



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
[www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://www.hawaii.gov/elections)

SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1754  
RELATING TO ELECTIONS**

**January 24, 2012**

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1754. The purpose of this bill is to allow for the mailing of absentee ballots to all registered voters residing in areas, due to redistricting, which are significantly smaller in population than normally associated with the justification and establishment of a polling place.

In 2011, the Hawaii State Reapportionment Commission and the Redistricting Commissions for the County of Hawaii and the City and County of Honolulu convened to develop new boundaries based on the last decennial census. In a normal reapportionment year, attempts are made, to the extent possible, to have boundaries line up with each other so as to avoid areas being unnecessarily divided up on the basis of county council, state representative, state senator, and congressional lines. However, at times small population pockets will occur that will each need to have their own unique ballot type developed. A ballot type contains the unique combination of contests, questions, or issues that voters who reside in a specific area are entitled to vote on.

The 2010 General Election, based on the 2001 Reapportionment Plan, involved 242 polling places. These polling places ranged in size from 188 to 6,000 registered voters. The average polling place is typically within the range of 2,500 to 3,000 registered voters. The present bill refers to population pockets of less than 500 registered voters that would require their own ballot type. Based on the 2010 General

Election, the impacted polling places, assuming the 2011 Reapportionment Plan is the same, would be the following:

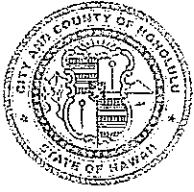
- District/Precinct 03/02 - Hale Aloha Nazarene School;
- District/Precinct 25/03 - St. Clement's Episcopal Church,
- District/Precinct 30/03 - Moanalua Elementary School; and
- District/Precinct 36/04 - Leeward Community College.

This reapportionment year, we expect that the ability to keep to a minimum the amount of small population pockets that require their own ballot type will be difficult to know or control. Specifically, since the original 2011 Reapportionment Plan for the State House of Representatives and Senate has been invalidated by the Hawaii Supreme Court, the Reapportionment Commission will need to develop another plan that may have to be significantly different from the prior plan.

Under the present circumstances, given the limited amount of time that the Reapportionment Commission has to complete its plan, it may not be able to have boundaries line up with each other so as to avoid areas being unnecessarily divided up on the basis of county council, state representative, state senator, and congressional lines. Additionally, even if the Reapportionment Commission has the time to make these attempts, the unique configuration of the various state, county, and federal lines, might make it inevitable that there will be small population pockets that will each need to have their own unique ballot type developed.

As such, given the small amount of voters in each of these possible population pockets and the financial resources and personnel required to establish and operate a polling place, the purpose of this bill is to permit the mailing of absentee ballots to all registered voters in these impacted areas in lieu of the operation of polling places. In this way, the office would have the option to focus its resources to other polling places or election-day program areas of need. It should be noted that all voters would still be able to vote in person at an absentee walk location, which are opened at least ten working days prior to each election.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1754.



**ELECTIONS**  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 100  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3099  
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-3800 • FAX: (808) 768-3835

**BERNICE K.N. MAU**  
City Clerk

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1754  
RELATING TO ELECTIONS.**

Committee on Judiciary  
Rm. 325  
January 24, 2012

Chairman Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the City Clerk supports passage of H.B. 1754, which would allow voting by mail in "pocket" precincts areas where electoral district lines created a unique set of contests affecting up to 500 registered voters.

The bill stipulates that the determination of affected areas be made "as of the preceding general election". However, we recommend that if this bill will be made applicable to the 2012 elections, that the Chief election officer be given the discretion to make that determination in the first year following redistricting.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS\*

***League of Women Voters of Hawaii***

49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813

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TESTIMONY TO HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

SUPPORTING HB 1754 RELATING TO ELECTIONS

HEARING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

To: Chair, Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Kari Rhoads

Re: Mail Election

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB1754 which would allow the Office of Elections to facilitate voting for small populations of residents whose voting districts have been redrawn due to the latest census and redistricting.

Since polling places normally have ballots that list candidates that are to be elected from that specific area and since the numbers of voters who fall into each special category would be small, staffing and furnishing all the accoutrements for these polls would be burdensome and expensive.

It therefore seems reasonable to send ballots to the voters involved and have them returned by mail. The method would be the same as absentee voting. It is a tried and true method and would simplify the voting in these areas for all concerned.

The Office of Elections carried out an entire special election for a Congressional seat on very short notice and it went very well. We are confident that in the special circumstances that the redistricting has created, voting by mail is the solution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marian W. Wilkins, LWV Elections Committee Member

January 23, 2012