

SB2051
TESTIMONY



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
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SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

**TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2051
RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION**

February 7, 2012

Chair Hee and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2051. The purpose of this bill is to provide for online voter registration and to make various housekeeping changes to our voter registration laws.

In order to provide another opportunity for the registration of eligible voters, the present bill authorizes applicants to register electronically. This will require the creation of an online voter registration system. Given the technological issues associated with planning and designing such a system, this bill appropriates \$500,000 for fiscal year 2012-2013 for that purpose. The possible need for additional funding for the implementation of the system will be addressed after the planning and design stage.

The bill additionally makes minor housekeeping changes to update our voter registration laws, such as removing the requirement to maintain a separate voter registration list for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, as now all registered voters are eligible to vote for those seats.

Finally, the bill removes the requirement to post a list of all registered voters in each precinct at the polling place. Voters have expressed privacy concerns in the past as the list is required to include the voter's residence address, unless a voter has gone through the process of obtaining confidential status to have the information removed.

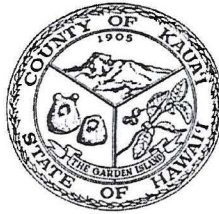
In order to ensure access to the necessary government databases and the expertise associated with those databases, which would be necessary for the planning, designing, and implementing the online voter registration system, we would ask that the Committee consider amending the bill to include the following subsection at the end of Section 1.

“(f) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the examiners of drivers, the attorney general, and any other agency or official, which issues government identification or maintains databases that in the opinion of election officials can be utilized to confirm a prospective voter’s identity, verify the accuracy of the information provided on applications for voter registration, or otherwise ensure the continuing integrity of the voter registration rolls, shall at no cost to the election officials, provide technical assistance and real time access to those databases.”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2051.

RICKY R. WATANABE
County Clerk

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**ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101
LĪHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAI'I 96766-1819

TESTIMONY OF
RICKY R. WATANABE
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2051
RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION
February 7, 2012

Chair Hee and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 2051. The purpose of this bill is to authorize the acceptance of electronic applications to register to vote and to provide the funding required to develop an online voter registration system.

The bill will establish a convenient means for individuals to register to vote which will expedite the voter registration process for both registrants and election officials. Additionally, an online voter registration system will modernize registration methods and perhaps encourage younger eligible voters to register.

Senate Bill No. 2051 also includes minor housekeeping changes to update our voter registration laws to conform to online voter registration, and remove references to obsolete processes and technologies.

Lastly, the bill addresses voter privacy concerns by removing the requirement to post a list of registered voters in each precinct at the polling place.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 2051.

RICKY R. WATANABE
County Clerk



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February 6, 2012

TO: Chair Clayton Hee, Vice Chair Maile Shimabukuro
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2051 RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION

Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii supports electronic voter registration. Making it easier to register is an important step toward increasing voter participation. Especially for younger people, the use of the computer as a means of doing business is now the norm. Many no longer have printers (that would be necessary to print out mail-in voter registration forms). Electronic voter registration greatly streamlines the process, while the potential for fraud appears to be no greater than mail-in voter registration.

Although there are costs associated with implementing an electronic system, other states have found substantial cost savings by using such a system.

We urge your support for SB 2051.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: ndavlantes@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2051 on 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 06, 2012 9:41:25 AM

Testimony for JDL 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM SB2051

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Nancy Davlantes
Organization: Individual
E-mail: ndavlantes@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

I heartily support this effort to modernize voter registration for the 21st century and reduce barriers to voting. Hawaii's voter turnout is among the lowest in the nation, and online voter registration will make the registration process more convenient. And, in this time of budgetary constraints, online registration saves money in the long run by reducing costs of processing paper registration forms.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: brenching@juno.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2051 on 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM
Date: Monday, February 06, 2012 6:57:25 AM

Testimony for JDL 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM SB2051

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brenda Ching
Organization: Individual
E-mail: brenching@juno.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

It's time to modernize voter registration for the 21st century and reduce barriers to voting for all citizens.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: fmnhawaii@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2051 on 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM
Date: Sunday, February 05, 2012 10:23:21 PM

Testimony for JDL 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM SB2051

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Francis Nakamoto
Organization: Individual
E-mail: fmnhawaii@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/5/2012

Comments:

Please support SB2051, which will allow voters to register on-line. At a time when other regressive and politically-partisan state legislatures are reducing voter rights by making it harder to register and to exercise their right to vote, Hawaii is taking a step in the other and correct direction by encouraging voting. SB2051 will help citizens who either have not yet registered or need to re-register, to become voters and exercise their civil duties. We are truly a shining example of democracy in action for the nation to emulate by taking this action, rather than return the country to the shameful historical past of voter suppression and poll-taxes in another form. Mahalo for your progressive action!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: kshishido02@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2051 on 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM
Date: Sunday, February 05, 2012 9:16:00 PM

Testimony for JDL 2/7/2012 10:15:00 AM SB2051

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Karen Shishido
Organization: Individual
E-mail: kshishido02@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/5/2012

Comments:

Dear Chair Hee and Vice Chair Shimabukuro:

I support this effort to modernize voter registration for the 21st century and reduce barriers to voting. Hawaii's voter turnout is among the lowest in the nation, and online voter registration will make the registration process more convenient for voters as well as save taxpayer dollars by streamlining the process for elections staff -- online registration saves money in the long run by reducing costs of processing paper registration forms. Online voter registration has been successfully implemented in Arizona and Washington state. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony.

Sincerely,
Karen Shishido