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April 14, 2011

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HGEA responds to House Republicans' criticism of the union's tentative agreement with state, counties

Statement by HGEA Executive Director Randy Perreira:

"Once again, the Republicans are using bogus math to further their own ideological agenda and attack our government workers.

"It seems especially curious that they are crying foul with the HGEA tentative agreement when a mere two years ago they were silent as Governor Linda Lingle shut down government two days a month with her furlough plan. They claim they are concerned about delays and backlogs of government services, yet unlike Governor Lingle's furloughs that shut down schools and curtailed services, Governor Abercrombie's plan would enable government offices to remain open to meet the public's needs.

"Their continued rhetoric that 'labor costs make up almost 70 percent of our state budget' is misleading because government is in the business of providing services, not manufacturing goods – therefore it's understandable that labor costs would be higher because outside of overhead and resources, government pays only for personnel costs."

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About HGEA

HGEA was founded in 1934 to ensure fair and equitable representation for government employees. HGEA is the largest labor union in Hawaii, with more than 42,000 members. HGEA represents state and county employees in seven bargaining units. HGEA also serves a large associate membership composed primarily of retirees, other state and county employees and officials, and federal and private sector employees.