



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the House Committee on Human Services

Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair

Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 17, 2016, 9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 329

By

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Chief Court Administrator

First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 2315, Senate Draft 2, Relating to Jury Duty

Purpose: Exempts from jury duty mothers who breastfeed or express breast milk; provided that this exemption shall end when a mother is no longer breastfeeding or expressing breast milk.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary recognizes the good intentions behind this bill. However, we respectfully offer these comments on the present system that appears to adequately accommodate breastfeeding mothers. Upon request, breastfeeding mothers may be exempted from jury duty for one calendar year. The Judiciary also ensures that private, designated spaces (and times) are provided for breastfeeding mothers. The Judiciary is not aware of a situation where a breastfeeding mother was either denied an exemption from service or opportunity to use designated lactation rooms after bringing their need to the jury pool's attention.

The Judiciary acknowledges that communication regarding this topic can be improved. The Senate also acknowledged the importance of the Judiciary assuring clear communication concerning this issue in SCR 126 and SR 92. We are in the process of reviewing information on both the Judiciary's websites and written information mailed to potential jurors. Both information and forms are being reviewed and modified, as appropriate, to more clearly communicate information for breastfeeding mothers.



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Legislation exempting breastfeeding mothers opens the door to future requests by other groups for automatic exemptions from jury duty, which negatively impacts our need to maintain a large, diverse pool of potential jurors.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.