

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3116

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 20 2008

RE: H.B. No. 661
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Labor, to which was referred
H.B. No. 661, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a system of
comprehensive public funding of any county council election in the
State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the Hawai'i County Council; Americans for Democratic Action,
Hawaii Chapter; Conservation Council for Hawai'i; Democratic Party
of Hawai'i; Global H.O.P.E.; The League of Women Voters of Hawaii;
Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i; Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter;
Hawaii Clean Elections; Common Cause Hawaii; Kokua Council; Life
of the Land; the Mayor of Hawaii County; one Hawai'i County Council
Member; and eighty-four individuals. Comments were received from
the Campaign Spending Commission and Office of Elections.

Many testifiers who supported this measure requested that the
measure apply only to Hawaii County Council elections. According
to testimony of the Hawaii County Council, it is offering the
Hawaii County Council elections as a test case for total public
election financing. Seven states and two cities already have
voluntary comprehensive public funding of elections in place:
Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, New Jersey, New Mexico, North



Carolina, Vermont, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Portland, Oregon, according to Common Cause.

Your Committee finds that comprehensive public financing of campaigns has promising potential and should be explored on a pilot basis to determine if it fulfills its promise. Your Committee believes that establishing a pilot project will provide a means by which some benchmark issues, such as the number of candidates per district, percentage of contested elections, incumbency rates, incumbency victory margins, and voter participation rates, may be experienced and addressed.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting the purpose section;
- (2) Making the measure a pilot project to apply only to the Hawaii County Council elections in the years 2010, 2012, and 2014;
- (3) Deleting the statutory conformity revisions, since this measure enacts a pilot project;
- (4) Providing for a \$5 individual qualifying contribution to a participating candidate;
- (5) Allowing ten business days following the receipt of the candidate's completed application for certification under this measure;
- (6) Prohibiting any candidate receiving comprehensive public funding to be eligible to also receive partial public funding in any of the election years of 2010, 2012, and 2014;
- (7) Inserting an appropriation for \$100,000 in each year of the election cycle to which this measure applies, for the Campaign Spending Commission to hire additional staff positions and other assistance to support comprehensive publicly funded elections under this measure;
- (8) Changing the threshold amount that triggers the distribution of funds to certified candidates from \$500,000 to \$300,000;



- (9) Changing the effective date to January 1, 2010, and the appropriation to take effect on July 1, 2008; and
- (10) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Labor that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 661, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 661, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary and
Labor,


BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, Chair



