

**TESTIMONY OF THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE, 2008**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 3141, RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 6, 2008 **TIME:** 9:00 AM

**LOCATION:** State Capitol Room 016  
*Deliver to: Committee Clerk, Room 219, 1 copies*

**TESTIFIER(S):** Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General  
or Deputy Attorney General Charleen M. Aina

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Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

The Attorney General testifies to suggest clarifying language, if this bill's purpose is to allow corporations to make contributions to candidates and candidate committees to the same extent as individuals are permitted to make.

There is currently an appeal pending in the Intermediate Court of Appeals, from a decision by the Second Circuit Court rejecting the Campaign Spending Commission's position that when non-individuals make campaign contributions, they become noncandidate committees and, notwithstanding the larger amounts persons or any other entity may contribute to candidates and candidate committees under section 11-204(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, non-individuals can only contribute up to \$1,000 of their money to make contributions to any and all candidates and candidate committees in an election period.

If this bill's purpose is to deal with that issue and subject non-individuals, including corporations, partnerships, and other organizations, to the same contribution limits to which individuals are subject, we suggest that the proviso added to subsection (b) of section 11-204 by this bill be revised to read:

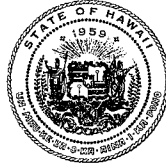
; provided that notwithstanding any other provision of this part, a contribution to a candidate or candidate committee made by an entity that is not an individual,

shall not constitute a contribution or expenditure to, from, for, or by a noncandidate committee.

and that a new subsection (c) be added to that same section to provide as follows:

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the contribution limits specified in subsection (a) shall apply to contributions or expenditures made by individuals and non-individuals, including organizations, associations, corporations, and partnerships.

We do not believe that this bill, with the revisions we suggest, in any way reduces or changes the reporting requirements to which non-individuals are presently subject under the campaign spending laws. If the committee believes that this is not the case, then we suggest that the bill be revised as suggested, and any other revisions necessary to maintain the status quo as to reporting be added as well.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**  
235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 6, 2008

**TO:** The Honorable Brian Taniguchi  
The Honorable Clayton Hee  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

**FROM:** Barbara U. Wong, Executive Director *BW*  
Campaign Spending Commission

**SUBJECT: Testimony on S.B. No. 3141, Relating to Campaign Spending**

Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
9:00 a.m. in Conference Room 016

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Hee, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

S.B. No. 3141 proposes to amend Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") §11-204(b) by recodifying the law as it existed prior to Act 203, Session Laws of Hawaii 2005 ("Act 203").

Act 203 amended HRS §11-204(b) as follows:

(b) No person or any other entity shall make contributions to a noncandidate committee, in an aggregate amount greater than \$1,000 in an election[; ~~except that in the case of a corporation or company using funds from its own treasury, there shall be no limit on contributions or expenditures to the corporation or company noncandidate committee~~].

The Commission, based upon the change in the law, enforced a \$1,000 contribution limit from a corporation or company to its noncandidate committee during the primary and \$1,000 during the general election. The enforcement of the law was challenged by the Charmaine Tavares Campaign and a contributor to her campaign.

The Second Circuit Court ("Court") filed a Final Declaratory Judgment on August 10, 2007 in Charmaine Tavares Campaign v. Wong, Civil No. 06-1-0430(3). The Court ruled that corporations and other business entities may make contributions from their treasuries directly to candidates and candidate committees under HRS §11-204(a)(1)(C)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This section, provides, in relevant part, as follows:  
" (a)(1) No person or any other entity shall make contributions to:

without registering with the Commission and filing periodic reports, as they were not noncandidate committees.

The Commission appealed the Court's decision and filed its Opening brief on January 16, 2008 with the Intermediate Court of Appeals.

This bill proposes to return to the law as it existed prior to Act 203, as follows:

"(b) No person or any other entity shall make contributions to a noncandidate committee, in an aggregate amount greater than \$1,000 in an election[-]; except that in the case of a corporation or company using funds from its own treasury, there shall be no limit on contributions or expenditures to the corporation or company noncandidate committee."

The current statute is similar to federal law which has prohibited corporate contributions since 1907. (2 U.S.C.A. § 441b). In the same vein, in 2005, S.B. 440 (the companion bill was House Bill 1747) was introduced into the legislature proposing a prohibition on all corporate contributions. When H.B. 1747 was finally enacted as Act 203, the proposed prohibition on corporate contributions was removed, as well as wording in 11-204 (b) allowing corporations unlimited access to their treasury funds for contributions.

#### **Alternative language**

If the Committee intends to pass S.B. No. 3141, we recommend that the Committee consider alternative language which is clearer and would preserve transparency with respect to corporate or business contributions:

§ 11-191 "Noncandidate committee" means a committee as defined in this section that has the purpose of making contributions or expenditures to influence the nomination for election, the election of any candidate to political office, or for or against any issue on the ballot, but does not include a candidate's committee. A noncandidate committee includes a corporation or other business entity using funds from its own treasury to make contributions directly to, or expenditures on behalf of, candidates, candidate committees and other noncandidate committees.

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(A) A candidate seeking nomination or election to a two-year office or to the candidate's committee in an aggregate amount greater than \$2,000 during an election period;

(B) A candidate seeking nomination or election to a four-year statewide office or to the candidate's committee in an aggregate amount greater than \$6,000 during an election period; and

(C) A candidate seeking nomination or election to a four-year nonstatewide office or to the candidate's committee in an aggregate amount greater than \$4,000 during an election period."

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi  
Testimony regarding S.B. No. 3141  
Page 3 of 3  
February 6, 2008

Additionally, we recommend that a corporation or company should not be able to contribute unlimited treasury funds to their noncandidate committee for use to make contributions to candidates and other noncandidate committees, but instead a cap be instituted (see italics).

§11-204 (b) No person or any other entity shall make contributions to a noncandidate committee, in an aggregate amount greater than \$1,000 in an election; except that in the case of a corporation or company using funds from its own treasury, there shall be no a limit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on contributions or expenditures to the corporation or company noncandidate committee.



**THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF HAWAII**

49 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, ROOM 314 HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813 PHONE: (808) 531-7448 EMAIL: voters@lwv-hawaii.com

**Testimony on S.B. 3141 Relating to Campaign Spending**

Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
9 a.m. Conference Room 016

Testifier: Jean Aoki, Legislative Team member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee, and members,

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii opposes S.B. 3141.

Even the past executive director of the Campaign Spending Commission, Bob Watada, agreed that what was enacted into Act 203 was a weakened version of a reform bill we would all have liked to see. The proposed amendment would weaken it further.

The provision in the Section 11-204, Hawaii Revised Statutes was intentionally amended to remove the provision allowing corporations or companies using funds from their own treasury to contribute unlimited amounts to the corporation or company non-candidate committee. Under this amended statute, **companies and corporations would regain their ability to donate unlimited amounts to their non-candidate committees.**

Allowing corporations and companies to donate unlimited amounts to their non-candidate committees which then donate to individual candidates does not make sense. All the companies are doing is funneling their money through committees set up to do just that, and/or campaign for certain candidates. It really makes no difference whether the money goes directly to candidates from corporate and company treasuries or through their non-candidate committees. Whatever was wrong under an earlier system when companies were free to donate directly to candidates would remain wrong under the proposed system.

The limitation on the donation limit to the \$1000 limit set for individuals should stand.

**We realize that fundraising is hard work and no fun. We realize that campaign finance reform laws make fundraising increasingly more difficult. We also realize as we limit the donation limits, candidates need to work even harder to raise the same amount of money. But then, we need to weigh that against the perception and the reality that in too many instances money not just influences but determines public policies.**

**We can blame Buckley for part of our problems. We could stop the ever-spiraling cost of campaigning by enacting expenditure limits and stop the race for ever more and more money.**

**Thank you for this opportunity to testify on S.B. 3141.**



SB3141  
JDL  
Wednesday February 6, 2008  
9:00 a.m.  
Room 016

Hawaii Voice for a Better Future

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair

February 5, 2008

Re: SB3141 — Corporate contributions

In Opposition

Kokua Council opposes this bill, which essential blows the lid off of corporate contributions.



We know, and I think you know, that corporations look upon their contributions as an investment. They are not philanthropic organizations. Their stockholders or private owners expect a good return on their investment. And they have deep pockets, much deeper than ordinary citizens who elect their representatives.

Corporate donations at any level of government are a threat to our democracy and have been forbidden on the federal level for more than 50 years. Instead of encouraging corporate influence peddling, which is what this bill does, we should find ways to clamp down further and restrict corporate money in politics.

We are seeing a move toward publicly funded elections in Hawaii. It's already moving forward on the Big Island at the County level. This bill is a giant step **backwards** for Hawaii and should not be allowed to pass.

Kokua Council will be tracking the progress of this bill and we urge members of this committee not to go on record as favoring corporate influence on your own decisions.

I hope that the Chair and members of this Committee will realize that it is better for the state and for each of you if this bill does not move forward.

Larry Geller, President

*Larry Geller*  
Kokua Council



Testimony from Barbara Polk, Americans for Democratic Action, Hawaii Chapter  
on SB 3141 relating to campaign spending  
Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee hearing,  
8:00am, Wednesday, February 6, 2008  
5 copies requested

To: Chair Brian Taniguchi  
Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

From: Barbara Polk, Legislative Chair  
Americans for Democratic Action, Hawaii Chapter

**Subject: Testimony in opposition to SB 3141 Relating to Campaign Spending**

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Hee, and members of the Judiciary and Labor Committee. On behalf of myself and the Hawaii Chapter of Americans for Democratic Action, I wish to testify in opposition to SB 3141.

For the past two years, Act 205 of the 2005 legislature has limited corporate contributions to political campaigns. We are aware that the interpretation of this law has not been resolved in the courts and that the legislature is attempting to clarify it. However, this bill proposes to do so by drastically increasing the ability of corporations to influence political decision making through campaign contributions .

Allowing the deep pockets of corporations to fund candidates greatly dilutes the impact of individuals on the political process. We do not know on what basis a democracy can allow corporations to make campaign contributions at all. The directors and officers of corporations have the same right as all other people to make such contributions as individuals. On what basis should they be given an **additional** opportunity, one not available to the general public, to direct money under their control to political campaigns through their corporation? Doing so gives those officers and directors more opportunity to influence politics than has the average citizen and seriously damages our democracy.

We urge you to defeat this bill, or, better yet, to follow the lead of the federal government and 22 states by disallowing ALL direct corporate contributions to candidates for office.

# **CITIZEN'S VOICE**

**C/O GEORGE FOX**

**Honolulu, Hawaii 96817**

**FROM: GEORGE FOX**

**To: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR**

**RE: SB 3141 RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING**

**TIME: 9:00 P.m.**

**PLACE: ROOM 016**

State Capitol

Honolulu, HI 96813

## **COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR**

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair

Aloha honorable Chair, Vice chair, and members of the committee,  
CITIZEN'S VOICE **STRONGLY OPPOSES** of SB 3141 relating to  
Campaign Spending. The Federal government and a number of states totally  
ban corporate contributions. Now here in Hawaii we have this bill in the  
House and its' companion in the Senate that allows corporations to make  
unlimited campaign contributions. This is beyond belief!

This is the most self-serving legislation we have ever had the misfortune to  
experience in this building where self-serving business is the norm. We have  
wondered for years what it would take, if anything, to get the people of  
Hawaii to rise up in protest. Then along came the Super Ferry. Folks were  
not only jumping in the harbor but also throwing their keiki in to prevent the  
ferry from entering. So just maybe people are mad enough to protest any  
legislation not in the public interest. This is an election year and we will see.

Please in your own self-interest do not pass out SB 3141.

Mahalo,

George Fox,

ED



February 6, 2008

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
ON SB 3141 RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING**

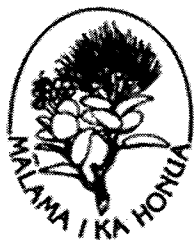
Thank you Chair Taniguchi and committee members. I am Gareth Sakakida, Managing Director of the Hawaii Transportation Association (HTA) which has 360 transportation related members throughout the state of Hawaii.

Hawaii Transportation Association strongly supports this bill.

An association has a duty to advance its members' viewpoints, especially in the legislative arena. An association and other entities should be permitted to expend resources that are necessary to accomplish this duty.

Legislators can understand there is little that can be done with \$1,000 per election period. Members themselves can make contributions, but many small business members lack the financial strength to participate to a great degree, thus they rely on their association's overall financial position to serve the industry.

Thank you.



# Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803  
808.537.9019 [hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org)

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008, 9:00 A.M.

**(Testimony is 1 page long)**

### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 3141

Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, opposes SB 3144, lifting the \$1000 donation limit on corporate non-candidate committees. We join the chorus of community organizations, "good government" groups, and advocates who believe that there is too much corporate influence in our democracy. The pressure to accept funds from corporate political action committees (PAC) places legislators in an untenable position where decisions that they make regarding the interests of that PAC come into question—whether the concerns are real or perceived.

Lawmakers who support this measure are making clear that they support a policy of removing this restriction on the level of corporate participation in elections. If clarity in the original policy is warranted to aid the Intermediate Court of Appeals, that clarity should make the \$1000 donation limit explicit. Such a clarification would go a long way in improving the perception of our democratic election process and reduce the unfair influence of corporate money in politics.

Please hold SB 3141 in committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

To: Senate JDL Committee

From: H. Richard & Eleanore A. Burson

Subject: SB 3141 Hearing Wednesday 2/6 at 9:00 AM in Room 016, Senate JDL committee

We understand SB 3141 will lift the existing cap on the total aggregate amount a corporation can contribute to candidates during an election. We oppose this bill--it will allow corporations to further influence our elections, to the detriment of the public. We need less corporate influence during elections, not more. Please do the right thing and reject this bill.

H. Richard Burson  
Eleanore A. Burson

Judiciary and Labor Committee

Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Clayton Hee

In opposition to SB3141 (relating to campaign spending)

Hearing on Wednesday, February 6

9 a.m. in conference room 016

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee, and members of the committee,

I'm writing in strong opposition to SB3141. Hawaii should be the leader in government ethics and full public funding of elections. This bill will essentially legalize bribery.

The \$1,000 cap on corporate donations is a proven way to limit corporate interests, and allows candidates to choose more grassroots style fundraising methods.

According to a 2005 AARP survey, 86% of Hawaii's residents of voting age "think campaign contributions moderately or greatly influence policies supported by elected officials." Given this fact, we should be working to limit corporate money and encourage citizen participation. The current \$1,000 cap does both.

Please kill SB3141. We need legislators to be more accountable to citizens, not corporations. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Randy Ching  
Honolulu  
oahurandy@yahoo.com  
942-0145

From: Brien Hallett

To: Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2008

Time:9:00 a.m.

Measure Number: SB 3141: RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING.

I am writing to oppose SB 3141.

Opening up unlimited contributions by corporations to noncandidate committees is precisely the wrong way to reduce the influence of already influential corporate interests. The Federal government has observed this rule of common sense for over a hundred years. The State of Hawai'i should get on the bandwagon and not open the way for unlimited corporate influence through unlimited contributions.

## Opposition of SB 3141

Dear Senators,

I write in strong opposition to SB 3141. Corporate donations to campaigns are the scourge of our democracy - and the senators introducing this bill should be ashamed of their actions. By accepting campaign money from special interests, and believe me your donors have special interests for your actions in government, you compromise your very purpose as senators - representing the peoples' best interests.

I urge you to strike down this disgusting bill.

It's embarrassing that we're lifting a \$1,000 cap on corporate donations when event the federal government banned these types of contributions in 1907, 101 years ago. Hawaii should be the leader in areas of government ethics, sustainability, and other important subject matters. This bill takes us in the wrong direction. It does not perpetuate anything that is right or just.

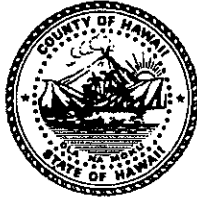
Sincerely,

Paul B. McKimmy  
2736 Puuhonua St.  
Honolulu, HI 96822



**BOB JACOBSON**  
Councilmember

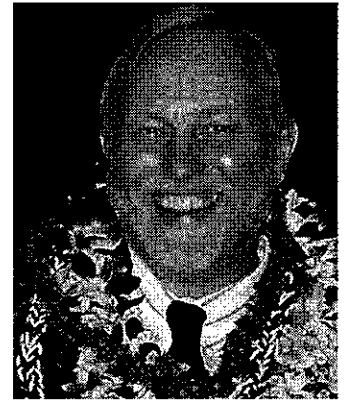
*Chair, Environmental Management Committee  
Vice-Chair, Finance Committee*



**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**

*County of Hawai'i*

333 Kīlauea Avenue, Second Floor  
Ben Franklin Building, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
Mailing Address: 25 Aupuni Street, Suite 200  
Phone: (808) 961-8263  
Fax: (808) 961-8912  
E-Mail: [bjacobson@co.hawaii.hi.us](mailto:bjacobson@co.hawaii.hi.us)



**LATE**

February 4, 2008

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Clayton Hee, Vice-Chair  
And Members  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Hearing Scheduled for February 6, 2008, 8:30 AM

Re: SB 3141 Relating to Campaign Spending

My testimony is in opposition to SB 3141. I do not support Senate Bill 3141 and believe that it would cheapen and jeopardize the integrity of our elections. I believe if corporations are not limited in their campaign contributions, they will increase their influence over our elections and public officials. What we need is publicly funded elections to safeguard elections and give the option for any qualified candidate to run for office. We need to keep moving in progressive steps toward voter owned elections.

Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Bob Jacobson".

Bob Jacobson  
Council Member District 6  
County of Hawaii

# COMMON CAUSE HAWAII

CONTACT: NIKKI LOVE

PHONE: (808) 286-2285

EMAIL: INFO@COMMONCAUSEHAWAII.ORG

WEB: WWW.COMMONCAUSEHAWAII.ORG

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# LATE

## JDL Committee ✓

Wednesday 2/6/08 at 9:00AM in Room 016  
Senate Bill 3141

### TESTIMONY

**Nikki Love, spokesperson, Common Cause Hawaii**

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee, and committee members:

I am testifying in **strong opposition** to **SB 3141** on behalf of Common Cause Hawaii. Common Cause is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy organization that aims to ensure citizen voices are heard in the political process and to hold their elected leaders accountable. We are currently rebuilding a chapter in this state, and see this issue as a priority for the following reasons:

**This bill invites more corporate money into politics.**

The current \$1,000 aggregate limit is more than enough money for a corporation to give in each election. Campaign donations should come from people, not corporate treasuries.

**This bill makes Hawaii's campaign laws more obsolete.**

The federal government banned corporate donations to candidates in 1907. Twenty-two states also prohibit corporate donations to candidates. If we are going to change Hawaii's campaign finance law, it should be to reduce the amount of corporate money in the political process, not increase it.

**This bill squanders a precious opportunity for citizen participation.**

Political campaigns are one of the few opportunities for citizens to get directly involved in the democratic process. As money becomes more important in campaigns, citizen participation matters less. By increasing the amount of corporate money in campaigns, this bill further diminishes the value of participation by ordinary citizens.

**I urge you to hold SB 3141, or amend it to reduce the amount of corporate money allowed in Hawaii's campaigns.**

**Mahalo.**

Testimony on SB3141 RELATING TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
February 6 2008

**LATE**

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Senator Russell S. Kokobun, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol, Rm 407  
415 South Beretania  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairman Hee, Vice Chairman Kokobun, and members of the Committee:

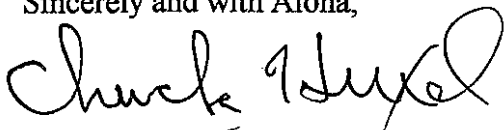
Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

As a representative of Americans for Democratic Action, Hawai'i Chapter, I speak against SB3141.

It is our opinion that the powerful and universal presence of money in our electoral campaign process, both locally and nationally, is endangering American democracy. Private wealth, particularly that of corporate interests, dominates our political process. Effective limits on local campaign donations here in Hawai'i may not eliminate the danger, but they may be a first step toward lessening it. It is claimed now that the limits placed by Act 205 on corporate donations to candidates and non-candidate committees were a mistake, unintended by the 2005 legislators. Whether the provisions in Act 205 limiting corporate donations are a shining example of legislative wisdom, as I believe, or a fortunate intervention by fate (or divinity), please leave them as they are. Such limits can help to curb the wildly escalating "fundraising arms race" dominating our political campaigns; they can equalize the challenge faced by all candidates; and they can lessen the lopsided influence that corporate wealth exerts in our political system.

A legislative initiative to look into the ways in which the adverse influence of private and corporate wealth on our electoral processes can be lessened would be very useful. Such an initiative could also provide a respected public forum for discussion of the important issue of public funding for election campaigns, which we advocate.

Sincerely and with Aloha,



Chuck Huxel, President  
Americans for Democratic Action, Hawai'i Chapter  
P.O. Box 61792  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Phone contact: 258-3615

## testimony

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**From:** kory@voterownedhawaii.org [kory.payne@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 05, 2008 11:00 PM  
**To:** testimony; All Senators  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to SB 3141

**LATE**

Chair Taniguchi  
Members of the Senate JDL committee

My name is Kory Payne  
with Voter Owned Hawaii  
808-457-8622

I'm writing in opposition to SB 3141

We all know corporations are bound, by law, to pursue interests only dealing with the motive of profit. This is often in direct opposition to the public interest.

Instead of creating a situation where candidates go out and fundraise in a more "grassroots" manner, thereby allowing them to take more populist and responsible positions on legislative matters, this bill would force candidates to rely even more than they already do on corporate money to get into office.

This compromises the position of a public lawmaker.

--  
Kory Payne  
Voter Owned Hawaii  
Community Organizer  
cell: 808-457-8622  
<http://voterownedhawaii.org/>

## testimony

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**From:** Robert Retherford [robert.retherford@hawaiiintel.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 05, 2008 10:42 PM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** No on SB 3141

# LATE

Dear Senators,

I am writing to register my opposition to SB 3141 that would increase the limit of campaign donations by corporate interests.

As the public already feels cynical and powerless, and rightly views corporate donations as buying legislation that favors their interests, it is truly astonishing that some of you are proposing to increase these donations, rather than doing away with them altogether.

Please restore the public's faith in your integrity and stop supporting influence peddling by increasing corporate donations.

Thank you,

Ursula Retherford  
42 N. Kainalu Drvie  
Kailua, Hi 96734  
261-4537

## Testimony of James R. Olson against HB 2455/SB3141

Democracy is based on the equal access of every citizen to political influence. Limitations on campaign contributions enforce this equality by ensuring that those with greater wealth are not able to use that advantage to exert excessive control over the actions of our government. While those limitations are not perfect, in that they are still large enough to be out of the range of the average citizen, they do at least reduce the influence of wealth on our political system, and loopholes that allow them to be dodged should not be allowed.

Every citizen already has the right to give monetary support to political candidates. No extension of this right, through giving corporations the right to give additional money, is necessary. While corporations are given standing in the law as persons, that standing is limited. For instance, a corporation is not allowed to marry, nor is it allowed to vote. This second limitation on the rights of a corporation is pertinent to the question at hand. If corporations were allowed to vote, anyone with sufficient means could multiply their vote simply by establishing a new corporation. Likewise, allowing corporations to contribute money to political candidates has this same effect of allowing certain people to multiply their political influence, by giving those who have control over the political contributions of a corporation to give more than other citizens.

The current law, which limits corporate giving to a total of \$1,000 per campaign, is not perfect, in that it does allow that much excess influence by those who control corporate contributions, but it is sufficient for the moment. Overturning it would push us toward a system where money counts more than votes, and wealth trumps the public good.