



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
Friday, February 2, 2007, 9:00 a.m.

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. 1082
DAYTON M. NAKANELUA, STATE DIRECTOR, UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

The United Public Workers (UPW) represents blue-collar, non-supervisory employees in bargaining unit 1 in the State and counties, which includes approximately two hundred (200) employees of the Board of Water Supply (BWS) on Oahu. In 2003 when Act 40 was adopted we supported the authorization for experimental modernization projects, with the understanding that programs affecting bargaining unit employees comply with chapter 89 and other critical personnel statutes.

In December 2003, the UPW and the BWS on Oahu jointly agreed to implement a one-year pilot program to determine whether a multi-skilled worker program for pipefitters, carpenters, equipment operators, masons, and others in the construction trades would improve the efficiency of BWS operations. The program was designed, for example, to improve response time to repair water main breaks which occur on the average of one per day on this island, by cross training in the trades and use of computer technology, as well as the most updated human resource techniques and methods. The pilot program indicated a minimum of a 20% improvement in overall efficiency, and in certain areas as much as a 40% to 60% improvement in services.

The UPW and BWS are currently in negotiations over wages and other terms and conditions for the multi-skilled worker program to be expanded to the entire field operations division effective July 1, 2007. The program will affect approximately 155 BWS employees.

The success of this multi-skilled worker concept has peaked the interest of the State Department of Transportation which agreed to implement a similar program. We believe the program will be under review by other governmental entities for possible adoption.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that you retain the statute which allows for this program to continue and not to pass H.B. 1082.