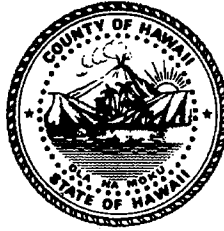


CASEY JARMAN
County Clerk



KENNETH G. GOODENOW
Deputy County Clerk

COLLEEN SCHRANDT
Legislative Auditor

Mailing Address:
(Former County Building)
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Business Address:
333 Kilauea Avenue, Second Floor
Ben Franklin Building
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

County of Hawai'i
Office of the County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 961-8255 Facsimile: (808) 961-8912

LATE
DATE

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 26, 2008
To: The Honorable Roslyn H. Baker
The Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
From: Casey Jarman, County Clerk, Hawai'i County
Subject: Testimony on H.B. No. 661, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, Relating to Campaign Spending

Hearing to be held on Thursday, March 27, 2008 at 9:45 a.m. in Conference Room 211.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter. I am in receipt of testimony on this bill to your Committee from Barbara U. Wong, Campaign Spending Commission, dated March 25, 2008. Ms. Wong shared her testimony with me as it directly impacts the Office of the Hawai'i County Council-Clerk. Unfortunately, I was unable to convey to her the following information prior to her submission of her written testimony.

On page 6 of her testimony, she suggests that Section 8 of H.B. No. 661, H.D. 1, S.D. 1 be amended to require the verification of signatures and qualifying contributions to be conducted by the my office. At the time she wrote this testimony, she was unaware that the voter registration information needed to verify the signatures can be made available to her office. The statewide voter registration information is stored on the mainframe with the City and County of Honolulu. They are currently working on a program that would not disclose social security numbers. The Campaign Spending Commission could have access to this program if the clerks would agree to give the Commission access to the information. Also, to my knowledge, we would not be able to verify the qualifying contributions.

Based on the above, please do not amend Section 8 by requiring the Office of the Clerk of the County of Hawai'i to verify that the signatures are from registered voters in the district for which the candidate is seeking office.

Honorable committee Members

LATE
LATE
LATE

I am submitting testimony in strong support for HB661 relating to campaign finance (Publicly funded elections pilot for Hawaii County Council) on behalf of Hawaii Clean Elections.

Creating a comprehensive public funding option for candidates running for Hawaii County Council is not only a good first step in restructuring the power dynamic in Hawaii County and a powerful tool in empowering grassroots campaigns and initiatives, its fiscally responsible, even affordable.

In 2007 the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund collected \$232,000 in interest and \$180,000 in revenue from the \$2 check off on all Hawaii state income tax return forms. In 2006 The Campaign Election Fund Collected approximately \$200,000 in interest and \$200,000 in revenue from the \$2 check off. Between 2006 and 2007 with a Gubernatorial and Congressional race (both in 2006) the Campaign Spending Commission distributed \$141,377 in public funds to candidates across the state, leaving a net sum of approximately \$669,000 in net gains left unused.

The Assertion by the Campaign Spending Commission that a Hawaii County Council Pilot will bankrupt a fund that nets over \$600,000 every two years is not only absurd but irresponsible.

Every indication from states and municipalities engaged in a comprehensive public funding option tell us that we can expect a modest initial rise in the amount of candidates running for office. For Hawaii County that translates into an increase from 27 candidates to 30 candidates. Of the 30 candidates, results from other states tell us that approximately 30-35% will actually qualify for public funds. This translates to about nine candidates qualifying in Hawaii County. If each county has one publicly funded candidate the cost will hover around \$200,000-\$225,000. Figuring in equalizing funds we estimate total disbursements to be around \$230,000 to \$250,000

Let's suppose that the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund has \$6million in the bank in 2010 and doles out public campaign funds identical to 2006 figures (with a gubernatorial and congressional races). It would be fair to estimate the entire "partial" option at approximately \$150,000 for 2010. Add that to the estimated \$250,000 (high end estimate) disbursement of the comprehensive public funding option pilot in Hawaii County and the total disbursement of public funds to campaigns will be approximately \$400,000. Keep in mind that the fund will collect over \$800,000 from the \$2 check off and interest between 2009 and 2010.

In short the Hawaii County pilot is AFFORDABLE . The best part is that the funds meant to help grassroots candidates running meaningful campaigns will actually be used towards those ends.

John Higgins

President, Hawaii Clean Elections

testimony

From: theresa lee [edithyamashita@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2008 7:03 PM
To: testimony
Subject: strong support for HB 661 HD1 SD1

LATE
LATE
LATE

Please record my support for the above bill. It is a tremendously important step in we the voters efforts for elections that are not dominated by huge amounts of money that would be better spent elsewhere. In addition it would ensure that it is not the moneyed people who get elected, but people who would best represent the interests of people. thank you theresa y. lee 46-4085 Mamalahoa Hwy Honokaa HI 96727

Be a better friend, newshound, and know-it-all with Yahoo! Mobile. [Try it now.](#)