



# Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

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## LATE TESTIMONY

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

March 19, 2013, 10:05 A.M.  
(Testimony is 1 page long)

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1481 HD2

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawaii Chapter, with over 10,000 dues paying members and supporters statewide, respectfully **supports** HB 1481 HD2. This measure would create a publicly funded election process.

We believe that publicly funded elections help to remove the pressures of raising campaign donations from individuals or companies that seek to influence the behavior of elected officials. While the Sierra Club's mission is to keep Hawaii's environment clean, that mission can't be achieved when special interests financially back Hawaii's lawmakers.

At the state and county levels, it is clear that money influences politics. To avoid impugning any current elected official, this testimony will share an older example. On the November 6, 1997, 10 p.m. broadcast of KHON-2 News it was reported, "Bank of Hawaii's Larry Johnson says his bank powerful political action committee will support the re-election of lawmakers who vote for the task force (*Economic Revitalization Task Force*) recommendations and withhold contributions from those who do not." Such a statement is nothing short of bribery. Hawaii Revised Statutes § 710-1040 defines bribery as follows:

"(a) The person confers, or offers...pecuniary benefit upon a public servant with the intent to influence a public servant's vote, opinion, judgment, exercise of discretion, or other action in the public servant's official capacity."

Such inappropriate influence from campaign donations continues today. Even the perception of impropriety—actions based on campaign donations instead of citizen representation—harms our democratic processes as citizens question decisions and lose interest in the political process. By establishing a public funding process for elections, this measure will help remove pressure on both elected officials to raise funds and individuals and corporations from having to make

donations. We believe it will also increase citizen faith in the democratic process and deliberative decision making.

This measure is consistent with the Sierra Club's principles on campaign finance reform: public financing for campaigns and limits on donations and gifts. Maine, Arizona, Vermont, Massachusetts, North Carolina and New Mexico already use "Voter Owned Elections" for state elections. These laws empower more citizens to run for public office. Candidates no longer need private wealth, nor do they need to rely on campaign funding from often-controversial special interest groups. One study found that legislators, when freed from the need to raise funds privately, said they spent more time with voters, focused more on issues, planned their campaigns earlier and budgeted better.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**hee2 - Kathleen**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 19, 2013 1:49 AM  
**To:** JDLEstimony  
**Cc:** redahi@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/19/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am testifying in support of HB 1481. It would reduce the influence of special interest money so we can achieve a more sustainable and safe Hawai'i.

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**From:** Kae Toguchi [kaetog@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 6:18 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of HB 1481

Hi my name is Ms. Kae Toguchi. I am a member of The Sierra Club. I want you to understand my feed back about the HB 1481 by only thinking about the special interest and not the canadiates. Well, i want you to do it backwards. Well, how do you teach others the right way and do it the wrong way. You see the process is going bad already because i thought the genetically modified food's are going to be changed but they aren't they are getting lacked. Now, using the election committees the process should be the canadiates and the people in Oahu and others too, Not what you want it's about others too. You always go to the process about it first it has to be GMO and than Big OIL. Where is the others in that category?

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*Ms. Kae Toguchi*  
*Participant of Winners at Work DBA Abilities Unlimited*  
*Client of North Shore Mental Health Under Adult Mental Health*  
*Owner of the sibling of HighWayInn Incorporated Taste of Old Hawaii*  
Supporter & Member of American Civil Liberties Union  
Member of American Heart Association  
Member of American Red Cross  
Member of Southern Poverty Law Center  
Member of Equine advocates  
Member of North Shore Animal League  
Member of League for Women Conservation voters  
Member of League for Conservation  
Member of Tiger Haven  
Member of United State Senate  
Member of Tiger Creek  
Member of International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros  
Member of Ocean Conservancy  
Member of Green Peace  
Member of Amnesty International  
Member of In Defense of Animals  
Member of World Wild Life Fund  
Member of Gentle Giants Draft Horse Rescue  
Member of The Cornell Lab of ornithology  
Member of Foundation for International community Assistance (FIN CA)  
Member of National Anti-vivisection  
Member of National Wildlife Federation  
Member of Planned Parent Hood  
Member of Bishop Museum  
Member of Easter Seals Hawaii  
Member of Forest service Employees for environmental Ethics  
Member of Orphan Acres  
Member of Ox fam America

Member of Sierra Club  
Member of Center for Biological Diversity  
Member of AHAHUI MALAMA IKA LOKAHI  
Member of Union Concerned Scientist  
Member of The Smile Train  
Member of Forever of wild exotic animal  
Member of The Wilderness Society  
Member of Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Member of The Hawaiian Humane Society & The Humane Society of The United States  
Member of Rescue Animals  
Member of Save The RedWoods  
Member of Public Citizen  
Member of Adopt a Platoon  
Member of National Geographic  
Member of K-Mart Stores  
Member of F.Y.E. Entertainment  
Member of Food Land( Maikai)  
Member of Hallmark Gold Crown Rewards  
Member of Southern Poverty Law Center  
Member of The Seal of The State of Alaska  
Member of Castle Ton Ranch Horse  
Member of The Fund of Animals  
Member of Ocean Conservancy  
Member of Union of Concerned Scientists  
Member of Foundation for International Community Assistance (FIN-CA)  
Member of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics  
Member of Guiding Eyes for the Blind  
Member of Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine  
Member of PBS Hawaii  
Member of Save The Red Woods  
Member of Chimp Haven  
Member of Tempur-Pedic  
Member of D.E.L.T.A Rescue  
Member of Democratic National Committee  
Member of St.Johns Indian School  
Member & Board Member of The Winning Lions Club  
Member of Aloha Pono Lions Club  
Member of Don't Betray Our Troops  
Member of Democratic Headquarters  
Member of 600 Million Dogs  
Member of Hearst Magazine  
Member of Allure Magazine  
Member of Vanity Fair Magazine  
Member of Family Circle Magazine  
Member of Woman's Day Magazine  
Member of Glamour Magazine  
Member of The Nation Magazine  
Member of United For A Fair Economy  
Member of Project Vote Smart  
Member of Rainforest Alliance  
Member of Corporate Accountability International

Member of Friends Of The Earth

Member of ASPCA

Member of Last Chance For Animals

Member of Government Accountability Project

Member of Credo Act

Member of American For Prosperity Foundation

Member of American Voice Education Fund

Member of Until Everyone Comes Home

Member of Friends Chamber of Commerce

Member of Student Conservation Association

Member of National Association For The Advancement of Colored People

Note: If you have questions please feel free to ask.

hee2 - Kathleen

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**From:** Laureen Elizabeth [laureenelizabeth1@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 6:25 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of HB 1481

**LATE TESTIMONY**

I support HB1481, which would reduce the influence of special interest money!  
Mahalo for your attention!  
Lauréen Elizabeth

**hee2 - Kathleen**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 6:48 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** Alemorrier@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alicia Morrier	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 8:00 PM  
To: JDLTestimony  
Cc: jenniferjangles@gmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013  
Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Ruggles	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, I support HB1481 to create a public funding option for State Senate and House races. We applaud house representatives for passing HB1481 and are counting on you to continue the trend and make this measure successful. There are three main reasons we need to pass HB1418: First, ordinary citizens cannot afford to run for office, (farmers, school teachers, i.e. areas lacking adequate representation). Second, politicians depend on large private contributions to run their campaigns. Third, many people don't bother vote because they have lost faith in the system. Since Arizona's public funding program began in 1998 voter turnout has increased more than 10%. Oftentimes, minority groups have no access to government as a result of not being able to have the money to influence elected officials. According to a report published by Greenlining Institute, publicly funded elections boosts minority candidates and participation. In six years of Arizona's program minority candidates tripled. Una Clarke, elected in New York City, said that the public financing program enabled "a larger number and a more diversified group of persons, both economically and racially, to run an effective campaign and to win." HB1418 levels the playing field between those who have access to large sums of money and those who don't. HB1481 is based on the idea that elections should be decided on the merits of the candidates and their ideas, not their fundraising abilities. As long as someone has good ideas and support from their community they will be able to have a fair chance of running a successful campaign. Public funding also makes sure that the time candidates used to spend on fundraising must now be spent listening to constituents and focusing on issues unique to their district. While 20 out of 30 state senate races were uncontested in 1998 in Arizona, by 2002 only 9 senate races went uncontested. In the current system of privately financed elections it is natural that not paying for elections costs tax payers more in the long run. Sometimes politicians are torn between representing their constituents needs or their main campaign funders. This can be seen through favoritism of campaign donors, political groups involved in contract negotiations, tax breaks, jobs/promotions/pay adjustments, subsidies, grants, non-profit connections, conflicts of interest, bailouts/handouts, etc. that are just now coming to light thanks to the emergence of the internet. The current political system sometimes results in the waste of huge sums of public money in the long run. Publicly funded elections enables politicians to focus on long term health instead of short term needs of the private sector because they cannot owe anyone but the public. When speaking about his experience being publicly funded, New York City elected official Marty Markowitz said: "The campaign financing gave me the freedom of not having to take money from the financial powerhouses in the borough of Brooklyn. It gave me the freedom that I didn't have to enter into any arrangements, whether spoken or expected, in terms of payback if I become elected." As a Big Island resident I have been profoundly pleased of the results of the Public Funding Pilot program here and it has proven to be successful. While strengthening participation in government, HB1418

restores trust in politicians and democracy. In the name of Hawaii's future please give taxpayers the deal of the century and pass this measure. Sincerely,

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 9:14 PM  
**To:** JDLEstimony  
**Cc:** CFRnikki@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikki Love	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Mahalo for hearing this important measure. Please support this bill for publicly funded elections. The overwhelming quantity of money in politics continues to grow, fueling citizens' distrust and cynicism about our democracy. Although much reform is needed at the federal level, publicly funded elections still has great potential to make a real difference at the state and local levels. A comprehensive publicly funded elections program can help improve public trust, reduce the burdens of fundraising, and promote stronger connections between elected officials and their constituents. Please move this measure forward.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 9:18 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** haha@hawaii.rr.com  
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**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
C. Kong	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Private money has negative influence on elected officials and a corrosive effect on government.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 10:51 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** tammui@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tam Mui	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 10:52 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** ti\_health@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tia Kent	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 10:52 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** taterocks@socket.net  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tatiana Rocks	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**hee2 - Kathleen**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 10:52 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** 09jjju@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Julian Jiman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 3:44 PM  
**To:** JDL Testimony  
**Cc:** MSMatson@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
MS Matson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2013 3:07 PM  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Cc:** susan.r002@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1481 on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM\*

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**HB1481**

Submitted on: 3/18/2013

Testimony for JDL on Mar 19, 2013 10:05AM in Conference Room 16

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan & Robert Irvine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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