



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health  
Wednesday, February 18, 2015  
1:30 P.M.  
State Capitol - Conference Room 414

RE: SENATE BILL 1291; RELATING TO MEDICAL MARIJUANA

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

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 1291, which prohibits an employer from disciplining, suspending, discharging, or discriminating against an employee who is a patient qualified to use medical marijuana; solely because the employee tested positive for marijuana use.

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

Employers are responsible under federal and state laws and regulations for the safety of their employees in the workplace and for ensuring the safety of the workplace itself. While provisions in this bill appear to recognize that being “under the influence” is a preeminent workplace safety concern, we believe that employers and HR professionals need the maximum amount of flexibility currently available under existing laws to protect the safety of all workers and those with whom those workers’ come into contact.

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.

