



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**
802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782

KEVIN B. CRONIN
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2562, SD1
RELATING TO VOTING

February 25, 2008

Chair Baker and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2562, SD1. The purpose of this bill is to allow eligible voters to apply for absentee voter status.

The Office of Elections supports the intent of Senate Bill No. 2562, SD1, and has introduced similar legislation in the form of Senate Bill No. 1555.

Over the years, we have seen an increase in the number of voters who cannot go to the polls and vote on election day for a variety of reasons, e.g. age, physical infirmity, and various disabilities. This bill enables an increase in participation in the electoral process by making voting more convenient and accessible by allowing all voters who can not vote on election day, for various reasons, the opportunity to apply for permanent absentee status. The Office of Elections has always strived to make voting more convenient and accessible to all citizens, statewide.

While the office supports this bill, the office does not implement absentee voting. That responsibility is tasked to the various county clerks pursuant to statute, and they may have operational concerns that need to be addressed in order to facilitate implementation of this bill.

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Finally, we estimate the cost to implement permanent absentee voting would be \$200,000. This would include the following:

Printing of New AB Applications	\$15,000
Redesign of AB Applications	10,000
Voter Registration System Upgrade	75,000
Voter Education	<u>100,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$200,000

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 2562, SD1.

Respectfully Submitted:

By Kevin Cronin

PETER A. NAKAMURA
County Clerk

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**ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK
4396 RICE STREET, SUITE 106
LIHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAII 96766-1371**

**TESTIMONY OF THE
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2562, S.D. 1
RELATING TO VOTING**

February 25, 2008

Chair Baker and Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill No. 2562, S.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to authorize permanent absentee voting.

The Office of the County Clerk has no position on this bill but offers technical comments to strengthen the permanent absentee voting process.

We recommend that the bill be amended to include ballot replacement provisions specifying that the voter shall be responsible for requesting a replacement ballot prior to Election Day if the requested absentee ballot is spoiled or not received.

Additionally, we suggest including language in section 15-4(f) which allows for the termination of permanent absentee voter status if a voter chooses to cast a ballot at any early voting (absentee walk) site or at the polls on election day.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill No. 2562, S.D. 1.

PETER A. NAKAMURA
County Clerk