

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature
Regular Session of 2009

LAFF

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Health
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Friday, April 3, 2009; 10:30 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.C.R. 120 and H.R. 97
Urging the Members of the Legislature and the Hawaii Business Community to Support the
Establishment of Paid Family Leave in Hawaii**

The ILWU Local 142 supports adoption of H.C.R. 120 and H.R. 97, which urges members of the Legislature and Hawaii's business community to support the establishment of paid family leave in Hawaii.

As Hawaii's aged population grows, so too will the number of working men and women who must take time off from work or retire altogether to provide care needed by their loved ones at home. These family caregivers sacrifice jobs and retirement income to provide uncompensated care for their family members.

The State may say this is the responsibility of the family. However, we believe that the State must be involved in this growing social dilemma. If family caregivers decide to stop providing care, who will provide the care? If the person needing care cannot afford institutional care, who will pay? Ultimately, it will become the taxpayer's burden. Thus, the State must be involved in finding a solution.

Paid family leave or some other kind of wage replacement program to assist family caregivers is only a nominal effort at providing assistance to caregivers. Family leave is limited. State law provides for four weeks of leave only to employers with 100 or more employees. However, this nominal effort will demonstrate the State's acknowledgement of the invaluable service provided by family caregivers and its commitment to working towards a solution.

We are not sure what will come from this resolution. Last year, a Working Group was tasked to address this same problem and could not come to any agreement. The two sides on the issue were polarized. Philosophical differences precluded consensus or compromise. Hopefully, this year's resolution will yield a better spirit of cooperation toward establishment of a paid family leave benefit.

The ILWU urges adoption of H.C.R. 120 and H.R. 97. Thank you for considering our views.