



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

League of Women Voters of Hawaii

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House Committee on Judiciary
Representative Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair and Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Monday, April 02, 2012

2:15 PM. Conf. Rm. 325

HR125/HCR161 RELATING TO VOTER PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE

TESTIMONY

Carmille Lim, Voter Services Chair, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

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

Aloha, my name is Carmille Lim, board member and Voter Services Chair of the League of Women Voters of Hawaii, and I thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of our members throughout Hawai'i.

On behalf of the League, I am respectfully submitting my comments in **support** of HR125/HCR161, which requests the Lieutenant Governor to convene a voter participation task force on voter registration and voter turnout in Hawaii.

Hawaii ranks among the bottom of the fifty states in the percentage of registered voters who turn out to vote; we have high hopes that this voter participation task force will examine voter registration behaviors and voting barriers, find ways to encourage citizens to register and vote, and explore voter modernization efforts to potentially improve voter participation.

While we do support this resolution, we'd like to suggest a revision on page 3, section 6: we request an amendment to define "young eligible voters" more clearly, and offer this replacement language instead:

"Two members representing eligible voters ***from ages 18 to 35 to*** be selected by the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii; and..."

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HR125/HCR161.



Hawaii
COMMON CAUSE
Holding Power Accountable

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

Monday 4/2/12 at 2:15PM in Room 325
HCR 161 / HR 125 – Voter Participation Task Force

TESTIMONY

Nikki Love, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

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

Common Cause Hawaii supports HCR 161 and HR 125, which request the Lieutenant Governor to convene a voter participation task force.

We are very concerned about Hawaii's lackluster voter participation. In recent years, Hawaii has consistently ranked at or near the bottom of all 50 states in voter turnout. This has serious implications for our democratic process.

To our knowledge, there has not been a major study or public convening on the topic of voter participation in Hawaii in recent years. A task force would establish a venue for representatives of government, academia, and public interest groups to study the issue, consider possible reforms, and recommend future action.

We ask the Committee to move these resolutions forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Committee: Committee on Judiciary
Hearing Date/Time: Monday, April 2, 2012, 2:15 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 325
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of H.R. 125/ H.C.R. 161

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. R. 125/ H.C.R. 161.

The importance of ensuring that all Hawaii's citizens are able and encouraged to vote cannot be overstated. To promote and protect democracy and ensure that the voices of all Hawaii's citizens are heard, Hawaii should seek ways to reduce the barriers to registration and voting, ensure the integrity of its electoral system and encourage voter turnout.

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,

Laurie A. Temple
Staff Attorney

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Testimony for HR125 on 4/2/2012 2:15:00 PM

Testimony for HR125 on 4/2/2012 2:15:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, March 28, 2012 8:59 AM

To: JUDtestimony

Cc: Jim@JamesHochbergLaw.com

Testimony for JUD 4/2/2012 2:15:00 PM HR125

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: Comments Only

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: James Hochberg, A.A.L.

Organization: Individual

E-mail: Jim@JamesHochbergLaw.com

Submitted on: 3/28/2012

Comments:

Rather than assign appointment authority to current office holders (who may very well be members of the Democratic Party), perhaps it would be better to evenly appoint the members from all the official political parties currently acknowledged for participation in this year's elections. Otherwise the Commission membership will be top heavy with democrats. Democrats have been in control of our politics for so long, the current malaise in the voting public is probably the result of that. Let's not have the fox in the hen house, so to speak.