

HB 2401, HD2



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Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair and Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

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10:15 A.M. Conf. Rm. 016

Janet Mason, Vice-President, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

TESTIMONY ON HB2401, HD2 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE IV, SECTION 2 OF THE
STATE CONSTITUTION TO ADD A RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERS APPOINTED TO
THE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

I'm Janet Mason, Vice President of the League of Women Voters of Hawaii.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports adding a residency requirement for members appointed to the Reapportionment Commission. This would be a process improvement over the current approach to appointing Commission members, and would help guarantee that residents throughout Hawaii are adequately represented on the Commission.

Ideally, the residence of the Commission's members would correspond closely to the geographic distribution of our population. But because there are currently four appointing authorities for eight members of the Commission, achieving and maintaining this proportionality is difficult.

This measure proposes that each of the four appointing authorities select two members, who shall be a resident of a different basic island unit from the other. While this approach improves the geographic representation on the Commission, it could also result in no Oahu representatives on the Reapportionment Commission. Oahu residents are approximately two-thirds of the State's population, so it is reasonable to assure them representation on the Commission.

The League of Women Voters suggests that this bill amended to require that each of the four appointing authorities appoint one person from Oahu and a second person from a different island. Having four of the eight appointed members from Oahu and four of the eight members from other islands would not be the ideal, but would be a fairer geographic balance than the current approach, and fairer than leaving open the possibility that no members of the Commission resided on Oahu.. The ninth member of the Commission, its Chair, could continue to be selected using the current provisions of Article IV, Section 2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.