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S.B. NO. 787

A Bill for an Act Relating to Disaster Leave.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that natural disasters and other catastrophes often arise suddenly, and that cooperation among government agencies and volunteer service agencies is vital in coping with such emergencies. The legislature further finds that dedicated service by trained and experienced volunteers can help prevent loss and destruction of life and property, and that it is in the interest of the State and its citizens to allow certain state and county employees who are trained and experienced in disaster relief to provide such service for brief periods without loss of pay and benefits.

SECTION 2. Chapter 78, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§78- Paid leave for state and county employees providing disaster relief services for the American Red Cross. (a) The governor or mayor or their respective designees may grant a state or county employee who is a certified American Red Cross disaster volunteer up to thirty days paid leave of absence to perform disaster relief services for the American Red Cross, a federally chartered non-governmental disaster relief organization, when a disaster has been:

- (1) Designated as level III or higher by American Red Cross regulations;
- (2) Officially declared by the president of the United States; or
- (3) Declared a state of emergency by the governor;

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provided that the employee has prior authorization from the governor or mayor, or their respective designee, as applicable, and the leave of absence imposes no undue hardship on state or county operations.

(b) Employees granted leaves of absence pursuant to this section shall be paid at their regular rates of pay for those regular hours during which the employees are absent from work, without loss of seniority, pay, vacation, sick leave, or earned overtime accumulations.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 16, 2003.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.