

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Carolyn.L.Roldan@hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 1:15 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for House Bill 343  
**Attachments:** HB 343 (2011).pdf

**Testifier:** Scott Nago, Chief Election Officer  
Office of Elections

**Committee:** House Committee on Judiciary

**Date/Time:** Thursday, February 10, 2011

**Measure:** HB No. 343 Relating to Voting



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**  
802 LEHUA AVENUE  
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. 343**  
**RELATING TO VOTING**  
**February 10, 2011**

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 343. The purpose of this bill is to allow for election day voter registration. The Office of Elections provides the following comment.

This bill would increase the workload of precinct officials. Precinct officials already are tasked with numerous responsibilities, such as making sure the voter is in the proper polling place; providing voters with instructions on how to properly mark their ballot and use the electronic voting system; verifying voter identification; and providing special assistance to voters in regards to minority language ballots, curbside voting, and spoiled ballots. Adding voter registration to their workload may impact our ability to recruit and staff the polling places.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 343.

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Richard Spacer [rspacer@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 08, 2011 3:40 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** House Judiciary Committee Feb. 10, 2011 2:00 PM HB 343 (status)

Dear Houe Judiciary Committee:

Please SUPPORT HB 343 (status) to allow Hawaii to have voter registration on election day. Mahalo.

Richard Spacer  
private citizen  
Kauai

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The fish are biting.

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## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Deborah Lockett [deblockett@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 08, 2011 6:05 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** nlove@commoncausehawaii.org  
**Subject:** HB 343

Dear Distinguished Committee Members,

I write this testimony today to urge you to support HB 343 which would establish election day voter registration.

Election day registration (EDR) is one of the most promising reforms to improve voter participation.

Traditionally, Hawaii ranks at or near the bottom of all 50 states in voter turnout.

In the 2010 general election, Hawaii's turnout, among eligible voters was only 41%, this in a year when Hawaii born Barack Obama ran for President!

Nine states and D.C. have successfully implemented EDR, which have resulted in higher voter turnout.

One of our most cherished freedoms in this great country of ours, one that we have invaded other countries to establish, is the freedom to vote.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Aloha,

*Deborah A. Lockett, M.P.H.  
The Lockett Group*

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Jason Wagner [jwagner@assets-school.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 7:11 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 343

Dear JUD Committee, Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Vice Chair Karl Rhoads:

My name is Jason Wagner, and I am a teacher at Assets School. I teach Civic Responsibility and Leadership. I would like to offer my support of House Bill 343.

I feel that this bill would be especially beneficial to young voters, who often do not turn out to vote because they are not registered. Many of them forget or don't know how to register. Providing the option to register at the voting site would open up more of the electorate, which is something that our society should be striving for. How valid is our representative democracy with only 41% voter turnout?

I work with high school students, and they are a generation who thrive on instantaneous results. Allowing them to register and vote in one process would suit their need for immediacy.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of this bill. If you have any questions, I can be reached at 754-0140 or 1852 Ho`okupa Street Pearl City, HI 96782.

Jason Wagner

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Nancy Davlantes [ndavlantes@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 11:32 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony; Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran; Rep. Karl Rhoads  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* Testimony on HB343, for hearing 2/10/11, 2 p.m., room 325

I support this bill for the following reasons.

- I moved back to Hawaii in 2009 from Wisconsin, where same-day registration has been in effect for years and voter participation increased markedly.
- Voter turnout in Hawaii has been depressingly low in recent years.
- Eligible voter turnout last November was only 41%.
- Given that people often wait until the last minute, having a registration deadline 30 days before an election loses many that would otherwise vote.

Hawaii needs same-day registration.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Nancy Davlantes  
Member of Common Cause Hawaii  
47-228 Kamehameha Hwy  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 12:44 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** cfm@progressivestates.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** PSN HI Testimony - HB 343 - CFM.pdf

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Cristina Francisco-McGuire  
Organization: Progressive States Network  
Address: 101 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd Fl. New York, NY  
Phone: 212-680-3116 x118  
E-mail: [cfm@progressivestates.org](mailto:cfm@progressivestates.org)  
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

**Comments:**

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at [cfm@progressivestates.org](mailto:cfm@progressivestates.org) if you have questions.



**Testimony of Cristina Francisco-McGuire,  
Election Reform Policy Specialist at the Progressive States Network**

**To the Hawaii Committee on Judiciary  
On House Bill No. 343**

**Thursday, February 10, 2011**

**For more information, please contact:**

Cristina Francisco-McGuire  
Election Reform Policy Specialist  
Progressive States Network  
101 Avenue of the Americas, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10013

Phone: (212) 680-3116, ext. 118  
Email: [cfm@progressivestates.org](mailto:cfm@progressivestates.org)

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



## Introduction

My name is Cristina Francisco-McGuire and I am the Election Reform Policy Specialist at the Progressive States Network (PSN), an organization that supports state legislators and advocates across the country in promoting policies to expand access to democracy. I would like to thank the Chairman, Representative Gilbert Keith-Agaran, and the esteemed members of the House Committee on Judiciary, for the opportunity to testify on this crucial legislation.

I would like to voice my support for HB 343, a bill introduced by Representative Roy Takumi that enacts Election Day Registration (EDR). The proposed system allows voters to both register and vote on primary and election days, thereby bypassing one of the biggest hurdles to participation: the state's thirty-day voter registration requirement.

I applaud Representative Takumi for his efforts to remove the barriers to voting that prevent citizens from exercising their constitutional right to vote. As some of our partners will detail in their own testimony, EDR (also known as Same Day Registration, or SDR) is one of the safest, most cost-effective ways to ensure that as few people as possible are left out of the democratic process. I will focus my remarks on examples given by elected officials in EDR states regarding the positive impact that the system has had on voter turnout, election administration, and more.

## States with Longstanding EDR Policies

Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin adopted EDR in the 1970's, and Idaho, New Hampshire and Wyoming followed suit two decades later. During the 2008 elections, four of these states were ranked in the top five for voter turnout (the fifth, Iowa, implemented EDR in 2008). Minnesota, in particular, has boasted the top turnout in the nation for the past eight election cycles, and in 2008, EDR ballots in the state accounted for more than 18% of the votes cast.<sup>1</sup> According to Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie:<sup>2</sup>

Election Day registration goes back to the 1600[s] in New England, but Minnesota was the first state in the modern era to make this important change. It is the reason we are always number one in the nation in voter turnout and it is why our lists of voters are so up-to-date. By doing much of our voter registration and address updating in person on election day we are able to have the cleanest list possible. Same Day Registration, because it is in person, is much more secure than all registrations done through the mail.

In Wisconsin, 10-15% of voters typically use EDR and in 2008, about 460,000 people took advantage of the system to either register or update their addresses.<sup>3</sup> Regarding the success of the state's system, Wisconsin State Senator Jon Erpenbach stated:<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Demos, *Voters Win with Same Day Registration*. [http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin\\_feb032010.pdf](http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin_feb032010.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Email from MN Secretary of State Mark Ritchie to Cristina Francisco-McGuire, Election Reform Policy Specialist. February 8, 2011, 4:36pm EST. (on file with recipient)

<sup>3</sup> "The push to end election-day registration in Wisconsin: How strong is the case?" Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Jan. 21, 2011. <http://www.jsonline.com/blogs/news/114376604.html>

<sup>4</sup> Email from WI State Sen. Jon Erpenbach's aide, Julie Laundrie, to Cristina Francisco-McGuire, Election Reform Policy Specialist. February 8, 2011, 4:33pm EST. (on file with recipient)

Same day registration laws in Wisconsin provide access to democracy for the people of Wisconsin. Voters that have moved or are voting for the first time have an option to register at their neighborhood polling place. Having secure registration right at every polling place means democracy at the fullest. Wisconsin has consistently had some of the highest voter participation numbers in the nation and we are proud of our citizen representation at the polls. Highly trained election workers and a strong secure electronic voter database means that we know our elections are clean while we still provide strong voter access. I have heard that 70 percent of residential phone numbers turn over every year; let's face it we move around. Same day registration means we don't leave eligible voters without their constitutional rights."

Geographically mobile Americans also tend to be disproportionately low-income. Of the over 35 million people who moved between 2007 and 2008, about 45% had incomes of less than \$25,000.<sup>5</sup> SDR laws have thus helped ensure participation by low-income voters not only in Wisconsin, but in every state with SDR.

In addition to boosting turnout and expanding the franchise to low-income and other demographics that tend to be more transient, states like Hawaii that administer elections at the county level are already better situated to implement EDR than a state like Maine, which runs elections at the municipal level. According to Maine State Representative Diane Russell:<sup>6</sup>

In Maine, we run elections at the municipal level, meaning that our towns, not the counties, are in charge. The sheer bureaucracy of it is a nightmare, and we have over 600 assigned polling stations for over 500-some-odd towns. However, we are still able to administer Election Day registration. If we can do it, any state with a more streamlined administration at the county level can do it.

### **States that Recently Adopted EDR**

Montana implemented EDR in 2006, while SDR became law in Iowa and North Carolina in 2007 and D.C. enacted EDR in 2010. Turnout in Iowa and North Carolina, in particular, improved dramatically. While Iowa could only claim top ten voter turnout status for a handful of election cycles prior to passage of EDR, after EDR was implemented in time for the 2008 elections, the state ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for voter turnout.<sup>7</sup> In the experience of Iowa State Senator Joe Bolkcom:<sup>8</sup>

In Iowa Same day registration has led to greater voter involvement in our democratic process. Tens of thousands of Iowans have participated in electing their leaders because it was made more convenient for them to vote. Voters really liked this recent change in Iowa law and we have had no problems with voter fraud as a result.

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<sup>5</sup> Demos, *Voters Win with Same Day Registration*. [http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin\\_feb032010.pdf](http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin_feb032010.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Phone conversation between ME Rep. Diane Russell and Cristina Francisco-McGuire, Election Reform Policy Specialist. Feb. 9, 2011, 3:15pm. (notes on file with PSN)

<sup>7</sup> "Minnesota Leads Nation in Voter Turnout for Seventh Straight Election Cycle," Smart Politics, Dec. 16, 2008. [http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cspg/smartpolitics/2008/12/minnesota\\_leads\\_nation\\_in\\_vote\\_1.php](http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cspg/smartpolitics/2008/12/minnesota_leads_nation_in_vote_1.php)

<sup>8</sup> Email from IA State Sen. Joe Bolkcom to Cristina Francisco-McGuire, Election Reform Policy Specialist. February 9, 2011, 8:01am EST. (on file with recipient)

Making it easier for people to vote with SDR led to a similar increase in turnout in North Carolina in 2008. Though North Carolina's system is slightly different from the other eight states and D.C. – North Carolina permits registration and voting during the state's extended early voting period – the results were just as impressive. In the 2008 elections, turnout rose 8% over 2004 and proved to be the biggest presidential vote increase in the nation.<sup>9</sup> Of the 253,000 voters who used SDR during 2008's early voting period, 105,000 were first time voters in their counties.<sup>10</sup> The rest used SDR to update their voter registrations, avoiding the need to vote by provisional ballot and saving election administrators valuable time and resources. Indeed, according to North Carolina State Representative Deborah Ross:<sup>11</sup>

In North Carolina, many of our election officials appreciate same day voter registration because it cuts down on the number of provisional ballots they need to process after an election. It also helps people who have recently moved to the state or within counties. The process worked exceptionally well here.

### **Conclusion**

Statistics from EDR states and the aforementioned examples given by elected officials demonstrate that Election Day Registration often results in:

- Higher voter turnout, compared to non-EDR states
- Allowing citizens to exercise their right to vote, without being hindered by arbitrary voter registration deadlines
- Assisting youth, low-income folks, minorities and other Americans who tend to move frequently
- Election administration without the time-consuming process of handling provisional ballots
- No increase in fraud – in fact, EDR is more secure than voter registrations that are mailed

Therefore, I urge the members of this Committee to vote in favor of HB 343.

By removing barriers to democratic participation, lawmakers will be allowing Hawaiians to take full advantage of their inherent right to vote.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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<sup>9</sup> See United States Election Project, [http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout\\_2004G.html](http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2004G.html)

<sup>10</sup> Demos, *Voters Win with Same Day Registration*. [http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin\\_feb032010.pdf](http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin_feb032010.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Email from NC State Rep. Deborah Ross to Cristina Francisco-McGuire, Election Reform Policy Specialist. February 9, 2011, 10:01am EST. (on file with recipient)

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 08, 2011 6:07 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** creddy@punahou.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Chai Reddy  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 1601 Punahou St Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 945-2456  
E-mail: [creddy@punahou.edu](mailto:creddy@punahou.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/8/2011

Comments:

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 08, 2011 11:25 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** batcavetech@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** Testimony in support of HB 343.rtf

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Joseph Heaukulani  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 3177 Holly Place Honolulu, Hawaii  
Phone: (808) 778-1153  
E-mail: [batcavetech@hotmail.com](mailto:batcavetech@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/8/2011

Comments:

2/10/11

**Honorable Representative Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran**

**COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

Conference Room 325 2:00PM

Capitol Building

415 South Beretania Street

**Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 343**

**Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee**

I am an individual in support of HB 343. Hawaii has consistently been at the bottom of the nation in regards to voter turnout. With only 41% of all eligible voters voting in the 2010 general election there is definite room for improvement. Election Day Registration is needed to improve our numbers. Nine other states already with Election Day Registration have better turnouts than those without. Let's do our best to make sure people count.

**Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony in support of HB 343.**

Joseph Heaukulani

3177 Holly Place

Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

(808) 778-1153

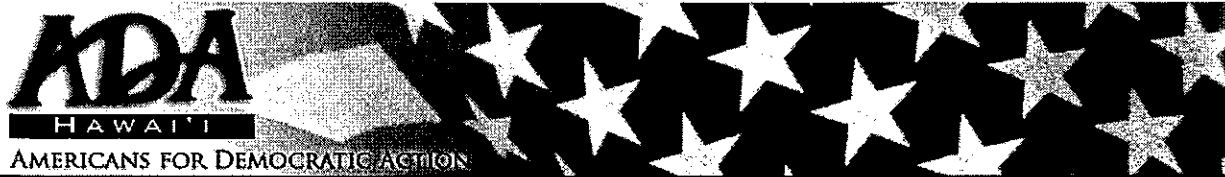
batcavetech@hotmail.com

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Barbara Polk [BarbaraPolk@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 2:43 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB 343  
**Attachments:** HB343 same day registration.doc; ATT00001..txt

Attached is testimony in Support of HB 343 for House Committee on the Judiciary hearing February 10, 2011 at 2:00 in Room 325



OFFICERS	DIRECTORS			MAILING ADDRESS
Brien Hallet, President	Nancy Bey Little	Barbara Polk	Guy Archer (Alt)	PO. Box 617
Juliet Begley, Vice-President	John Bickel	Jan Lubin	Josh Frost (Alt)	Honolulu,
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Chuck Huxel, Secretary	Jim Olson	George Simson	Marcia Schweitzer (Alt)	Karin Gill (Alt)

February 9, 2011

TO: Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads  
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii  
Barbara Polk, Legislative Chair

#### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 343 RELATING TO VOTING

Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii supports HB 343 that would allow residents to register to vote on election day. At present, Hawaii has the longest time permissible by federal law between the deadline to register to vote and election day. This is likely one of the reasons for the very low voter turnout in Hawaii. The several states that have same-day voter registration are states that also have the highest voter turnout. And those states have not reported problems with same-day registration.

Though we may wish that the public would pay attention to election campaigns earlier, most do not, and many only become interested as the election gets nearer and the amount of media attention escalates. Several of our Board members have had the experience of finding that their students want to vote, but that it's too late to register.

We encourage you to pass HB 343.



## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 3:12 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** nlove@commoncausehawaii.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** CCHI JUD 2-10-11 HB343 EDR.doc

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Nikki Love  
Organization: Common Cause Hawaii  
Address:  
Phone: 275-6275  
E-mail: [nlove@commoncausehawaii.org](mailto:nlove@commoncausehawaii.org)  
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:



P.O. Box 22703 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96823 • (808) 275-6275  
Web: [www.commoncausehawaii.org](http://www.commoncausehawaii.org) • Email: [info@commoncausehawaii.org](mailto:info@commoncausehawaii.org)

**House JUD Committee**  
**Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads**

**Thursday 2/10/11 at 2:00 PM in Room 325**  
**HB 343 – Election Day Registration**

**TESTIMONY**

**Nikki Love, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii**

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Committee Members:

**Common Cause Hawaii strongly supports HB 343** to establish election day registration, which would allow eligible voters to register and vote on election day.

This bill represents a major opportunity for improving voter participation in Hawaii. We ask the Committee to take this opportunity and make Hawaii the tenth state in the nation with election day registration.

As you know, in recent elections **Hawaii has been consistently at or near the bottom of all 50 states in voter turnout**. The numbers speak for themselves:

- Many are familiar with the official turnout statistic: only 56% of registered voters participated in the 2010 general election.
- But if you look at *eligible* voters, it's even worse: only 41% of eligible voters participated.
- Many eligible voters weren't registered, so they couldn't have voted even if they became inspired to do so just before election day. An estimated 239,876 eligible voters – that's 26% of all eligible voters – were not registered.<sup>1</sup>

**Our current voter registration method is archaic and burdensome for citizens, and unnecessarily excludes many eligible voters from participating in our democracy.** The current registration system favors those who are highly motivated, very interested in politics early on in the campaign season, plan far in advance to be sure they are registered, and don't move residences. For everyone else, the voter registration system is a major hurdle. The 30-day registration deadline makes it harder for those who are less involved in politics, unfamiliar with the voter registration process, or recently moved residences. Instead, we should create a system that empowers all eligible citizens to vote by enacting election day registration.

Election day registration (EDR) has been well-tested over the decades. Some states have used EDR since the 1970's, and today nine states and the District of Columbia have implemented EDR. The success of EDR is described by Demos, a nonpartisan policy organization, in their 2010 report:

- **Well-tested:** Over 1 million Americans used EDR in the 2008 election.

- **Turnout:** In the 2008 election, EDR states had an average turnout 7 percentage points higher than states without it. Historically, EDR states have had turnout 10-12 percentage points higher than those without it.
- **Young voters:** Young people are typically less likely to vote, and EDR could change that. Research indicates that EDR could increase youth turnout in presidential elections by as much as 14 percentage points. In Iowa in 2008, people between the ages of 18 and 24 comprised almost 35% of the voters who used EDR.
- **Cost:** Many election officials in EDR states have described the incremental cost of EDR as minimal. In addition, EDR means fewer provisional ballots. Wisconsin's elections director said that his state's ability to avoid provisional balloting alone makes EDR worthwhile.
- **Integrity:** There has been no evidence that EDR has led to voter fraud. Minnesota's Secretary of State noted: "EDR is much more secure because you have the person right in front of you – not a postcard in the mail.... We have 35 years of experience with this."<sup>ii</sup>
- **Voters left off the rolls:** For voters who have recently moved or were mistakenly left off the voter rolls, EDR is a way to ensure they can re-register and cast a ballot.<sup>ii</sup>

Specifically regarding Hawaii, Demos commissioned a study by professors at California Institute of Technology and NYU in 2008. Using 2004 numbers, the study estimates the following results for EDR in Hawaii:

- Overall turnout in Hawaii could increase by 5.7 percent;
- Turnout among those aged 18 to 25 could increase by 9.9 percent;
- Turnout among the poorest citizens could increase by 5.7 percent;
- Turnout among the wealthiest citizens could increase by 3.3 percent.<sup>iii</sup>

We urge the Committee to pass this bill and ask all the Committee members to champion this and other efforts for improving voter participation in Hawaii.

Mahalo for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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<sup>i</sup> George Mason University's United States Elections Project [http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout\\_2010G.html](http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2010G.html), and State of Hawaii Office of Elections <http://hawaii.gov/elections/results/2010/general/files/histatewide.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Demos, "Voters Win With Same Day Registration," [http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin\\_feb032010.pdf](http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin_feb032010.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> R. Michael Alvarez of California Institute of Technology and Jonathan Nagler of New York University, "Election Day Voter Registration in Hawaii," Winter 2008.

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Carmille Lim [carmille.lim@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 4:00 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB343- election day voter registration  
**Attachments:** HB343.pdf

RPlease see attached testimony re: **Support of HB343 –Election Day Voter Registration**

House Judiciary Committee

**Hearing date:** Thursday, February 10, 2011

**Hearing time:** 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Rm. 325

**Will not be present at hearing**

**Three (3) copies, including original**

**Page 1 of 1**

*Mahalo, carmille*

Re: **Support of HB343 –Election Day Voter Registration**

House Judiciary Committee

**Hearing date:** Thursday, February 10, 2011

**Hearing time:** 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Rm. 325

**Will not be present at hearing**

**Three (3) copies, including original**

**Page 1 of 1**

February 9, 2011

**To:** Rep. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair  
Members of the Judiciary Committee

**Fm:** Carmille Lim  
Aiea, HI  
carmille.lim@gmail.com

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my **support of HB343**.

The current voter registration deadline, which is 30 days before an election, prevents many eligible voters from participating. This contributes to the disturbingly low voter turnout our state faces. In recent years, Hawai'i has ranked at or near the bottom in voter turnout. In the 2010 general election, Hawai'i's voter turnout among eligible voters was only 41%.<sup>1</sup>

Election Day Registration is especially effective in encouraging younger eligible citizens to vote.<sup>2</sup> In fact, research shows that Election Day registration may increase voter turnout in the younger population (18~24) by as much as 14%.<sup>2</sup> Nine states and D.C. have successfully implemented election day registration, and those states have higher turnout than those without it.<sup>2</sup>

As a recent graduate of UH Mānoa, I often came across other students who were actively involved in several community organizations; people who cared deeply about and were knowledgeable about certain issues affecting Hawai'i. Unfortunately, to the "average" citizen, or those who are just starting to, or wanting to get involved, access to basic civics information has been less-than-ideal (our own UH's political science department does not require students to learn Hawai'i's governmental processes). **After having worked a precinct on election day, I've come to realize that registration deadlines can be confusing to these citizens and pose as an unnecessary obstacle, which results in many eligible and interested students not voting on election day. Feedback from my peers who've worked at other precincts reflect similar observations.**

Though it's been argued that encouraging same-day voter registration will also encourage "uninformed" citizens to participate, it is unlikely that someone "uninformed" will go out of their way on a weekend (or Tuesday), drive to their precinct, and wait in line to cast a ballot. **HB343 will only ensure that we include all eligible and interested individuals, especially youth 18~24, to participate in the democratic process on election day.**

Please pass HB343. Mahalo for your time.

<sup>1</sup> United States Elections Project: 2010 General Elections Turnout Rate, January 2011, [http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout\\_2010G.html](http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2010G.html)

<sup>2</sup> A Demos Policy Brief: SDR, January 2010, [http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin\\_feb032010.pdf](http://www.demos.org/pubs/voterswin_feb032010.pdf)

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** LWV [lwvhawaii@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 4:01 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony HB 343  
**Attachments:** HB 343 EDR.doc

From Jean Aoki, League of Women Voters Legislative Committee  
For hearing before the **Committee on Judiciary**  
**On: HB 343 Relating to Voting**  
**Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011**  
**Time: 2:00 p.m.**  
**Place: Conference Room 325**

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League of Women Voters  
49 South Hotel Street, Rm. 315  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Tel. 808 531-7448  
Fax 808 599-5669

Visit us at [www.lwv-hawaii.com](http://www.lwv-hawaii.com)  
Contact us at [Voters@LWV-Hawaii.com](mailto:Voters@LWV-Hawaii.com)

A Non-Partisan Organization to Encourage Informed Citizen Participation in Government



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

## TESTIMONY ON HB 343 RELATING TO VOTING

House Committee on Judiciary

Date of Hearing: Thursday, February 10, 2011

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Place: Conference Room 325

Testifier: Jean Aoki. LWV Legislative Committee

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

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HB 343 which would provide for Election Day Registration.

Section 1 of this bill gives good reasons for enacting this bill. As it states, citizens of this State do not have an absolute right to vote. Even the U.S. Constitution does not guarantee citizens the right to vote. It is implied in the federal constitution in different amendments. Amendment XV . Section one states that the right of citizens to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Amendment XIX states: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. But nowhere does the Constitution explicitly give all citizens the right to vote.

This was glaringly illustrated in the 2000 and the 2004 Elections, when because of the tight presidential race, the Florida vote was the crucial determining vote. With the media spotlight aimed nonstop during the weeks when all of the problems of the Florida electoral process were exposed, a very distressing revelation was that of thousands of citizens purged from the voter rolls because their names were so similar to the names of felons or ex-felons. These citizens went to the polls on Election Day only to be turned away.

With Election Day Registration, this injustice would have been corrected instantly.



## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

The Hawaii State Constitution states in Article I, Bill of Rights, Section 1, "All political power of this State is inherent in the people and the responsibility for the exercise thereof rests with the people. All government is founded on this authority."

But that political power of the people must have an avenue for expression if it is to be realized. That avenue is through the inherent right to vote as expressed by our constitution – the right to elect our representatives to government at both the legislative and executive levels---those representatives that best represent our interests. Without the power of the vote, we cannot exercise our political power nor our responsibilities as citizens of this state.

Section 1 of this bill states that "this right to vote should not be hindered without just cause,"and goes further to state that barriers to the exercise of this right should be removed and citizens encouraged to exercise this right.

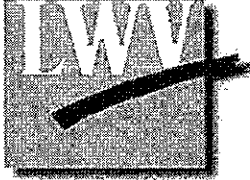
One of the barriers mentioned is the 30-day voter registration requirement. Certain occurrences -- a conversation, something one reads, the appeal from a candidate, interest in a ballot issue -- may make a person realize that he/she needs to vote. But the registration deadline has passed, and here we have a lost opportunity to ingrain in someone the habit of taking part in one of our democracy's citizenship obligations.

The expressed fear of fraud is more of an excuse to disenfranchise a whole group of people. Individual fraud is almost nonexistent, and organized fraud involving individual campaigns and other groups are more easily detected.

With our very low voter participation rate and the poor standing of our public education system, Hawaii suffers from the image of a nonvibrant, backwards society. We need to do everything we can to get our citizens involved in the solution of our problems. If Election Day Registration brings more people to the polls, that would be a good start.

We urge you to pass HB 343. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of this bill.





THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Annie Koh [anniekoh@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 4:22 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** HB 343 testimony  
**Attachments:** HB343testimony.pdf

Please see attached pdf

**HEARING OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, Feb. 10**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Room 325**

**To: House Committee on Judiciary**

**Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Vice Chair Karl Rhoads**

From: Annie Koh

Voter outreach coordinator and Kanu Hawaii member

Re: Election Day Registration bill (HB 343)

In Strong Support

Chairs & Committee Members:

**I strongly support HB 343** based on my experiences as a former voter outreach coordinator with the League of Young Voters and as a volunteer pollworker in Hawaii's November 2, 2010 General Election.

At Washington Middle School in Honolulu, several would-be voters came in ready to discharge their civic duty, photo I.D. and proof of residence in hand, only to find out that somehow they had not made in on the rolls. Citizens patiently waited on lunchroom benches to get word from the Office of Elections whether or not they would be permitted to vote, only to be turned away disappointed. With Hawaii's turnout rates at the bottom of the barrel nationwide, can we really afford to turn away voters?

Last minute "get out the vote" initiatives have proven fruitful in engaging younger voters through text message, Twitter, and other instantaneous methods of communication. Without Election Day Registration, however, we would lose many young citizens who may not have been reached earlier in the year. Some preliminary studies have indicated that Election Day registration can increase young voter turnout as much as 14%.

Let us institute Election Day registration and make our civic duty accessible to all.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Annie Koh  
1650 Kanunu St. #610  
Honolulu, HI 96814

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Shirley Magarifuji [Shirley.Magarifuji@mauicounty.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 4:42 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for House Bill 343  
**Attachments:** HB 343 (2011).pdf

Testifier: Jeffrey T. Kuwada, County Clerk  
County of Maui

Committee: House Committee on Judiciary

Date: February 10, 2011

Measure: HB No. 343 Relating to Voting



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk](http://www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk)

TESTIMONY OF

JEFFREY T. KUWADA, COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF MAUI

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

ON HOUSE BILL NO. 343

RELATING TO VOTING

FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 343. The purpose of this bill is to allow for Election Day voter registration.

The Office of the County Clerk, County of Maui, offers the following comment.

This measure will increase the workload of precinct officials. Presently, precinct officials are tasked with numerous responsibilities, such as making sure the voter is in the proper polling place, providing voters with instructions on how to properly mark their ballot and use the electronic voting system, verifying voter identification, and providing special assistance to voters with respect to non-English minority language ballots, curbside voting, and spoiled ballots. Adding voter registration to their workload may impact our ability to recruit and staff the polling places. I anticipate that additional voting officials and election clerks will be required to staff polling places and election control centers in order to administer Election Day voter registration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 343.

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 5:27 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** dgluck@acluhawaii.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** 2.10.11.pdf

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Daniel Gluck  
Organization: ACLU of Hawaii  
Address: P.O. Box 3410 Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 522-5900  
E-mail: [dgluck@acluhawaii.org](mailto:dgluck@acluhawaii.org)  
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:



Committee: Committee on Judiciary  
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 10, 2011, 2:00 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 325  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of H.B. 343,  
Relating to Voting

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii ("ACLU of Hawaii") writes in support of H.B. 343, Relating to Voting, which allows election day voter registration.

The ACLU of Hawaii applauds this Committee for hearing this bill and recognizing the importance of ensuring that all Hawaii's citizens are able to vote (and reducing the barriers to voting). At least nine other states, plus the District of Columbia, have adopted similar measures, and election-day registration may help to increase voter turnout. As such, we strongly support H.B. 343.

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 45 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Daniel M. Gluck  
Senior Staff Attorney  
ACLU of Hawaii

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801  
T: 808.522-5900  
F: 808.522-5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)



## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 6:17 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** panjoan@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Joan Pan  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 4348 Waiialae Ave. #220 Honolulu, HI 96816  
Phone:  
E-mail: [panjoan@gmail.com](mailto:panjoan@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** Francis Nakamoto [fmnhawaii@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 10:58 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** HB343

Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Hearing Date 2/10/11, Room 325

I support HB343. I speak only for myself on this issue. Having observed first hand the frustrations of enacting election reform in Congress while serving on Congresswoman Mazie Hirono's staff, I am resigned to the fact that reform will come only on the state and county level. Congress is incapable of correcting the deficiencies and inequities of our election policies and it will only be less likely to happen with the change in leadership in the House.

It is therefore imperative that the State take long delayed action to encourage voting, rather than making it difficult for people to exercise their right to vote. HB343 is a small, but necessary step in the right direction. By enabling same day registration, the State will allow citizens, who can't find the time to register under the current requirements, to avoid an extra step to vote. This will go a long way to encourage voting, rather than put up barriers that discourage voting or provide excuses to avoid that responsibility.

Please support HB343.

Mahalo,  
Francis M. Nakamoto  
1829 Ala Noe Place  
Honolulu, HI 96819

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Francis M. Nakamoto  
1829 Ala Noe Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Tel. (808) 833-6357  
Cell (808) 721-4860

## JUDtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 09, 2011 11:58 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** albeeman@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB343 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** Testimony HB343 JUD.doc

Testimony for JUD 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB343

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Albert E Beeman  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 908 Kumukoa St. Hilo, HI 96720  
Phone: 808-895-1813  
E-mail: [albeeman@gmail.com](mailto:albeeman@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

**Testimony on:**           **HB343, Election Day Voter Registration**

**Hearing Date:**           **Thursday, February 11, 2011  2 PM**

**Room:**                   **House Conference Room 325**

**To:**                       **Chairman Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads and  
all JUD Committee Members**

**From:**                   **Albert E. Beeman**  
Private Citizen  
908 Kumukoa Street, Hilo, HI 96720

**Subject:**               **In Favor of HB343**

**Aloha JUD Committee Members,**

**I urge you to vote in favor HB343.**

With only 41% of voters participating in the 2010 general election Hawaii ranked at or near the bottom in US voter turnout we need to make some changes that make it easier for eligible voters to actually vote!

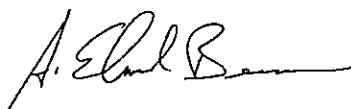
Young voters seem to stay away for voting more than any other age segment. Research shows yhat Election Day Registration can increase young voter participation by up to 14 percent.

Voters also tend to forget to update their address on the Voter Rolls when they move and Election Day Registration will allow these voters to make the necessary changes and go ahead and vote!

We need to join the 9 other states and Washington, DC in allowing Election Day Registration.

Our voter turnout disgraces our state, please implement EDR and help clean up our voting act!

Me ka mahalo (Respectfully),



Albert E. Beeman  
Hilo