



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHAHA

March 28, 2024

To: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair,
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair,
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair and
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024
Time: 9:45 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 211, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: H.B. 1889 H.D.1, S.D.1 RELATING TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION
MEDICAL BENEFITS**

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The **DLIR supports** this proposal which amends Section 386-21.9, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) to improve female firefighters' access to comprehensive medical coverage by expanding workers' compensation medical benefits for firefighters to include coverage for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.

II. CURRENT LAW

§386-21.9 states that the employer is responsible for the medical care, services, and supplies for firefighters suffering from cancer, leukemia multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, or cancer of the lung, brain, stomach, esophagus, intestines, rectum, kidney, bladder, prostate, or testes.

§386-21 requires the employer is to provide to the employee so long as reasonably needed, all medical care, services and supplies as the nature of the injury requires.

III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL

The DLIR supports this measure to ensure that firefighters receive timely and appropriate medical treatment to include breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 28, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill 1889 HD1 SD1– Relating to Workers' Compensation Medical Benefits

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Bill 1889 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Workers' Compensation Medical Benefits.

This bill expands workers' compensation medical benefits for firefighters to include coverage for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs.

It is important that all types of cancer that are correlated to environmental hazards to which firefighters are exposed are covered.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director

**HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT
KA 'OIHANA KINAI AHI O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

636 SOUTH STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 723-7139 • FAX: (808) 723-7111 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



SHELDON K. HAO
FIRE CHIEF
LUNA NUI KINAI AHI

JASON SAMALA
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
HOPE LUNA NUI KINAI AHI

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Judiciary
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 228
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1889, House Draft (HD) 1, Senate Draft (SD) 1 Relating to
Workers' Compensation Medical Benefits

I am Sheldon K. Hao, Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The HFD strongly supports HB 1889, HD 1, SD 1, which expands workers' compensation medical benefits for fire fighters (FF) to include coverage for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs.

Over the last decade, the fire profession has experienced an increase in FF deaths related to cancer. The University of Cincinnati and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health conducted studies as a result of the initial findings. They are the most comprehensive investigations into cancer-related diseases incurred by career FFs to date and support the initial findings.

A State of Hawaii (State) cancer taskforce performed an investigative study with assistance from medical insurance companies and found that FFs in the State are also experiencing elevated levels of exposure to the effects of cancer-related diseases, thereby correlating Hawaii's information with the national studies.

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
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A study published in Public Health in 2023 found that female FFs may develop a wide variety of cancers and develop them at an earlier age than most other women. This proposed language ensures inclusion of cancers that may affect female FFs.

There are approximately 40 female FFs out of a total of about 2,100 active FFs in the State. Although this is not a high percentage of the total, female FFs deserve to be covered due to anatomical differences. If passed, this bill will provide the female FF and their family with the financial and moral support they require if affected.

The HFD urges your committees' passage of HB 1889, HD 1, SD 1 for the welfare of our FFs.

Should you have questions, please contact Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at 723-7169 or glum@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

SHELDON K. HAO
Fire Chief

SKH/GL:cn

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOŪĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
www.labor.hawaii.gov

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Ways & Means
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Judiciary
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 228
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1889, House Draft (HD) 1, Senate Draft (SD) 1, Relating to Workers' Compensation Medical Benefits

I am Kazuo Todd, Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC). The SFC strongly supports HB 1889, HD1, SD1, which expands workers' compensation medical benefits for firefighters to include coverage for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs.

Over the last decade, the fire profession has experienced an increase in fire fighter deaths related to cancer. The University of Cincinnati and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health conducted studies as a result of the initial findings. They are the most comprehensive investigations into cancer-related diseases incurred by career fire fighters to date and support the initial findings.

A State of Hawaii (State) cancer taskforce performed an investigative study with assistance from medical insurance companies and found that fire fighters in the State are also experiencing elevated levels of exposure to the effects of cancer-related diseases, correlating Hawaii's information with the national studies.

A study published in Public Health in 2023 found that female firefighters may develop a wide variety of cancers and develop them at an earlier age than most other women.

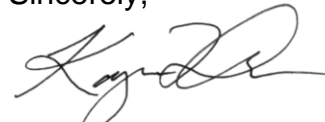
The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
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March 26, 2024

This proposed language ensures inclusion of cancers that may affect female firefighters.

There are approximately 40 female firefighters out of a total of about 2,100 active firefighters in the state. Although this is not a high percentage of the total, female firefighters deserve to be covered due to anatomical differences. If passed, this bill will provide the female firefighter and their family with the financial and moral support they require if affected. The SFC urges your committees' passage of HB 1889, HD1, SD1 for the welfare of our firefighters.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at 723-7169 or glum@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kazuo Todd', written in a cursive style.

KAZUO TODD
Chair

KT/GL:cs



INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

LOCAL OFFICE • 451 ATKINSON DRIVE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814 • PHONE 949-4161

HAWAII DIVISION: 100 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720 • **OAHU DIVISION:** 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
MAUI COUNTY DIVISION: 896 Lower Main Street, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793 • **KAUAI DIVISION:** 4154 Hardy Street, Lihue, Hawaii 96766
HAWAII LONGSHORE DIVISION: 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

LOCAL 142

March 27, 2024

The Thirty-Second Legislature
Regular Session of 2024

THE SENATE

Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
Thursday, March 28, 2024; 9:45 a.m.

STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON HB1889, HD1 SD1 RELATING TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION MEDICAL BENEFITS

On behalf of the ILWU Local 142, I am writing to express our wholehearted endorsement of HB1889, a critical piece of legislation aimed at strengthening workers' compensation medical benefits for firefighters in the state of Hawai'i. Our Hawai'i firefighters are dedicated men and women who put their lives on the line to protect our communities, and our union recognizes the paramount importance of addressing the unique health challenges they face in the performance of their duties.

The research findings outlined in the bill, particularly the heightened risk of cancer among firefighters due to exposure to contaminants, underscore the necessity for legislative intervention. This commitment to understanding and mitigating the risks associated with firefighting demonstrates a shared dedication to the welfare of our frontline heroes.

It is particularly noteworthy that HB1889 recognizes and addresses the unique vulnerabilities faced by female firefighters, who may be at an elevated risk of breast, cervical, and uterine cancers. The proposed amendment to Section 386-21.9 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, encompassing coverage for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs, aligns with union values around equity and inclusivity in the provision of comprehensive medical coverage.

The ILWU Local 142 urges the committee to support our firefighters by endorsing HB1889. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of **HB1889, HD1**.

Christian West
President, ILWU Local 142



**Hawaii
Legislative
Council
Members**

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country
Market
Hanalei

Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
Hilo/Kona

Dr. Andrew Johnson
Niko Niko Family
Dentistry
Honolulu

Robert H. Pahia
Hawaii Taro Farm
Wailuku

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
Honolulu

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Kihei

L. Malu Shizue Miki
Abundant Life
Natural Foods
Hilo

Kim Coco Iwamoto
Enlightened Energy
Honolulu

Chamber of
Sustainable
Commerce
P.O. Box 22394
Honolulu, HI
96823

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Thursday, March 28, 2024
9:45 AM in Conference Room 211

RE: **HB1889 HD1 SD1** Worker's Compensation Equity - **Strong Support**

Dear Chairs Dela Cruz & Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki & Gabbard and
Members of both Committees,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 100 small
businesses across the State that strive for a triple bottom line: people,
planet and prosperity – we know Hawaii can strengthen its economy
without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment.

We offer testimony in strong support of HB1889 HD1 SD1, which expands
workers' compensation medical benefits for firefighters to include coverage
for breast cancer and cancer of the female reproductive organs.

In addition to saving home and saving lives, firefighters save the business
community millions of dollars every year, putting their health and safety at
risk to protect our investments. Our members are grateful for the risks they
take and injuries they subject themselves to.

We owe firefighters the most comprehensive workers' compensation
medical coverage our state can mandate. **Since we are already covering
cancer of the prostate and testes, Hawaii is way past due in covering
cancer of breast and any reproductive organs, including those
belonging to firefighters who identify as female.**

Any firefighter who has been denied workers' compensation medical
coverage for cancer of their breasts or reproductive organs should receive
the full financial compensation they should have rightfully received and
remuneration for the violation of their civil rights on the basis of sex.

HB-1889-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2024 6:54:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2024 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Kidd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure