



January 30, 2024

To: COMMITTEE ON LABOR & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

RE: Strong Support of HB 2757 – Relating to Paid Family Leave Bill

Hrg: Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 9:00AM Conference Room 309

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA is in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2757 which would allow workers to take time off and still receive part of their income when they need to care for their own serious health needs or those of a loved one, or to bond with a new child. We have been expecting our working families and their employers to cobble together family care. No one should have to choose between their loved ones and their paycheck.

The Need for Paid Family Leave in Hawaii

The United States is the only developed country that doesn't have national paid family leave. The average amount of paid family leave in OECD nations is about one year. The second-worst nation after the United States (which has zero weeks of leave) is Mexico, which has 12 weeks of leave.

To fill that gap, 13 states and the District of Columbia have passed paid family leave laws. California was the first state to pass paid family leave, about 20 years ago. This program is not a new idea and works in other states. Hawai'i struggles to keep our working-age families from moving away. 34,898 residents of Hawai'i moved to states that passed paid leave laws in 2021. We are competing with states that have paid family and medical leave – including the entire West Coast – for the best workers. When young couples are deciding where to start a family, paid family and medical leave may be an important deciding factor for them.

I humbly ask for your SUPPORT of HB 2757 for state funding.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler
Executive Director