



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health
Friday, February 6, 2015
2:30 P.M.
State Capitol - Conference Room 414

RE: SENATE BILL 766; RELATING TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the committees:

We are Melissa Pannell and John Knorek, the Legislative Committee co-chairs for the Society for Human Resource Management – Hawaii Chapter ("SHRM Hawaii"). SHRM Hawaii represents nearly 1,000 human resource professionals in the State of Hawaii.

We are writing to respectfully oppose SB 766, which requires that physicians selected and paid for by an employer for the purpose of conducting a medical examination for workers' compensation purposes shall be actively treating at least ten patients in a one-month period. Furthermore, the language requires that the attending physician be actively treating at least 50 per cent of the physician's total patient load in a one-month period and possess medical malpractice insurance. The definition of "actively treating" has been incorporated, as well.

Human resource professionals are keenly attuned to the needs of employers and employees. We are the frontline professionals responsible for businesses' most valuable asset: human capital. We truly have our employers' and employees' interests at heart. We respectfully oppose this measure for the potential decrease in the number of physicians who conduct these examinations, and the availability of increased denial of workers' compensation claims.

These changes would undermine the value of multiple years of experience by severely curtailing the number doctors allowed to perform independent medical examinations or ratings. The quality of the IMEs and rating exams will suffer, and the cost to the workers' compensation system will increase. Beyond these unintended costs and consequences, we would further cite the potential strain that these prescribed policies may place on the employee/employer relationship.

We will continue to review this bill and, if it advances, request to be a part of the dialogue concerning it. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

