



## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY ON HB 2343 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII STATE  
CONSTITUTION TO REQUIRE DISCLOSURE OF THE NAMES OF JUDICIAL NOMINEES

Committee on Judiciary  
Rep. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair  
Tuesday, January 31, 2012  
2:00 p.m. Conf. Room 325

Testimony by Jean Aoki, LWV Legislative Committee member

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, members of the Committee on Judiciary,

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HB 2343 which would amend our state constitution to require the judicial selection commission to publicly disclose its lists of nominees for appointments to seats on our district and circuit courts, the intermediate appellate court and the supreme court, concurrently with its presentation of those lists to the governor or the chief justice.

When the League did our study of the Judiciary in 2002 and 2003, we focused a great deal of attention on the Judicial Selection Commission, because the public had really no or little input in the selection of our judges and justices in contrast to states where the judges and justices are elected. While we would oppose any attempts to select the members of our courts by election, we did believe and took the position that the names of the nominees for seats on the courts should be released by the Judicial Selection Commission. This would allow input by members of the public who knew one or more of the nominees as to their qualifications, just as the voluntary release of the nominees by then Governor Lingle and Chief Justice Moon made possible comments to them from the public.

So it was welcome news when the Chair of the Judicial Selection Commission announced that henceforth, the names of all nominees to seats on the courts would be released at the times the names are sent to the governor and the chief justice. Increased sunshine in the process of selecting judges would increase public confidence in the Judiciary.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this very important constitutional amendment.