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Big Islanders Charge Call-Up Out of Line

HILO — The Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Hawaii has taken issue with the Big Island's quota in the call-up of the National Guard and Reserves.

President Robert Yamada said a resolution is being drafted and will be mailed to all legislators.

"We are not opposing the call-up per se," Yamada said. "We believe the State of Hawaii should carry its share of the load.

"As a matter of fact, if you consider the high percentage of fatalities from Hawaii in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, it is evident that Hawaii has been hit hard.

He added that Hawaii County was the most affected County in the callup, and added that the manpower shortage on the Big Island "will be extremely critical."

Yamada said Hawaii will contribute more than 17 per cent of the 24,500 men called to active duty even though its population is less than 1 per cent of the U.S. population.

More significantly, Yamada said, is the fact that the Big Island, with a population of 68,000, is sending 800 men to active duty while Oahu, with a population of 619,105, is contributing only 1,900.

"Our boys are being sent away to take care of an emergency and their leaving creates one, a serious one, right here on the Big Island," Yamada said.