



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
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by
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SB 1271 SD1 Proposed HD1 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

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

SB 1271 SD1 Proposed HD1 requires managerial employees in the executive branch, including the University of Hawai'i, who are exempt from civil service to use, donate or forfeit accrued vacation leave allowances upon separation from State service. This bill also prohibits the reemployment of exempt managerial employees by the same department after they voluntarily or involuntarily separate from service. Finally, this bill proposes a statewide attrition policy which would restrict the filling of 30% of the University's vacancies in fiscal years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

The University of Hawai'i **strongly opposes** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This proposal inappropriately targets a specific group of employees, excluded executives and managers, for disparate treatment in the administration of accrued vacation leave. Such treatment, particularly in the area of benefits administration - where we strive for uniform application of provisions across bargaining units and employee groups – does not reflect good management practice.
2. It is inappropriate to retroactively place restrictions on a benefit that employees have rightfully earned. Although not covered by collective bargaining, these exempt executive and managerial employees have a reasonable expectation that management will fulfill its prior obligations regarding the payment of accrued vacation leave.
3. This measure would prohibit the University from reemploying a manager once they separate from service. The University of Hawai'i, as an institution of higher education, fundamentally supports the professional growth and development of all our employees. It would be detrimental to our operations to bar individuals who may leave University service to pursue other professional or educational opportunities from later reemployment. The University prefers to maintain the flexibility to reemploy these highly experience individuals.
4. The bill proposes a statewide attrition policy that would restrict the refilling of 30% of vacant positions in fiscal years 2009 -2010 and 2010 -2011. Despite the current economic situation, enrollment within the University system is at an all-time high. Since there is no way to determine in which programs the vacancies may occur, the University is unable to determine the potential impact of these restrictions. We believe it is more appropriate that such decisions be left to the university administration and the Board of Regents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.