

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY ON H.R.169 ESTABLISHING POLICIES FOR THE LEGISLATIVE BROADCAST PROGRAM'S CABLECASTS OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' PROCEEDINGS.

Committee on Legislative Management  
Wednesday, March 25, 2009  
2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 423

Testifier: Jean Aoki, Legislative Liaison,

Chair Tokioka, Vice Chair Oshiro, members of LMG,

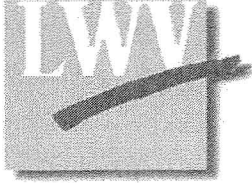
The League of Women Voters supports H.R. No. 169 although we would like to see more attention given to the selection of the hearings to be aired. The telecasting of some of the legislative proceedings and floor sessions provides the public the opportunity to see the legislature in action, to gather information on the various issues being addressed, and to listen to the pros and cons on suggested solutions to various problems.

Without gavel to gavel coverage of all proceedings, the selection of the committee hearings become very important. Even though we are aware that each bill is of interest to some segment or segments of the population, considering the very limited coverage, consideration for airing should be given to those issues which are of greatest interest and concern to the largest number of people, those bills which involve the expenditure of the larger sums of money, those that will have the greatest impact on the general population, and the more controversial bills. Obviously, the hearings selected will contain measures that do not fit the above requirement, but that is to be expected. I'm amazed at how much I learn from sitting in hearing rooms and become interested in issues that I had not paid any attention to before.

It should not be up to the chairs of the committees to decide whether a particular hearing should be aired or not. The telecasting is provided in the interest of our citizens who want to know what is going on at the legislature, and that should be the only basis for the criteria used for the selections.

Generally, the media will focus on most of what they consider the "newsworthy" bills, and we recognize their invaluable contribution to public knowledge and discourse, but the public should also have the opportunity to hear all of the arguments presented by testifiers, and all of the discussions by the legislators who will make those decisions, unfiltered by intermediaries who are constrained by the limited time or space available depending on the medium of communication.

Also, there should be room for some flexibility so that changes can be made if a particular bill is suddenly creating a good deal of controversy and/or attracting a large number of testimonies which



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would be an indication of public interest.

To increase the viewership of the telecast hearings and floor proceedings, I wish we could find a way of getting the time of the airings of these hearings and floor sessions into the television guides. It may not be possible to carry the precise committee hearing which will be telecast, but reserving a certain time of certain days for "legislative proceedings" would help the members of the public.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this resolution.