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**MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS**

Honorable Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Honorable Representative Mike Lee, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor

Hawai'i House of Representatives
415 S Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 2263 HD1 (Relating to military families.)

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense and military families stationed in the State of Hawai'i, I would like to provide comments **in support** of the provisions reflected within House Bill 2263 HD1, which aims to expand Hawai's family leave law to include qualifying military exigencies.

This provision recognizes a critical and often overlooked need within our military community. When a service member is deployed or receives a notice of an impending call to active duty, their families face a unique and immediate set of challenges. This is not a planned, leisurely transition. It is often a sudden and stressful period of upheaval, and the support of their family is paramount.

The moments and days leading up to a deployment are a whirlwind of logistical and emotional preparations. Families must arrange for childcare, facilitate financial and legal arrangements, attend to school and medical care needs, and other responsibilities. These are not trivial tasks. They are essential for the stability and well-being of the family left behind.

The expansion of Hawai'i's family leave law for qualifying military exigencies will provide a vital lifeline to our military families. It will allow a spouse or family member to take the necessary time to manage these pressing needs without the added stress of worrying about their job security. This is not just a benefit to the families themselves. It is a direct investment in the readiness and well-being of our armed forces.

We thank the Committee for considering this important legislation and are especially grateful for the tremendous efforts Hawai'i continues to make in support of our service

members and their families. Should you have any questions upon deliberation of this legislation, I can be reached at Kelli.M.Douglas.civ@mail.mil or 571-265-0075.

Sincerely,

Kelli May Douglas
Defense-State Liaison Office
Pacific Southwest Region



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

February 17, 2026

To: The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Chair,
The Honorable Mike Lee, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Labor

Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309, State Capitol

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

Re: H.B. 2263 H.D.1 RELATING TO MILITARY FAMILIES

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The **DLIR supports** this measure as it aligns Hawai'i's Family Leave Law (HFLL) with federal standards and addresses the needs of families impacted by military service. Authorizing eligible employees to take family leave for a qualifying military exigency ensures that workers can respond to urgent situations related to active-duty service without jeopardizing their employment. Adding a clear definition of "qualifying military exigency" in §398-1, consistent with Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations § 825.126, provides clarity and uniformity.

II. CURRENT LAW

Chapter 398, HRS, provides four weeks of family leave for eligible employees of employers with 100 or more employees, upon the birth of a child of the employee or the adoption of a child; or to care for the employee's child, spouse, reciprocal beneficiary, sibling, grandchild, or parent with a serious health condition.

III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL

This measure extends protected leave under the HFLL for an employee to take family leave for a qualifying military exigency of an employee's child, spouse, reciprocal beneficiary, sibling, grandchild, or parent in the United States Armed Forces. This amendment recognizes the unique challenges faced by families of service members and strengthens Hawai'i's commitment to supporting military families.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of
LAURIE MCALLISTER MOORE
Executive Director
Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Tuesday, February 17, 2026
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2263
RELATING TO MILITARY FAMILIES.

Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Military and Community Relations Office (MACRO), I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of this measure to expand Hawai'i's family leave law to include qualifying military exigencies.

MACRO sees firsthand the often unpredictable demands military life places on families. Short-notice deployments, relocation orders, mandatory briefings, and urgent legal, financial, or childcare arrangements frequently require immediate time away from work. These responsibilities are not optional, they are simply part of supporting a loved one's service to our country. Yet, under current state law, these circumstances are not formally recognized as qualifying leave, often requiring employees and employers to rely on ad hoc arrangements rather than clear, consistent policy.

Aligning state law with established federal standards provides clarity for employers, consistency for employees, and ensures that Hawai'i's military families receive the same baseline protections already available elsewhere.

From a community and readiness perspective, the benefits are practical and immediate. When families have clear, reliable leave options to handle deployment preparations, childcare transitions, and essential administrative requirements, service members can focus on their missions and households experience less disruption and stress. Supporting family stability in this way strengthens force readiness, workforce continuity, and the overall well-being of Hawai'i's communities.

This bill represents a reasonable, targeted update that reflects the realities of military life in our state and demonstrates Hawai'i's continued commitment to those who serve and the families who stand beside them. MACRO respectfully urges your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2263 HD1
RELATING TO MILITARY FAMILIES
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

BY

BRIGADIER GENERAL WALTER R. ROSS, JR.
DIRECTOR
JOINT STAFF, HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD

February 15, 2026

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice-Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brigadier General Walter Ross, Director of the Joint Staff, Hawai'i National Guard, State of Hawai'i, Department of Defense.

I am presenting this testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB2263 HD1.

This important legislation aims to empower eligible employees by granting them the right to take family leave for qualifying military exigencies. These exigencies may include last-minute deployments and other significant events that require an employee's emotional and logistical support due to a family member's military service. The core purpose of this provision is to provide meaningful assistance to employees during uncertain times, allowing them to take the necessary time off to manage essential family responsibilities when their loved ones are on active duty.

The implementation of this legislation will significantly enhance our collective ability to promote family readiness and resilience within the Hawai'i National Guard (HING). By addressing the unique and often challenging circumstances faced by military families, this initiative not only acknowledges their sacrifices but also strengthens the fabric of our community. Through our commitment to the families of servicemembers, we reaffirm that their well-being is a priority as they continue to support the State of Hawai'i and defend our nation. This legislation serves as a vital resource, creating an environment where military families feel supported, valued, and prepared to handle the demands of military life, thereby ensuring that HING remains a strong pillar of support for both our local communities and our country as a whole.

The Hawai'i National Guard, Department of Defense, supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

Brigadier General Walter R. Ross, Jr., walter.r.ross2.mil@army.mil; 808-844-6087