



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
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S.B. 232 – Relating to
Civil Unions

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO, strongly supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 232 which proposes to extend to partners in a civil union the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage.

The Hawaii Government Employees Association is the State's largest labor union, representing more than 28,000 public employees. In May 2008, the HGEA General Assembly, our union's highest policy-making body, resolved to support efforts to establish civil unions in Hawaii. Delegates from all islands and all HGEA bargaining units voted to advance equal protection, support and respect for workers, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) brothers and sisters. Without passage of the proposed measure, certain benefits gained in contract negotiations will not be realized by families of LGBT employees.

We urge passage of this bill to address the needs of same gender couples to have benefits, rights and entitlements equal to those of all other working families in Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. 232.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director