNNECESSARY

The premise of SCR 97 is that (1) employers do not have access to affordable retirement plans; and (2) employees do not have the opportunity to participate in their employer's retirement plan either because their employer does not offer a retirement plan or they are ineligible to participate in the plan offered.

ACLI disagrees.

Employers have access to affordable retirement plans.

• Affordable Retirement Vehicles Already Exist.

• Many inexpensive and accessible retirement vehicles are already available to small employers:

- IRAs
- SEPs
- SIMPLE IRA plans
- 401(k) and 403(b) plans are available as part of an association pooled employer plans

• The passage of the SECURE Act and Other Law Changes have created more access to affordable retirement savings plans for small employers

• A little over a year ago, on 12/20/19, Congress passed into law the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act (the SECURE Act). This Act is expected to dramatically increase the number of small employers adopting retirement plans and the participation of their employees.

• New Laws Allow for More Multiple Employer Plans (MEPs)

• On 7/29/19 DOL promulgated its Association Retirement Plan (ARP) Regulation. Employers in the same trade, industry, line of business or profession or in the same geographic area can now establish an ARP.

• The SECURE Act now supplements the DOL's ARP Regulation by authorizing unrelated employers to band together to create a multiple employer plan (a "MEP") which will reduce an employer's cost to establish and administer a retirement plan for its employees. These efficient low cost plans will now be available from providers nationwide including payroll providers such as ADP and Paychex.

• New Employer Tax Incentives

• To reduce the costs of starting a retirement plan the Act gives new tax incentives to small businesses to establish retirement plans for their employees.

• Small business employers are given a tax credit of up to \$5,000 each year for 3 years.

• The amount of an employer's tax credit is the greater of (a) \$500, or (b) the lesser of (1) \$250 credit for each non-highly compensated employee eligible to participate, or (2) \$5,000.

• Thus, a small employer having only 1 employee is entitled to a \$500 tax credit; and an employer having 20 or more employees gets a \$5,000 tax credit.

Credit applies to small employers having no more than 100

employees over a 3 year period.

Credit applies to SEP, SIMPLE, 401(k) and P/S plans

• If the plan has auto enrollment, employer gets additional \$500 tax credit per year – up to 3 years. Thus, small employer having auto enrollment plan and 20 employees get a tax credit of \$5,500

• THE SECURE Act Enables Many More Employees to Participate in Their Employer's Retirement Plan.

• Part-time employees can now join their employers' 401(k) plans

• The Act now REQUIRES employers to offer any employee working more than 1,000 hours a year or 500 hours each year for 3 consecutive years to participate in their 401(k) plan.

• Thus, a part-time employee working at least a 20 hour week each year, for example, or at least a 10 hour week each year over 3 consecutive years can now participate in their employer's 401(k) plan.

THE TASK FORCE STUDY AND MANDATE FOR PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS PREMATURE

The SECURE ACT was only passed into law a little more than a year ago. The marketplace for streamlined retirement plans is already expanding quickly, with many new options available to small employers.

ACLI submits that the Task Force Study and proposed legislation would be more informative and productive in providing guidance to lawmakers at a later date. Indeed, whether Hawaii would want or need to establish such a program now before knowing the full impact of the SECURE ACT's transformational effect on retirement plan access may be questioned.

STATE SPONSORED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLANS ARE COSTLY, COMPLEX AND POTENTIALLY IN CONFLICT WITH FEDERAL LAW.

The Resolution directs the task force to determine the feasibility of Hawaii's establishing a state sponsored retirement plan including those adopted by "California, Illinois, Oregon, and other states that have initiated a similar state-facilitated retirement savings program" This mandate is ill-advised.

The creation of a new State sponsored retirement program for private sector employees would be costly.

In states that have studied state sponsored retirement plans, the estimated startup and ongoing state costs are prohibitive, ranging from \$15M to \$20M in Illinois, \$23M in Oregon¹, \$45M in Connecticut, and \$170M in California. For this and other reasons, only 3 of the twelve states that have adopted state sponsored retirement plans for private sector employees (California, Illinois and Oregon) have in fact implemented their retirement plans.

¹ The Oregon Legislature initially allocated \$1.3 million over the first 18 months after the bill became effective. This funding only covered the initial design of its proposed state-run plan for private workers. A pilot phase of the OregonSaves program began in July 2017 and through calendar year 2018, the Board has now borrowed and spent more than \$5 million in General Fund dollars for startup costs.

While the State of Hawaii should as a matter of policy encourage all of its residents to accumulate the savings they need to secure their own retirement, the wisdom of the state's spending its scarce resources to fund the cost of State sponsored retirement program mandated by SCR 97 may be questioned. Indeed, as this Committee is well aware, funding the state's own employees' retirement plan and other costly government funded programs such as Honolulu's HART mass transit system, now projected to cost \$12.4B, has been and continues to be challenging.

There are significant legal concerns regarding the validity of these programs.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce received a definitive legal opinion in 2017 that the State sponsored retirement plans then in existence in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey and Oregon, will likely be determined to be an employer-sponsored plan subject to and governed by ERISA. The opinion also concludes that the plan's provisions will most likely be found to be pre-empted by ERISA.

Indeed, the California plan, called CalSavers, is now under serious legal threat from a lawsuit filed by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and others in a Federal District Court in California² in November of 2018. The trial court's decision affirming the validity of the California plan has since been appealed by the plaintiffs to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.³ Its decision is expected at any time. The U.S Department of Labor filed an amicus brief in the appeal, confirming that the CalSavers plan is preempted and subjects employers to liability, in violation of the authorizing statute. Although the DOL has withdrawn as an amicus, their brief is still persuasive. If the lawsuit is successful, it would undermine the premise of the eleven other State sponsored retirement plans that have already adopted them.⁴

Accordingly, considering a state sponsored retirement saving program at this time would be premature. Prudence would dictate that Hawaii should await the outcome of the current litigation.

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE REPORT TO BE GENERATED BY THE TASK FORCE MAY BE QUESTIONED

The work to be performed by the Task Force as mandated by SCR 97 is unfunded. Yet, it is charged with the awesome responsibility to:

a. Assess the feasibility of a Hawaii retirement savings program;

² <u>Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, et al. vs. The California Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program, et al</u>, No. 2:18-cv-01584 MCE-KJN, Dist. Ct, Eastern Dist., CA.

³ <u>Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, et al. vs. The California Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program, et al</u>, No. 20-15591 (9th Cir. 2020).

⁴ Aside from California, the 11 other state sponsored plans are Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts (voluntary multiple employer 401k plan for non-profits only), New Jersey, New Mexico (voluntary for employers, auto-IRA and marketplace option), New York (voluntary for employers), Oregon, Vermont (voluntary multiple employer 401k plan, not implemented) and Virginia (pending Governor's signature).

- b. Review the implications of the federal SECURE ACT passed by Congress in December of 2019; and
- c. If a retirement savings program is feasible draft (1) a plan best suited for the State to be implemented, (2) an administrative framework for the initial start-up of the program, its oversight, time line for the plan's implementation and its start-up costs; and (3) a general marketing "and outreach framework to encourage small business and employee participation". The task force is to submit to the legislature a report and proposed legislation.

Further, the task force is required to "review independent studies and reports and receive briefings by national and local experts in retirement savings" in its assessment of the feasibility of a Hawaii retirement savings program.

The Resolution requests the task force to report its finding, recommendation and plan for its implementation to legislature within forty days of the next legislative session.

While SCR 97 states: "... the task force may request and utilize an independent consultant or administrative facilitator, paid or in-kind from a third-party source, to assist the task force in carrying out its activities" no funds are appropriated for this purpose. Moreover, the examples of the kind of assistance contemplated to be furnished by the consultant/administrative facilitator cited in the Resolution are, however, solely secretarial and administrative in nature.

For the foregoing reasons ACLI must respectfully oppose SCR 97 and urges this Committee to defer passage of this measure.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SCR 97.

LAW OFFICES OF OREN T. CHIKAMOTO A Limited Liability Law Company

Oren T. Chikamoto 1001 Bishop Street, Suite 1750 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Telephone: (808) 531-1500 E mail: otc@chikamotolaw.com



Senate Committee on Labor, Culture & the Arts Hearing Date: March 19, 2021 Time: 3:10 pm

RE: SCR 97: Requesting the Convening of a Retirement Savings Task Force to Assess the Feasibility of Establishing a Hawaii Retirement Savings Program

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and members of the Committee, my name is Cynthia Takenaka representing the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors ("NAIFA") Hawaii, an organization of life insurance agents and financial advisors throughout Hawaii who primarily market life, annuities, long term care and disability income insurance products.

SCR 97 establishes a "retirement savings task force" to assess the feasibility by "coming up with findings and recommendations related to the establishment of a Hawaii retirement savings program" (page 2) for private sector employees. This task force is to report its findings and recommendations prior to the 2022 regular session and terminate on September 30, 2022. It allows the retirement savings task force to "request and utilize an independent consultant or administrative facilitator, paid or in-kind from a their-party source, to assist the task force in carrying out its activities", as noted on page 5.

We are respectfully do <u>not</u> support SCR 97.

We understand the importance of retirement security and acknowledges that many Americans are not saving enough for retirement. Many legislative proposals to implement a state-run retirement programs appear designed to address issues of availability and access. However, availability of and access to the many retirement savings options are not the problems.

There already exists a strong, vibrant private sector retirement plan market that offers diverse, affordable options to individuals and employers. If a retirement plan is not offered in the workplace, employees have ready access to low cost IRAs through financial institutions, such as banks, savings and loans, credit unions and financial advisory firms.

Hawaii should conduct an education and outreach program initially about the need to save for retirement. A lack of financial education about the need to save for retirement, competing financial needs which cause many to live from paycheck to paycheck with nothing left over each month to put away in a retirement account, as well as a lack of discipline needed to place long term security over immediate wants, all play a large role in our country's retirement savings.

Colorado, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Virginia have passed mandatory state run retirement plans. Only 4....California, Illinois, Oregon and Massachusetts have enrolled workers. The costs, risks, legal complexities and potential liabilities for private employers and to the state needs to be studied more carefully than what is proposed in SCR 97.

Congress passed the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019 (SECURE Act) that was enacted in December 2019 (page 3, item (4) of SCR 97).

Some of the highlights of the SECURE Act: 1) Multiple Employer Plans -- **allow unrelated employers in the same industry and pooled employers in unrelated industries to secure "safe harbor" retirement plans to save on administrative costs along with a tax credit up to \$500 to \$5,000 to help offset the costs of starting a plan; 2) provides for long-term part-time employees to participate;** 3) push back the required minimum distributions from retirement plans from age 70 ½ to 72; 4) expands Section 529 accounts (a tax advantaged savings plan to pay for education) for qualified student loan repayments and apprenticeship programs; 5) participants will receive an annual illustration of their yearly benefit statement that shows the estimated monthly retirement income; 6) removes the savings limitations by repealing the age limitation of 70½ and allow for contributions for a traditional IRAs.

We ask that a member from the private sector in the retirement planning field be included as a member of the task force. The investment and/or financial advisor can offer valuable input in their work managing retirement plans for their employer clients.

On page 2, item (3) is also of concern. If a state run retirement program is deemed feasible, SCR 97 calls for a draft of an implementation plan that recommends the best model for Hawaii and an administrative framework to provide the initial start-up, oversight and timeline for establishing the program including proposed start-up costs. **We ask for the deletion of this section**. This kind of recommendation requires a serious study by hired consultants. There is no funding in SCR 97.

Since the pandemic in 2020, turmoil in workplace occurred and hopefully, we are on the path to an improved economy and getting more citizens back to work. With the SECURE Act in place, let's give Hawaii's employers and employees the chance to start their retirement savings rather than assessing a feasibility and implementing a new state program for retirement savings.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our views and we respectfully **ask that this measure be held in committee**.

The Hawaii State Legislature The Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts SCR 97 and SR 76

March 18, 2021

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts

Re: Strong Support for SCR 97 and SR 76

Aloha Senator Taniguchi, Senator Ihara and members of the Committee

My name is Gerald (Gerry) Silva and my work history spans over six decades. I've done everything from selling sodas at the old Honolulu stadium to serving in executive positions in federal, state, and city government.

I've been fortunate because many of my employers offered retirement plans and others had deferred compensation options. Because of these programs, I am not likely to be a burden on society or my family during the remaining years of my life.

Unfortunately, some of my grandchildren may have more challenges as they face retirement in the decades ahead. Pension plans are few and far between—especially in the private sector. That is why I support these two resolutions that make it easier for employers to offer a saving plan and simplify enrollment in those plans for employees. A dozen states have successfully adopted plans to do this, and I'm certain that Hawaii can benefit from lessons learned.

Over the past four years I've seen the financial industry block efforts to create similar programs in Hawaii using a variety of ploys. Let me just address one—a federal program to make savings easier. On January 1, 2020, the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act took effect. Features include providing tax credits and protection of Multiple Employment Plans (MEPs)—key to success in other states. However, it is silent on how this is to be done. State facilitation has been critical in successful states, and it needs to be part of Hawaii's solution.

Creating an effective retirement savings plan is a complex undertaking that is best done with the participation of all stakeholders. These resolutions address a process that deals with the reality of that task. I respectfully ask that you pass them.

GERALD SILVA RETIRED

<u>SCR-97</u> Submitted on: 3/17/2021 11:53:59 AM Testimony for LCA on 3/19/2021 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Francis Nakamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Les Iraha and Members of the Committee on Labor . Culture and the Arts

I support SCR 97.

This resolution allows the State of Hawaii to form a task force to thoroughly investigate the benefits of joining twelve other states which offer its private sector employees the option of saving for their retirements through voluntary payroll deductions at their workplaces.

I am a retired attorney who researched the issues relating to Hawaii's private financial security sector's short-sighted opposition to Hawaii's proposed state-facilitated retirement savings program particularly its mistaken belief that it, along with several other existing state work savings plans, is preempted by the Federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

Let's be clear: A state-facilitated retirement saving program is not an employersponsored plan or defined benefit plan as defined under ERISA. IRAs have never fallen under ERISA and the State of Hawaii is not promising a secured or insured benefit for employees.

No employer will incur any costs or administrative obligations or assume any fiduciary duties. Employers simply remit employee payroll deductions to the State-facilitated program.

This issue was raised in a lawsuit filed by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association against the Calsavers program in California, which since September 2020 has already enrolled 274,000 workers who have saved more than \$43 million for retirement.

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California dismissed the lawsuit in March 2020 ruling that "Calsavers is neither an employee benefit plan nor does it relate to an ERISA plan," concluding that Calsavers is not preempted by ERISA. The Plaintiffs appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and oral arguments were heard in February 2021. The Department of Labor withdrew its amicus brief in opposition to

CalSavers just days before oral arguments were held. We feel confident that the outcome will yet again be favorable in that ERISA does not apply to these programs.

In the meantime, twelve states, including Oregon and California, continue to implement and operate their retirement savings program. The three states currently with automatic IRA programs up and running (Oregon, California, and Illinois) have nearly \$170 million in assets under management.

To be sure, Hawaii can start studying Hawaii's retirement savings options while monitoring the legal developments in California. The proposed task force can certainly consider this issue in its deliberations but this Legislature should not delay progress for yet another year while our workers who have been left out by the private financial sector are stuck without a convenient, inexpensive and tested way save for their retirement life.

<u>SCR-97</u> Submitted on: 3/17/2021 9:36:13 PM Testimony for LCA on 3/19/2021 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
GARY SIMON	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture, and the Arts:

I am Gary Simon, a retired, thirty-year resident of Manoa.

I strongly support SCR 97 and SR 76, which establish a retirement savings task force to study the feasibility for a Hawaii retirement savings program for private sector employees utilizing information from other states' experiences and educational institutions with expertise on existing programs and to study the costs involved. The task force will report the findings and recommendations to the legislature, including legislation to advance a feasible program.

The pandemic has shown us how vital it is for Americans to have savings to count on in an emergency. While Social Security is a critical piece of the puzzle, it is not enough to depend on for a stable financial future.

Fewer and fewer people have a pension plan. Many workers currently have no easy access to a 401K or to other avenues at work to save for retirement. Without an easy access way to save at work, a secure retirement is out of reach for many, especially those who work for small business.

While individuals can establish and contribute to a retirement savings program on their own, many do not. Only one in twenty workers independently will research and establish Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) for themselves. Studies show that workers are fifteen times more likely to save for their future if they can save through payroll deduction at work.

The ability to offer access to an easy way for small business employees to save for retirement could be extremely advantageous to the small businesses. Such a benefit to their workers can enhance employee hiring and retention. The benefit is amplified for small businesses as such savings programs can be constructed to be free for the employer and inexpensive to the workers.

Currently, many small businesses choose not to offer retirement programs to their workers due to the costs, complexity, and burden to manage this benefit. Establishing a

state-facilitated program would help small businesses offer access to this savings option to their employees.

When people save for a secure retirement, they are less likely to rely on public assistance programs later in life.

The task force will examine the benefits and the limitations of different retirement savings models and the issues attendant to the various models. The task force will be charged with proposing the optimum retirement savings program that can be launched and sustained for Hawaii's workers and their families.

I urge you to support SCR 97 and SR 76.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Very sincerely,

Gary Simon

Email garysimon@hawaii.rr.com



www.commoncause.org/hi

Hawaii Holding Power Accountable

Statement Before The SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, CULTURE, AND THE ARTS

Friday, March 19, 2021 3:10 PM Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

in consideration of

SCR 97 / SR 76

REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF **ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM.**

Chairs DELA CRUZ and RHOADS, Vice Chairs KEITH-AGARAN and KEOHOKALOLE, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means and Judiciary Committees

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments in support of SCR 97 / SR 76, requesting the convening of a retirement savings task force to assess the feasibility of establishing a Hawaii retirement savings program.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy - one that works for everyone.

Common Cause Hawaii understands that when every employee is able to have access to a payroll deduction retirement savings option to promote savings needed for a secure retirement, improve employees' financial security, and reduce wealth disparity in society, then ultimately benefits will flow to families, communities, and our state as a whole. Democracy cannot thrive, if people are constantly worried about if they have enough funds to retire.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SCR 97 / SR 76. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



HIPHI Board

Date: March 18, 2021

Kilikina Mani, MBA	
Chair	
KM Consulting LLC	To:
Michael Robinson, MBA, MA	
Immediate Past Chair	
Hawaiʻi Pacific Health	
JoAnn Tsark, MPH	Re:
Secretary	
John A. Burns School of	السحير
Medicine, Native Hawaiian	Hrg:
Research Office	
Debbie Erskine	
Treasurer	The Ha
Kamehameha Schools	which
	feasibi
Keshia Adolpho, LCSW	Teasibi
Molokai Community Health	
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John A. Burns School of Medicine, Department of	lack ac
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Mark Levin, JD	sector
William S. Richardson School	
of Law	A state
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Rachel Novotny, PhD, RDN, LD	busine
University of Hawaiʻi at	worke
Mānoa, College of Tropical	ALICE
Agriculture and Human	
Resources	concer
May Okihiro, MD, MS	wider e
John A. Burns School of	o 39 9
Medicine Department of	nla

Misty Pacheco, DrPH University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Department of Kinesiology and Exercise Sciences

Garret Sugai Kaiser Permanente

Pediatrics

9: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts

e: Support for SCR 97/SR 76

Hrg: March 19, 2021 at 3:10 PM via Videoconference

The Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI) **Supports SCR 97/ SR 76**, which establishes a retirement savings task force to assess the feasibility of establishing a Hawai'i retirement savings program.

The pandemic has shown us how vital it is for Americans to have savings. Social Security is not enough to depend on for a secure financial future. According to AARP, in Hawai'i, over 200,000 workers lack access to a work-based retirement plan. Without an easy way to save, a secure retirement is out of reach for about half of our private sector workers, especially those who work for small businessesⁱⁱ.

A state-facilitated retirement program changes that by giving businesses access to an easy, no-cost retirement option and helping workers grow the savings they needⁱⁱⁱ. In 2017, Aloha United Way's ALICE Report (Asset Limited, income Constrained, Employed) there is concern for the financial stability of aging Baby Boomers as well as the wider economy as the population ages. Some findings^{iv}:

- 39% of workers nationally give little or no thought to financial planning for retirement
- o 31% have no retirement savings or pension
- 75% of Americans nearing retirement have less than \$30,000 in savings

This task force is the first step to study the feasibility of a statefacilitated retirement program for Hawaii's private sector workforce. It would examine the different models, issues and challenges, start-up costs and fiscal implications. We have seen successful models in other states and hope that Hawai'i can learn from them to create a needed state-facilitated retirement program. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 97/ SR 76.

Mahalo,

Vamauch

Jessica Yamauchi Executive Director

ⁱⁱ AARP Fact Sheet: Hawaii "Workplace Retirement Plans Will Help Workers Build Economic Security", August 2015. https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2015-08/aarp-hawaii-fact-sheet.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ AARP Fact Sheet: Hawaii "Hawaii Could Save \$32.7 Million by Helping People Save for Their Own Retirement, May 2017. https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2017/04/AARP1150_FS463_Hawaii_May1v2.pdf

^{iv} Aloha United Way ALICE Report, 2017. https://www.auw.org/sites/default/files/pictures/AlohaUnitedWayALICE%20Report_HIFINAL.pdf

ⁱ Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.



March 19, 2021. 3:10 p.m.

- To: Chair Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr., and members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts
- From: Beth Giesting, Director, Hawai'i Budget & Policy Center

Re: <u>Support for SCR97/SR76</u> Requesting the Convening of a Retirement Savings Task Force to Assess the Feasibility of Establishing a Hawai'i Retirement Savings Program

The Hawai'i Budget & Policy Center provides the following comments in support of SCR97/SR76.

A work-based retirement savings plan that allows workers to automatically contribute through payroll deductions is the best way to help workers move toward economic security upon retirement. Unfortunately, it is estimated that more than 200,000 Hawai'i workers lack access to such a plan. One important reason is that establishing a qualified retirement savings program involves technical complexity and maintaining it is an ongoing responsibility, which can be challenging for small businesses.

A <u>2019 report</u> from the Federal Reserve pointed out that one-quarter of non-retired adults in the U.S. had no retirement savings, and in 2019, the <u>Hawai'i Financial Health Pulse Survey</u> found that 55 percent of local households reported having inadequate long-term savings. This is crucial because the <u>average</u> <u>Social Security benefit</u> in 2021 is just \$18,516 per year. No wonder nearly 1 in 5 adults 65 and older in Hawai'i received financial support from friends, children or other relatives in the three-month period preceding the survey.

The best way to amass an adequate retirement nest egg is to make it as easy to start saving and continue to do so over decades. This approach is especially helpful for lower-income workers who are likely to be able to save smaller amounts and whose Social Security income, based on lifetime earnings, will be smaller than higher-earning workers. A retirement account can also be used to tide a family over during economic crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or to leverage investments in education or other ways to improve future economic opportunities.

Creating this task force and working toward a retirement savings strategy for Hawai'i's workers will benefit many families for decades to come. Thank you for the opportunity to testify to support it.

<u>SCR-97</u> Submitted on: 3/17/2021 10:08:52 AM Testimony for LCA on 3/19/2021 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Wyatt	Testifying for Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture, and the Arts:

I am Kathy Wyatt, Treasurer of the Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition (HFCC). HFCC advocates for issues that improve the quality-of-life of those who give and receive care. Such issues include policies and programs that keep kupuna healthy, aid caregivers, and provide opportunities for a secure retirement.

HFCC strongly supports SCR 97 and SR 76, which establish a retirement savings task force to study the feasibility for a Hawai'i retirement savings program for private sector employees utilizing information from other states' experiences and educational institutions with expertise on existing programs and study the costs involved. The task force will report the findings and recommendations to the legislature, including legislation to advance the program if it is deemed feasible.

The pandemic has shown us how vital it is for Americans to have savings to depend on. While Social Security is a critical piece of the puzzle, it is not enough to depend on for a secure financial future.

Fewer and fewer people have a pension plan. Many workers currently have no easy access to a 401K or to other avenuesat work to save for retirement. Without an easy access way to save at work, a secure retirement is out of reach for many, especially those who work for small business.

While individuals can establish and contribute to a retirement savings program on their own, many do not. Only one in twenty workersindependently will research and establish Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) for themselves. Studies show that workers are fifteen times more likely to save for their future if they can save through payroll deduction at work.

The ability to offer access to an easy way for small business employees to save for retirement could be extremely advantageousto the small businesses. Such a benefit to their workers can enhance employee hiring and retention. The benefit is amplified for

small businesses as such savings programs can be constructed to be free for the employer and inexpensive to the workers.

Currently, many small businesses choose not to offer retirement programs to their workers due to the costs, complexity, and burden to manage this benefit. Establishing a state-facilitated program would help small businesses offer access to this savings option to their employees.

When people save for retirement, they are less likely to rely on public assistance programs later in life.

The task force will examine the benefits and the limitations of different retirement savings models and the issues attendant to the various models. The task force will be charged with proposing the optimum retirement savings program that can be launched and sustained for Hawaii's workers and their families.

HFCC urges you to support SCR 97/SR 76

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

With warmest aloha,

Kathy Wyatt, RN, MSN, MBA, LNH

Treasurer, Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition

Email <u>kwyatt01@aol.com</u>

Dolores Foley, PhD Pacific Academic Consultants 1389 Akalani Loop Kailua, Hawaii 96734

TO: The Honorable Senator Taniguchi, Chair and Members of the Committee The Honorable Representative Nakamura and Members of the Committee

RE: SCR 97 / SR 76/ HCR164

Title: REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM.

I was fortunate to be part of an employee sponsored retirement plan but many in Hawaii are not so fortunate. I support the convening of a Task Force to assess the Feasibility to establish a Retirement savings program. Other states have initiated similar programs and it is important that Hawaii explore this possibility.

A state-facilitated retirement program would give employees and businesses access to an easy, no-cost retirement option and helping workers grow the savings they need to take control of their future. Now more than ever, we need state leaders to pass legilation to make it easier for all workers to save for their future.

In Hawaii, an estimated 216,00 workers lack access to a work-based retirement plan (e.g. 401K). Without an easy way to save at work, a secure retirement is out of reach for about half of Hawaii's private sector workers, especially those who work for small businesses.

While individuals can establish and contribute to a retirement savings program on their own through a financial institution, many do not. Only 1 in 20 people will go out on their own and set up their own IRA (Individual Retirement Account) for themselves. At the same time, according to research, people are 15 times more likely to save if there is the ability to do so at work through payroll deduction.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to support SCR 97/SR76/HCR164

Sincerely,

Nolnes Faleg

Senate Committee on Labor, Cultural and the Arts March 19 , 2021 3:10 p.m. Testimony in Support of Senate Resolution

Dear Senator Taniguchi, Chair, and Committee Members:

My name is Jon Iha and I am the chef/owner of the Gochi Grill on Bishop Street. I love cooking and I love to have been able to open my own restaurant. It's a lot of work to open your own business and unfortunately there's not enough time or energy left over to figure out how to offer your workers a savings plan.

I am in strong support of SCR 97/SR76

I want to help my workers and I want to be competitive and be able to offer them retirement savings. But it's not easy. It's complicated, expensive and time consuming, especially when you are starting up a new small business.

If the state were to offer an easy, no cost way for small businesses like mine to offer a retirement savings program, I would take it. I understand the OregonSaves program is working and helping small businesses and workers there. Why can't we have a similar program here?

The lack of retirement savings means many Hawai'i workers will retire into poverty. What will happen to them? Will they become homeless? It will be difficult, if not impossible for them to survive on Social Security alone without some kind of help from the government for housing, food and medical assistance.

Saving through payroll deduction is the most effective way to get people to save.

Let's take a step in the right direction now to help people help themselves and start saving. Waiting means less time for people to save and more workers will be in danger of retiring poor.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jon Iha Gochi Grill 1111Bishop Street Suite #112 Honolulu, HI 96813 (808) 585-8558 To: Chair Brian Taniguchi Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Cultural and the Arts **Re: SCR 97/SR76 -Relating to Retirement Savings** 3:10 p.m., March 19, 2021

Testimony in Support of Senate Resolution

We need to create a Hawaii Saves program and I am in strong support of SCR 97/SR76. My name is Elizabeth Hata-Watanabe and I own Burgers on Bishop. We pride ourselves on making the best burgers and desserts in town and our success is due to the hard work my employees and I put into our craft. So I want to help my employees succeed. I want them to save for retirement and I want them to be able to retire.

But I can tell you as a small business owner that it's not easy to help workers save. I cannot afford to offer them a payroll savings plan, even though I know they are 15 times more likely to save if the money comes out of their paychecks. Not only is it expensive and complicated to hire a financial advisor, possibly a lawyer and then pay fees to set up payroll savings, but it's also time-consuming. And I don't have time to set up a program and manage it. I'm too busy running a restaurant.

So a state-facilitated retirement program like Hawaii Saves is the easiest way for me to offer savings to my employees and the best chance they have of actually saving. If I can add it to my payroll system at little or no cost and have my employees' funds managed by a private, reputable financial service company selected by the state, similar to the way the state runs college 529 savings plans, I would enthusiastically participate. It would help me keep my employees happy and compete against larger businesses that can offer savings plans.

One of the reasons I'm passionate about supporting this program is because as a woman business owner I know women are much more likely to retire into poverty and this program will help women save. On average women live longer so their retirement savings needs to go further. They also make less money, which means lower savings and lower Social Security benefits. So it's critical that women have access to payroll savings and a retirement account that is their own that can travel with them no matter where their life takes them.

Many of my workers are young and they will benefit most from starting retirement savings early because of compounding – the fact that, if invested properly and not withdrawn, their money will likely double every seven to ten years. So \$2,000 invested at age 20 could become more than \$176,000 by age 67 if you averaged a 10 percent annual return. And that doesn't even count the additional money workers would save over the course of their lifetime. But even older workers would benefit from a Hawaii Saves program. The key is to get into the savings habit and without an easy way to save, too many workers do not save.

This is not a government handout. This program is about helping workers save for their own futures.

As a taxpayer, I worry about the ticking time bomb cost of all the workers who are not saving now. The average retirement savings for workers is \$2,500 and the average worker close to

retirement has saved only \$12,000. We as taxpayers will have to pay for them when they get old and cannot work anymore. What will our homeless situation be like if we have kupuna who cannot pay for their housing because their Social Security payments can't cover medicine, food and rent? How many of these older homeless will be women?

The time to act is now. We cannot do nothing. Please pass SCR 97/SR76.

Elizabeth Hata-Watanabe Burgers on Bishop 745 Fort Street, #130 Honolulu, HI 96813 (808)586-2000

Written Testimony before the Hawaii Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts

by Hank Kim, Esq. Executive Director and Counsel National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS)

March 19, 2021

Introduction

Good morning. My name is Hank Kim and I am the Executive Director and Counsel of the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS). I want to thank Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Nakamura and Members of this Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of SCR 97/SR 76 related to the task force to study a state facilitated retirement saving program (aka Hawai'i Saves).

NCPERS is the largest trade association for public sector pension funds, representing 500 plans, plan sponsors, and employee groups, including the Fire & Police Pension Association of Colorado, throughout the United States and Canada. It is a unique non-profit network of public trustees, administrators, public officials, and investment, actuarial and legal professionals who collectively manage more than \$4 trillion in pension assets. Founded in 1941, NCPERS is the principal trade association working to promote and protect pensions by focusing on advocacy, research and education for the benefit of public sector pension stakeholders. Further, NCPERS promotes retirement security for *all* workers by advocating for state-facilitated retirement savings programs and plans to those who do not have access to an employer plan.

In addition to serving as Executive Director and Counsel for NCPERS, I currently serve as on the Board of Trustees for the Fairfax County Uniform Retirement System, a \$1.8 billion public employee retirement system providing pension coverage for the Fire & Rescue Department, Sheriff's Department, and certain other sworn employees of Fairfax, Virginia. Additionally, I serve as Treasurer of the National Institute on Retirement Security, a Washington, D.C. based think tank focusing on retirement security.

I am also an Editorial Advisory Panel member of the *Benefits Law Journal*, a quarterly law journal that for over 20 years has featured the most respected and accomplished employee benefits professionals who have shared their expertise. Each quarterly issue offers in-depth analysis of new legislation, regulations, case law, and current trends governing employee benefits: pension plans, welfare benefits, executive compensation, and tax and ERISA issues.

<u>Hawai'i Saves</u>

This is the sixth year in a row that the Hawaii State Legislature has considered bills to help private-sector workers save for retirement. Hawaii's interest in the topic reflects a trend that is playing out across the nation. Cities and states can see that millions of workers are inadequately prepared for retirement. They are concerned that if they fail to intervene, unprepared retirees will place added stress on social welfare programs and reduce the tax base.

Other speakers today have or will address the scope of the very real retirement crisis in America. I won't dwell on this, except to say that Americans have good reason to be worried about their ability to achieve financial security and make it last through retirement.

I will note, however, that Hawaii's numbers underscore the need to prompt action: Half of the state's private sector workers lack access to a workplace retirement savings plan, and the situation is worse for employees of companies with fewer than 100 employees. As I noted, Hawaii is far from the only state concerned with its citizens' retirement security. Policymakers and stakeholders from across the political spectrum have been considering for years how to give Americans greater confidence in their financial future. Payroll deduction is widely considered to be the most effective savings method. And the starting point is small businesses, which drive local economies and power innovation but often lack the scale to provide robust benefits.

In September 2011, NCPERS laid out the rationale for a state- and city-facilitated approach in a white paper, "The Secure Choice Pension: A Way Forward for Retirement Security in the Private Sector." Like the plans currently under consideration in Hawaii, the Secure Choice idea gives workers a way to build a retirement nest egg through automatic enrollment in an individual retirement account or similar offering. States and cities would leverage their existing expertise and savings mechanisms in the form of pooled investment vehicles.

Since 2011, we have seen tremendous progress in the Secure Choice movement. Nearly two years ago, Oregon became the first state in the nation to implement such a program, launching OregonSaves in July 2017. California followed suit in July 2019. Numerous other programs have launched or are in the pipeline.

Most states began the process with the same step Hawaii is now considering—by conducting a feasibility study to examine precisely how an automatic IRA program would fit the needs and requirements of Hawaii's workforce. HB 2251 would create a Hawaii Retirement Security Task Force, which is a prudent starting point.

Conclusion

NCPERS wishes to thank the Committee for this opportunity to testify in support of **SCR 97/SR 76.** We congratulate members of this committee and other legislative sponsors for their leadership in this area. We believe that through this hearing Hawaii is providing leadership in addressing the retirement crisis our nation faces. NCPERS stands ready to assist you with facts, research, and expertise as you delve into policy discussions on retirement security. We invite this body to contact us should you need additional information. Thank you. To: The Senate Committee on Labor and the Cultural and Arts
Date: March 19, 2021
Attention: The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
RE: SCR 97 & SR 76 Related to Retirement Savings – TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee,

My name is Wannette Gaylord, and I am the President and Owner of four expanded adult residential care homes on Oahu. As a small business owner with 12 full time employees, we provide 24-hour care to very frail older adults who reside in my licensed care homes. We pride ourselves is providing quality care to these individuals who are like family to me and my staff. My employees are compassionate and dedicated in providing a warm and safe "home" for our kupuna to live and thrive. So, I want to help my employees by being a good employer and offer benefits that reward their hard work and loyalty. Being able to offer a retirement savings plan would be one of those benefits. I want them to save for retirement.

As a small business owner, it's not easy to help workers save. I cannot afford to offer them a payroll savings plan, even though I know they are 15 times more likely to save if the money comes out of their paychecks. Not only is it expensive and complicated to hire a financial advisor, possibly a lawyer and then pay fees to set up payroll savings, but it's also time-consuming. And I don't have time to set up a program and manage it. I'm too busy running these homes.

I support the concept of having a public-facilitated retirement program that will help small businesses an easier way to offer a retirement savings program to my employees. If I can add it to my payroll system at little or no cost and have my employees' funds managed by a private, reputable financial service company selected by the state, similar to the way the state runs college 529 savings plans, I would enthusiastically participate. It would help me keep my employees happy and compete against larger nursing homes that can offer similar benefits.

One of the reasons I'm passionate about supporting this program is because as a woman business owner I know women are much more likely to retire into poverty and this program will help women save. On average, women live longer so their retirement savings needs to go further. They also make less money, which means lower savings and lower Social Security benefits. So, it's critical that women have access to payroll savings and a retirement account that is their own that can travel with them no matter where their life takes them. Many of my workers are younger women and they will benefit most from starting retirement savings early.

I strongly support SCR 97 and SR 76 which establishes a task force to look at the feasibility for Hawaii to offer a state-facilitated retirement savings for small businesses and their employees. This moves Hawaii a step closer in the right direction. Thank you for allowing me to testify in support.

Wannette Gaylord Gaylord's EARCH 1723 Malanai Street wannetteg@aol.com (808)227-7173 To: Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts

Date:Friday, March 19, 2021Time:3:10 p.m.Location.Conference Room 225

Re: RELATING TO SCR97/SR76 REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM

Chair Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Les Ihara Jr. and Members of the Committee:

My name is Esther Ueda, and I am writing in SUPPORT of SCR97/SR76 which establishes a Retirement Savings Task Force to assess the feasibility of a Hawaii Retirement Savings Program.

I have been a retiree for over 20 years, and I know the need for a good savings plan to meet all the expenses that come in retirement. There are always unexpected expenses which require dipping into your savings not to mention inflation for everyday expenses. Unfortunately many people today are not saving enough money for retirement. I've heard people say don't worry, I'll just keep on working. The sad fact is that many times for various reasons, we may not be able to work past our social security years.

I believe that an automatic savings program like many large organizations and public institutions have, would greatly encourage and facilitate people to save more.

Please support Resolutions SCR97/SR76.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

Esther Ueda Pearl City, Hawaii TO: Senate Committee on Labor, Cultural and the Arts

DATE: March 17, 2021

RE: SCR 97/SR76- REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM.

Testimony in Strong Support

As a professional working in the field of aging, I am in strong support for the establishment of a retirement savings task force. In Hawaii, an estimated 216,00 workers lack access to a work-based retirement plan (e.g. 401K). Without an easy way to save at work, a secure retirement is out of reach for 50% of Hawaii's private sector workers, especially those who work for small businesses. The pandemic has shown us how important it is for Americans to have savings. While Social Security is a critical piece of the puzzle, it is not enough for a secure financial future.

While individuals can establish and contribute to a retirement savings program on their own through a financial institution, many do not. Only 1 in 20 people will go out on their own and set up their own IRA (Individual Retirement Account) for themselves. At the same time, according to research, people are 15 times more likely to save if there is the ability to do so at work through payroll deduction. Many small businesses often choose not to offer retirement programs to their workers due to the costs, complexity, and burden to manage the benefit.

A state-facilitated retirement program will give businesses access to an easy, no-cost retirement option and helping workers grow the savings they need to take control of their future. Now more than ever, we need state leaders to pass Hawaii Saves to make it easier for all workers to save for the future.

The establishment of a task force is a critical first step to study the feasibility of a state-facilitated retirement program for Hawaii private sectors workforce who work in restaurants, mom and pop shops, small businesses, non-profits, or are independent sole proprietors. I *strongly support* the creation of this task force.

Sincerely,

Christy Nishita, Ph.D. Gerontologist Consultant, Age-Friendly Honolulu

March 18, 2021

TO:	Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Culture, and the Arts
FROM:	Carl Takamura
RE:	SCR 97/SR 76, Relating to Retirement Savings

I am strongly in support of SCR 97/SR 76 to establish a retirement savings task force to study the feasibility of a retirement savings program for private sector employees who do not have access to an automatic payroll savings plan.

The COVID 19 pandemic has revealed and exacerbated the deep and growing economic divide within our country and particularly in Hawaii where 69% of the people have daily challenges due to the high cost of living. In addition, recent studies have shown that 75% of Americans nearing retirement have less than \$30,000 in savings which means that when they retire, they will need assistance for food, housing and medical care.

Enabling more people to save for their retirement through automatic payroll deductions is a nobrainer and has been proven to work in other states. Oregon established their successful OregonSaves program in 2017 and has about 90,000 workers enrolled of which the average income of new savers is \$29,000 and the average amount saved is \$137/month. Along with Oregon, California and Illinois have similar programs running successfully and have nearly \$170 million in assets under management.

Rather than reinventing the wheel, Hawaii can benefit from the experience of these states and even look into the potential of an inter-state compact which may reduce the start-up cost and learning curve of establishing a HawaiiSaves program.

The task force established by SCR 97/SR 76 to study and recommend an approach best suited to Hawaii is a necessary step toward providing a secure financial retirement for all of our people.

Thank you and I urge you to pass this resolution.

Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts Chair: Senator Brian Taniguchi Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Hearing Date: March 19, 2021, 3:30pm

Re: SCR 97 / SR 76 REQUESTING THE CONVENING F A RETIREMENT SAVINGS TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Committee Members. My name is Linda Dorset, a citizen of Wailuku, Maui, and a member of AARP. I thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the above referenced legislation. I strongly support SCR97/SR76 because Average Social Security benefits for an older family household (age 65+) is \$17,898 a year, but household expenses average \$25,400 on food, utilities, and health care alone. I myself was fortunate to have an employer-sponsored retirement plan which helped me build a savings to supplement my Social Security. However, because I started late, I still fear that I may not have saved enough. Therefore, I personally know that education is not enough; once you have money in hand it's hard to give it up even if you know better. So, I worry about my son who takes no advice from me and thinks he will live forever.

If passed, SCR97 or SR76 would allow the state to investigate a plan which would allow small employers (who can't afford to implement their own plan) to be able offer a payroll deduction plan which would cost the employer nothing. Seventy percent of Hawai`i small business owners surveyed support a privately-managed, retirement savings program.

Other states have begun their own retirement saving programs in which the employees themselves will make the deductions for their own retirement accounts similar to the educational 529 accounts. This legislation would allow a task force to consider how this might work in Hawaii, and investigate the concerns brought forth by the Insurance Industry.

Furthermore, No state funding is being requested.

Thank you for your consideration

<u>SCR-97</u> Submitted on: 3/18/2021 10:48:21 PM Testimony for LCA on 3/19/2021 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
norma tenorio	Testifying for Oililua Eldercare Inc/ARCA	Support	No

Comments:

As the owner of 4 care homes across the island, I am in support This is a great idea.