

**HB300**  
**TESTIMONY**



*The Judiciary, State of Hawaii*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor**  
The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Monday, March 21, 2011 8:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

By  
W. Tom Mick  
Policy and Planning Department Head

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**Bill No. and Title:** House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, Relating to the Judiciary

**Purpose:** To provide biennium operating and capital improvement appropriations for FYs 2012 and 2013.

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary strongly urges your support of House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, which reflects the Judiciary's resource requirements for the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium. The Judiciary is extremely grateful for the House Finance Committee's support of our budget request of \$8.1 million each fiscal year of the biennium to restore full payroll funding and thereby eliminate two-day-per-month furloughs in the Judiciary. However, the Judiciary is concerned over the one percent reduction in general funds, or about \$1.3 million each year, from its base budget, as well as the non-funding of (1) the currently mandated restoration of the judges' five percent pay cut and scheduled pay increases, and (2) the Community Service Sentencing Program (CSSP) intake functions in the Second, Third, and Fifth Circuits. The loss of this \$1.3 million each year could further adversely affect the timely and efficient operation of Judiciary courts and programs statewide, as well as the court's ability to make justice available without undue inconvenience, cost, or delay, as well as result in some of the services provided by the Judiciary being further reduced and public safety being jeopardized. While the Judiciary is acutely aware of the State's limited financial resources and its still unsettled economic situation, the projected budget deficit for the fiscal biennium, and the potential further negative effects on the economy resulting from increasing oil prices and the recent earthquake in Japan, it is even more important in such



House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, Relating to the Judiciary  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21, 2011  
Page 2

difficult times that the Judiciary be able to perform its constitutional duties and fulfill its mandated responsibilities.

As mentioned above, we remain greatly concerned over the adjustment in House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, which would reduce the Judiciary's budget by \$1.3 million each year. As you certainly know, between FY 2009 and FY 2011, the Judiciary's budget base was reduced by 13.1%, or \$19.7 million, and 79 vacant positions, or 4% of its authorized permanent staffing, were eliminated, although 22 new positions were provided for Kapolei. As a result, the Judiciary had to take various cost cutting measures, including significantly reducing expenditures for electricity, purchase of service (POS) contracts, guardian ad litem/legal counsel services, per diem judges, overtime, repair and maintenance, travel, temporary hire positions, forms/supplies/printing, and other miscellaneous items. The Judiciary also adopted a two-day-per-month employee furlough plan that was implemented in November 2009 and that will continue through June 2011. Furlough actions reduced Judiciary general fund payroll expenditures by \$4.8 million in FY 2010 and \$8.1 million in FY 2011.

The impact of these budget and personnel reductions, together with the two-day-per-month furloughs, is being felt throughout the Judiciary and Hawai'i, especially considering that the Judiciary has no control over its workload and must now accommodate that workload with less financial resources, people, and work days. In fact, furloughs alone have eliminated more than 600,000 available staff hours of work. Taken together, these conditions have resulted in justice being less effective and delayed as cases and hearings take longer to get heard and resolved, and in the reduction or elimination of important services being provided by or through the Judiciary. Significant problems have arisen in scheduling trials and hearings as fewer days are available for scheduling, and because prosecutors, public defenders, and sheriffs do not all have the same furlough days as the Judiciary. With fewer days, there are more continuances which exacerbate the scheduling problems and contribute to overcrowded calendars. While the restoration of the payroll funding and the related elimination of furloughs will help alleviate some of these conditions and concerns, the \$1.3 million reduction may further delay recovery in some operational and treatment areas.

As noted previously, the budget situation resulted in the Judiciary reducing funding for POS contracts; actual POS contract expenditures decreased by more than \$2.8 million (almost 24%) from FY 2009 to FY 2010. These types of contracts involve the purchase of assessment and/or treatment services for substance abuse, child sex abuse, and mental health, as well as domestic violence emergency shelter services, juvenile client and family services, victim impact classes, individual/group counseling, and more. Portions of some of these programs/services were eliminated while others were significantly reduced. Cuts severely impacted treatment courts and resulted in fewer services being available and fewer clients served, and longer waits to access services resulting in less adherence to program goals and a slow-down in admittance. It is likely that much of this \$1.3 million reduction would have to be absorbed in the POS area which



House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, Relating to the Judiciary  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21, 2011  
Page 3

would further impact the extent of services provided and the number of clients served. While the Committee Report for House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2 notes that “the Judiciary received additional support for its programs in House Bill No. 1267, H.D. 1 which appropriates \$3,521,545 for FY 2012 for POS contracts for court substance abuse programs and the Hawai‘i Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE) program”, and we are very appreciative of that, this bill has not yet been passed out of the legislature nor signed into law. While House Bill No. 1267, H.D. 1, would certainly alleviate some of the concerns noted with the \$1.3 million reduction, we must emphasize that this would be just a one-time shot for FY 2012. It should also be noted that to continue funding the programs and services provided with this \$3.5 million will require us to seek such funding for the supplemental budget year during the next legislative session, which due to recent worldwide developments, could be held during a fiscal environment even more severe than now.

On the topic of judges’ pay, we are aware of House Bill No. 575, H.D. 1, which would defer the judges’ scheduled pay increase and leave their five percent pay cut in place until fiscal biennium 2013-2015. However, if this bill is for some reason not passed out or signed into law, then the Judiciary would need to pay \$1.9 million in FY 2012 and \$4.3 million in FY 2013 from its current budget base without any additional funding. If this occurred, the Judiciary would likely have to cut some programs and take reduction in force actions. As it is, the salaries of the judges in Hawai‘i, based on a 2010 cost of living comparison done by the National Center for State Courts, rank last, that is, 51<sup>st</sup>, of judges in all states including the District of Columbia. These low salaries make the recruitment of qualified applicants to be judges in Hawai‘i very difficult.

With regard to not funding the assumption of CSSP intake functions from the Department of Public Safety on the neighbor islands, this will likely leave our judges without an important and effective sentencing option that decreases the use of incarceration, and provides an opportunity for non-violent offenders to perhaps avoid prison in the future. Community service sentencing is a viable alternative to incarceration and therefore results in significant savings to the criminal justice system.

Relative to the CIP budget included in House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, the Judiciary is very appreciative of the \$21,434,000 provided for the fiscal biennium, including funds for upgrading and improving the roof and lanai at Ka‘ahumanu Hale (\$4,645,000), the windows at the Kapuaiwa Building (\$1,850,000), fire systems (\$147,000) and elevators (\$292,000) at Ka‘ahumanu Hale, and Judiciary facilities statewide (\$10 million lump sum for miscellaneous projects). However, we are extremely concerned with the lack of any funding provided for other important CIP projects, that is, for the purchase of land (\$4.5 million) for the Kona Judiciary Complex, for planning and design of an Administrative Services Office Building in Kapolei to support the Kapolei Court Complex, for Ali‘iolani Hale Exterior Improvements (\$3,040,000),



House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, Relating to the Judiciary  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21, 2011  
Page 4

and for design funds for improvements to the Kauikeaouli Hale cellblock (\$305,000). We are also troubled that House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, provided only \$4.5 million of the \$7.5 million requested for design of the Kona Judiciary Complex and that this funding was allocated to FY 2012 rather than FY 2013.

Specifically, regarding the Kona Judiciary Complex, House Finance in its committee report stated that "Your Committee acknowledges that the Judiciary has recently narrowed the proposed location for the new Kona Judiciary Complex to six sites, three of which are on State-owned lands. Your Committee's intent is that the new Complex be situated on one of the three State-owned sites. Accordingly, funds intended for land acquisition were reallocated to other State priorities." Two of these sites are owned by the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) and one by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR); one other is partially owned by DHHL. Only the DLNR site would potentially have little or no acquisition costs as DHHL has statutorily established fiduciary responsibilities to its beneficiaries that would likely require land purchase or some sort of lease or land swap at or near market value rates approaching the \$4.5 million requested. Without the funding and authorization for land acquisition, the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) and the Judiciary would be precluded from pursuing the acquisition of land once the Chief Justice makes a decision on the final site during FY 2012. This would mean a delay to the overall project of at least a year or more, until funds for the land become available. Also, it is important to note that the \$4.5 million appropriated for design is definitely inadequate for the size and scope of this project, as DAGS and its consultants have identified the need for design funding at \$7.5 million. Without adequate design funding, it is unlikely a design contract could be awarded, thereby further delaying this project. Lastly, the design funding being appropriated for FY 2012 rather than FY 2013 would be of little use, as design cannot proceed without the necessary authorization and funding (and State commitment) for land in place.

Not funding the other projects mentioned above has significant impacts on Judiciary facilities, its staff, the public, and Judiciary clients. Without an Administrative Services Office Building in Kapolei, many of the programs and services that support and interact with the family court and juvenile detention operations in Kapolei, such as the girls, family drug, and juvenile drug courts, will have to remain indefinitely in Honolulu, some in costly leased facilities. Further, the separation of these programs and support services between Honolulu and Kapolei results in various functional and operational inefficiencies. For Ali'iolani Hale, which houses the Hawai'i Supreme Court and central administrative functions for the Judiciary and is significant both historically and architecturally, the appearance and preservation of the building are paramount. Unfortunately, no significant amount of work has occurred at the exterior of this building in over 30 years and, if measures are not taken now, the deterioration that has already set in will continue. Major improvements within the scope for this project that have been long needed include full replacement of the low-slope roofing which is leaking and in very poor



House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, Relating to the Judiciary  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21, 2011  
Page 5

condition; repair and refurbishment of the clock and clock tower, including the patching of spalled or broken concrete; cleaning of the mauka portion and painting of the makai portion of the building exterior; repair and repainting of exterior windows; cleaning and refinishing of the exterior koa doors; and improvements to the landscaped areas that are immediately adjacent to the building. Without funding for planning and design for cellblock upgrades at Kauikeaouli Hale, the cellblocks will continue to have certain safety and security issues, as well as not be in full compliance with applicable fire and building codes.

The Judiciary understands the current dire economic and budgetary situation faced by the state yet at the same time believes that its proposed biennium budget is the Judiciary's best estimate of the resources necessary to maintain the integrity of the courts and to fulfill our statutory, constitutional, and public service mandates. The Judiciary respectfully requests your support of House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2, which includes the Judiciary's biennium budget request, and that you strongly consider restoring the one percent reduction (\$1.3 million) to its budget base, as well as the funding for the judges pay cuts and scheduled pay increases and for the CSSP intake functions on the neighbor islands. The Judiciary also respectfully requests the restoration of CIP funding for land purchase and design at Kona, and for the other projects where funds were cut by House Bill No. 300, H.D. 2.

I hope this information provided today will assist your committee in its deliberations relating to this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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Paul A. Tomar

**Mailing address:**

Family Law Section  
P. O. Box 3733  
Honolulu, HI 96812

**on the web at:**

[www.hawaiifamilylawsection.org](http://www.hawaiifamilylawsection.org)

**TESTIMONY OF THE FAMILY LAW SECTION  
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 300, H.D. 2  
THE JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2011**

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21 2011, 8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 016 State Capitol

Good afternoon, Senator Hee and Senator Shimabukuro and members of the Committee:

My name is Tom Farrell. I am an attorney and the chair of the Family Law Section of the Hawaii State Bar Association, on whose behalf I testify this morning.

The Family Law Section is comprised of over a hundred attorneys who practice primarily in Family Court. We handle divorce, paternity, domestic violence, child protection and guardianship cases. As a Section, our testimony represents the views of our members only; we do not speak on behalf of the entire Hawaii State Bar Association.

I am here today in general support of House Bill 300, H.D. 2 the Judiciary Appropriations Act, but I will limit my comments to three budget items that directly affect the Family Law bar.

Circuit Court Operating (JUD 310, 210, 330, 350):

**We were very pleased to see that H.D. 2 restored funding for staff salaries in order to eliminate court furloughs. We urge you to continue to take this position in S.D. 1.**

In his State of the Judiciary address the other day, the Chief Justice said Hawaii's citizens "want a civil justice system that resolves disputes in a timely and fair manner, and that is not so complex, expensive and time consuming, that few can afford it. Our citizens want justice that works." It's not working so well in the Family Court of the First Circuit, primarily due to loss of staff time as a result of employee furloughs.

Now the judges come to work anyway, but you can't run a court without a clerk, and a bailiff, and the security staff, and all the other people who make it possible. Two Fridays a month may not sound like much, but there is a real price. For example, Juvenile Drug Court used to take place every Friday afternoon. Some of these children and their families need to see the judge every week. Now, that can't happen. We've also lost two days a month for paternity hearings and for hearings on Domestic Abuse Protective Orders. That's a serious problem, because once a

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
House Bill 300, H.D. 2  
March 21, 2011

Temporary Restraining Order is issued, a hearing must be held within fifteen days. Since the family court can't put these off, the calendars just get longer and longer. It isn't unusual at all to have as many as twelve, or fourteen, or sixteen of these cases all set to be heard by one judge in one three hour period. If you have been wrongly accused of domestic violence, and you need some time to present your witnesses and evidence, you may not get it, or you may have to agree to a continuance of several weeks until the court has time to hear you. Meanwhile you're removed from your home and not allowed to see your children. That isn't a justice system that resolves disputes in a timely and fair manner.

As you may recall from the State of the Judiciary address, uncontested divorces are taking twice as long, but that's not the worst problem on the divorce calendar. In the divorce division, we hold so called "short trials," which are hearings on contested issues that need a couple of hours but don't need a whole day or two. These are held on Fridays. We've now lost half of those days, which means that the waiting list for short trials gets longer and longer with each passing month. Even getting a hearing date on routine motions is becoming an enormous problem. It takes more than judges to run a court; the clerks who process and calendar motions are absolutely vital. This past summer, it was taking up to two months just to get a post-divorce motion processed and set for a hearing that would occur yet another month or six weeks later. Now imagine that you're a parent entitled to summer visitation with your child, and the other parent is refusing to send her. The summer will be over before you ever get your case in front of a judge. That's not the timely judicial system that Hawaii's citizens rightly expect and deserve.

And while I don't have first-hand evidence of the impact in the other circuits, I have no reason to believe it is any better on the neighbor islands.

So we strongly urge you to stick with the House position on staff salaries. We take no position on judge's salaries.

The Kona Judiciary Complex (JUD 601 item 2):

**We understand and support the House's rationale for reducing the appropriation for the Kona Judiciary Complex to eliminate land acquisition costs. This facility can be built on existing state-owned land.**

The Kona Circuit Court has been a ramshackle operation on the grounds of the State Hospital for the thirty years that I've practiced law. It was inadequate in the 1980's, and the growth in population and caseload hasn't helped. However, the Kona Family Court is even worse. It's difficult to believe one is actually at a courthouse, with the beauty shop upstairs, and the convenience store downstairs. Security is terrible and there's one toilet for the couple hundred folks who pass through each day (and the staff). By the way, you can't file family court documents there; you have to go someplace else to do that. So with the files at one courthouse, and the judge at another, you can only hope that your file makes it to the judge's desk when your case is called for hearing. H.D. 2 provides \$4.5 million in the first year for design of a Kona Judiciary Complex to house the Circuit, District, and Family Courts. Please do not delete this item.



Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
House Bill 300, H.D. 2  
March 21, 2011

Administrative Services Office at Kapolei (JUD 601, item 1):

**The House's deletion of funds for an Administrative Services Office at Kapolei should be restored.**

The original plan for the Kapolei Judiciary Complex included office space for the Juvenile Probation Divisions. Unfortunately, this building was dropped from funding before the project was completed. As a result, we now have probation officers downtown making a 43 mile round-trip from the court and the juvenile detention home. I can sympathize with that, as most of us who practice in family court have offices downtown and have to make the same trip. However, it seems a huge waste of money to pay probation officers to drive ninety minutes or more each day, particularly when they already carry staggering caseloads. You wind up having to hire more probation officers because they are spending their time sitting in traffic, instead of supervising probationers. And, of course, you also have to spend money on their current quarters and on the DAGS auto fleet and gas for them to drive to Kapolei and back. If a probation officer makes about \$50,000 per year, about \$10,000 of it is going to pay him to drive. If you have fifty probation officers, that's about a half million dollars a year of wasted time. And if you have to add another ten probation officers to cover the work, that's another \$250,000 in salary costs; not to mention benefits and employee overhead. My rough estimate is that the cost of separating them from the court is running around a \$1 million per year, plus whatever it costs to maintain their current office space. At this point, the Judiciary is seeking \$6.5 million in design funding only. We support this request.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning.



**Testimony of the Hawaii State Bar Association  
In Support of House Bill 300  
The Judiciary Appropriations Act of 2011**

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Monday, March 21, 2010, 8:30 am  
Conference Room 016

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair

The Hawaii State Bar Association is comprised of over 7000 attorneys licensed to practice law in the State of Hawaii, 5000 of whom are residents of the State of Hawaii and are greatly impacted on a daily basis by the diminished services and functioning of the Judiciary. When the budget of the State Judiciary suffers a \$19.7 million (or 13.1%) cut, the services available to the public are diminished and the ability of the practicing bar to help the public are greatly hampered. When the Judiciary General Fund Appropriations are reduced from \$150,445,630 in FY 2009 to \$139,012,000 in FY 2010, and further to \$130,743,104 in FY 2011, the impact is dramatic on the ability to provide services and access to justice.

As the Chief Justice informed the Legislature and the public at his State of the Judiciary address to the Legislature on January 26, 2011, this negative impact comes at a time when demand for Judiciary services has increased due to the impact of the difficult economy on our citizens. Furloughs of Judiciary staff have had a dramatic impact on the ability to move cases forward, resulting in delays, transferred cases, use of furlough Fridays for settlement and other conferences in HSBA and other non-Judiciary facilities. Judges, attorneys and Judiciary staff have tried to work through the administrative issues resulting from diminished funding and resources, but the end result has been drastic on the public. Case backloads are building due to the length of time required to work through the system;

- Median age of pending Circuit Court civil cases has increased by 41.8% since 2008
- Median age of pending foreclosure cases has increased by 44% since 2008
- Since 2008, pending District Court civil actions have increased 98.2%, with a 36.4% increase in the number of cases filed



## **Testimony of the Hawaii State Bar Association in Support of House Bill 300**

**Page 2**

**Monday, March 21, 2010, 8:30 am**

The number of self-represented litigants has risen during this critical economic period, as the services that can be provided by the Judiciary have diminished. Night court, drug court, girls' court, juvenile court and many other programs have and do successfully provide access to justice. These are the very programs which move the poor successfully through the judicial system, avoiding the more expensive and devastating alternative of incarceration and separation from families. Any cutbacks in these programs and in probationary and public safety staffing and resources would exacerbate this decline in the ability of the justice system to serve the public.

The HSBA strongly urges the Legislature to recognize the negative effect budgetary cutbacks have had on the judicial system and the services available to the public. In addition, the HSBA strongly urges the Legislature to take special notice of the need for planning and site selection for a judicial complex in Kona on the Island of Hawaii. While Judiciary facilities have been developed and improved elsewhere throughout the state, the facilities at Kona have continued in a barely functional location and condition. The HSBA and its members in the West Hawaii area have since 2005 urged the Legislature to support Judiciary requests for funding for site selection and planning for a facility to serve West Hawaii. Knowing that completion of a facility takes years, we again strongly urge the Legislature to include this funding in the upcoming Judiciary appropriations.

The HSBA appreciates the opportunity to support the Judiciary as our partner in providing access to justice to our community.



## THE MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC, INC.

*Bringing People Together to Talk and Resolve Their Differences*

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245 N. Kukui St., #206 Honolulu, HI 96817 Tel: 521-6767 Fax: 538-1454 Email: [mcp@mediatehawaii.org](mailto:mcp@mediatehawaii.org)

March 18, 2011

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2011**

**TO:** COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & LABOR  
Rep. Clayton Hee, Chair  
Rep. Maile S. L. Shimabukoro, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director  
The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc.

**RE:** Appropriates funds for the judiciary for the fiscal biennium  
beginning 07/01/11 and ending on 06/30/13.

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Mediation Center of the Pacific and Mediation Centers of Hawai'i, I am writing in support of HB 300 HD 2 and the Judiciary's request for the appropriation of funds as defined therein. The requested funds in HB 300 HD 2 are critical to enable the Judiciary to administer justice for the ever-growing number of individuals who access the court system.

On January 26, 2011, Chief Justice Recktenwald reported in his State of the Judiciary speech that the administration of justice is more than the adjudication of cases. He noted that the Judiciary also helps address problems that underlie disputes and helps to alleviate their human impact. One way that the Judiciary meets these needs is by offering alternative dispute resolution through the community mediation centers throughout the State.

The Mediation Center of the Pacific is one of five community mediation centers that receive funding through the Judiciary's Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution (CADR) POS with Mediation Centers of Hawai'i (MCH). The Judiciary funds enable the mediation centers to assist thousands of people annually to quickly and efficiently resolve a broad variety of disputes including but not limited to divorce, landlord/tenant, consumer/merchant, civil rights, family matters and more.

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The Mediation Center of the Pacific, a 501(c)(3) not for profit Aloha United Way Agency, helps Hawai'i's people resolve conflicts peacefully within families, schools, businesses and communities.

Despite significant reductions in funding, this past fiscal year, FY09-10, the centers together managed a total of 3,677 cases involving 7,673 clients. Of the 3,403 new cases that were opened by the centers, 81% were pending in the judicial system and 52% resulted in written agreements.

Equally significant is the fact that overall, the mediation sessions were scheduled on average within 3 days and were conducted on average within 9.8 days from the time the second party agreed to mediate. Thus, while “the median age of pending civil cases in circuit court increased by more than 40 percent...prolonging the time it takes to resolve civil disputes...”<sup>1</sup> the community mediation centers increased access to justice by quickly providing mediation services both on-site at the various courts and at the offices of the respective centers throughout the State.

Over the past two years, the community mediation centers, like the judiciary, have seen a significant increase in the need for services, particularly for individuals in the low-income and vulnerable populations. The Mediation Center of the Pacific alone managed approximately 24% more cases since FY 08-09. These growing needs cannot be met without sufficient funding. Therefore, the Judiciary’s request for appropriation of funds as described in HB 300 HD 2 needs to be supported.

On behalf of the Mediation Center of the Pacific and Mediation Centers of Hawai`i, we respectfully request that you approve HB 300 HD 2 to enable the Judiciary to provide justice through prompt adjudication, dispute resolution and other needed services for all of Hawai`i’s people.

Sincerely,



Tracey S. Wiltgen  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Reported by Chief Justice Reckenwald in the State of the Judiciary on 1/26/11

Steven J. T. Chow, Esq.  
745 Fort Street  
Fort Street Tower, Suite 1415  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

March 18, 2011

VIA FACSIMILE #586-6659  
The Honorable Clayton Hee  
Chairman, Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Senate  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Testimony In Support of HB 300, HD2  
(HSCR953) Relating to the Judiciary Budget  
Date: Monday, March 21, 2011  
Time: 8:30 a.m.

Dear Chairman Hee and Committee Members:

I am writing to ask your support for the passage of HB 300, HD2 relating to the Judiciary Budget.

I have been a practicing attorney here in Hawaii for 30 years in a variety of practice areas including family law, landlord/tenant law, collection law and civil litigation with the firms of Fujiyama Duffy & Fujiyama and The Pacific Law Group fka Matsumoto LaFountaine & Chow. I have seen the Judiciary make great strides in protecting citizens' rights and ensuring justice for all over this period of time.

I know these are difficult financial times and we must all face belt tightening in one form or another. But, the foundation of our society and government is based on a strong Judiciary, and the budget cuts have eroded Hawaii's Judiciary to the point that essential legal services in all areas (criminal, family, civil, etc.) have been delayed, curtailed and, in some cases, eliminated.

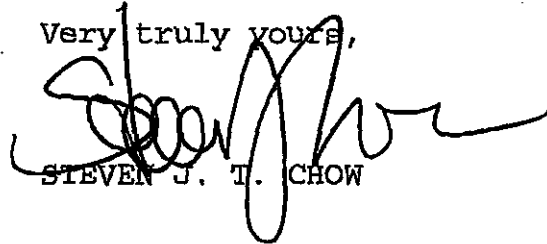
The Honorable Clayton Hee  
March 18, 2011  
Page 2

"Justice delayed is justice denied" is a quote which you have probably heard many times before.<sup>1</sup> That observation is especially true today as the Judiciary faces more and more demand for services with less and less resources. The citizens of Hawaii are becoming frustrated with the delays in the legal system as I often hear comments from clients and citizens of "why bother?" when discussing enforcing basic legal rights through the Court system. We must guard against a growing sense of apathy and distrust by the community of our legal system and can only do so by maintaining essential legal services and programs.

In closing, I would again respectfully ask for your support for HB 300, HD2 relating to the Judiciary Budget.

I would be happy to provide you with any additional information or comment. You can contact me at (808) 523-2999, ext. 208, or by email at schow@paclawgroup.com.

Very truly yours,



STEVEN J. T. CHOW

SJTC:ln

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<sup>1</sup> Attributed to William Gladstone, British politician (1809-1898).