



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i*

**Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary**

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair

Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 31, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

By

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First Circuit

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**Bill No. and Title:** Senate Bill No. 2315, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, Relating to Jury Duty.

**Purpose:** Exempts from jury duty parents involved in the active care and custody of the parent's natural born or adopted child while the child is six months old or younger.

**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 parents of young children. Parents providing care for a young child may request an exemption from jury duty for one calendar year. The Judiciary provides for this to assure that there are ways to accommodate the change in status of families within the one calendar year for which they are eligible to be summoned for jury duty.

The Judiciary acknowledges that communication regarding this topic can be improved. The Senate also acknowledged the importance of the Judiciary assuring clear communication concerning these types of exemption issues in Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 126 and Senate Resolution No. 92. We are in the process of reviewing information on all exemptions 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 parents with young children.



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Legislation exempting parents of young children opens the door to future requests by other groups for automatic exemptions from jury duty. This could result in more requirements of proof of situation than are currently asked for. Further exemptions could also negatively impact our need to maintain a large, diverse pool of potential jurors.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.