



中國夏威夷商會
China-Hawaii Chamber of Commerce
Hong Kong-Hawaii Chamber of Commerce
Hong Kong China Hawaii Chamber of Commerce
 "Hawaii-China Guan Xi. We Get Things Done"

PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS - Letter to the Editor - February 18, 2005, Friday Page 38

#BXNMVBN *****5-DIGIT 96813
 #034063995# 03/04/05 S-30C P1123
 JOHNSON CHOI
 HONG KONG CHINA HAWAII CHAMBER
 55 MERCHANT ST., STE. 1813 HI 7
 HONOLULU HI 96813-4330

Letters to the Editor

Finally working with labor

Over the last few years, we've sent strong messages to our lawmakers that our workers' compensation system needed reform. We introduced bills, testified and urged our lawmakers to take action, but still nothing has been done.

So why have they not been listening?

It became clear to the business community that in our haste to reform the system, we failed to engage those who will be most affected by any proposed changes to the system — our workers.



Camp
Friedman

The chamber has initiated with union leaders an effort to collaborate to find fair-based, equitable and meaningful solutions to help ease the burden of workers' compensation costs. Like business, labor recognizes that work security depends on Hawaii's companies to be competitive in an ever-increasing global marketplace and has agreed to work with us toward a common goal.

While labor and the chamber agree that we will have our differences in specific issues related to current workers' compensation measures before the Legislature, we are, in a good faith effort, trying to find common ground, and we are making some progress.

One area of potential agreement is in the support of House Bill 1636, allowing collective bargaining units to carve out workers' compensation from its labor agreements to allow coordinated care. The purpose of this measure is to introduce the employee-directed care to unions on a prototype basis and if proved

successful, to apply it to all businesses with protections in place for workers.

What we hope to achieve, in the spirit of compromise, is to find common ground on this issue and implement changes, on a test-case basis, to determine whether coordinated care is providing a solution.

Bill 1636 allows the collective bargaining units to elect to carve out workers' compensation and requires accurate data to be collected from the participating collective bargaining units on a year-ly basis.

With the results, we could evaluate the effectiveness of the pre-selected coordinated care provider programs, both in terms of providing the workers with timely and quality care and allowing businesses to determine the cost savings with such efforts.

So let's not look at labor as part of the problem. They are part of our solution. We have initiated a partnership that will result in what we hope is a win-win proposition for business and labor.

CHRISTINE CAMP FRIEDMAN
 Chairwoman
 Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii

Stung by our reputation

When I left Hong Kong to attend the [University of Hawaii] School of Travel Industry Management in 1973, friends and family questioned whether I was in Hawaii for fun, hula girls and beaches or really getting a college degree. I proved them wrong when I got my BA and MBA in 5 1/2 years.

Thirty-two years later, Hawaii as a tourist destination associated with fun, hula girls and beaches has not changed. Hawaii as a serious place to do business is still questioned by many.

After doing business with Asia for more

than 25 years, almost any group going to Asia from Hawaii involved a lot of parties. Parties are an important element of networking and business, but should not be the chief component. Little, if any, serious business actually gets done.

Many of the decision-makers who enjoyed the Hawaii parties during the past 25 years are decision-makers today. The table is now turned as decisions must be made whether to go to the Hawaiian parties or to talk business with serious business delegations from throughout the U.S. and around the world. Post-Enron, and with the company's interest first, it has become an easy choice to stay away from Hawaii.

It is really regretful that many of us serious about doing business in Hawaii and in Asia continue to face questions on our real intention: business or pleasure in the name of businesses? It may be a wake-up call for some, but probably business as usual for many.

JOHNSON CHOI
 Hong Kong-China-Hawaii
 Chamber of Commerce
 Honolulu

How to submit a letter

Pacific Business News welcomes letters from readers. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or clarity. All letters must be typewritten or e-mailed and include writer's name, address and phone number.

Mail to PBN, 1833 Kalakaua Ave., 7th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96815. Fax to (808) 955-8031. Or send via the Pacific Business News Web site at pacific.bizjournals.com.

All submissions become the property of Pacific Business News and may not be published or otherwise used in any medium.

55 Merchant Street, Harbor Court, Suite 1813, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813, USA.

Telephone: (808) 222-8183 Facsimile: (808) 524-8063 Home Page: <http://www.hkhcc.org> E-mail: info@hkhcc.org