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STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 25, 2013

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: *for* *IK* Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director
Campaign Spending Commission

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 381, SD 2, HD 1, Relating to Comprehensive Public Funding For Elections**

Wednesday, March 27, 2013
4:45 p.m., Conference Room 308

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission ("Commission") takes no position on this bill, but offers the following comments.

Section 1 of the bill would limit the number of candidates that the Commission certifies to participate in the Pilot Comprehensive Public Funding for Elections to the Hawaii County Council program, or Act 244, to fifteen candidates. The Commission notes that in 2010 and 2012, only eight candidates were funded under Act 244 in each year. The Commission notes that 2014 is the last year for this pilot comprehensive public funding program. Under section 3 of Act 244, in order to run this pilot program in 2014, the Commission must determine if there is a minimum of \$3,500,000 in the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund ("HECF"). As of December 31, 2012, HECF's balance stood at \$3,190,437.02. Without an appropriation, Act 244 will not be implemented in 2014.

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Scott .Y Nishimoto, Vice Chair
The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance
March 25, 2013
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Section 2 of the bill amends the formula for computing the base amount of public funding for the primary and general elections by using the average of the amount spent by the winning candidates in the previous two elections, reduced by ten percent. As section 12 is currently worded, the base amount of public funding is the average of the amount spent by the winning candidate in the two previous elections of the same district, reduced by ten percent. Section 2 would provide certified candidates with the same amount of public funding no matter which district they run in.

To illustrate, under section 12 of Act 244, the base amount of public funding for the 2014 elections will be:

<u>District</u>	<u>Primary Election</u>	<u>General Election</u>
1	\$3,780.49	\$7,260.01
2	\$13,781.48	\$0.00
3	\$12,058.37	\$450.76
4	\$11,366.93	\$2,956.81
5	\$15,764.18	\$1,921.22
6	\$22,310.78	\$15,788.93
7	\$8,292.33	\$266.66
8	\$18,333.09	\$172.97
9	\$12,267.28	\$324.38

If this bill is passed, the base amount of public funding for certified candidates in all districts will be \$13,106.10 for the primary election and \$3,237.97 for the general election, or **\$16,344.07** total, per candidate, for both elections.

Bradley D. Westervelt

31 Mehau Lane, Hilo, HI 96720

808-557-5453 bdw@hawaii.rr.com

March 26, 2013

RE: SB381

Aloha,

As one of the recipients of the Hawaii County public funding pilot program, (B4 Council District 6, 2012) I have a lot of opinions on what is and is not working.

I strongly agree the wide differences in funding available to the various districts is unfair, and needs adjustment, but I strongly believe that making all the districts exactly the same is not the right solution!

The point of the public funding program is to provide an opportunity for regular citizens to participate in serving in elected office. The requirement to collect 200 valid personal checks from registered voters within the district is a very high bar, to start with.

Compare that to getting thousands in campaign contributions from just a few individuals or corporations, and it quickly becomes not worth the effort, especially if the public fund amount for a district is under five or ten thousand.

The pilot program was crafted to run for three years as a test. The changes proposed by SB381 represent major changes well beyond the intent of the County Council's original authorship. Leveling the compensation amount for every district will undermine the intent to provide equalizing funding for new candidates in a subsequent election in a district that had major spending previously. In other words, the intent was to have public funds available to compete with private sector and special interest backed candidates.

I'd like to see the program amended to have a higher minimum compensation available to candidates in districts that have gone uncontested, but capping the amount to same for every district is short sighted, and guts the original purpose.

Sincerely,

Bradley Westervelt
Pilot Program recipient 2012
Legislative Aide, Hawaii County Council District 6, 2008-2010

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 7:34 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: sgd8@hawaiiintel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB381 on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM

SB381

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Dursin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Dear Chairman Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance: I am writing to you in strong support of SB381. Having worked over the years for the passage and implementation of the Big Island Comprehensive Candidate Funding Pilot Project, I can assure you that both candidates and voters view the project very favorably. However, there has been one problem: the lack of equitable funding for all nine council districts. We have heard considerable public criticism of the present funding formula. Moreover, candidates themselves have voiced objections. As a member of the Hawai'i County League of Women Voters, I participated in a follow-up of the 2012 pilot program. All candidates who qualified for the funding were interviewed. Without exception, they said that funding should be the same for every district. SB381 ensures equal funding. This bill also appropriates money to the Campaign Spending Commission. In order to do their very important job, they need adequate funding. Please support this bill. Thank you for taking my comments.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [FINTestimony](#)
Cc: pohaku@ilhawaii.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB381 on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM*
Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 11:52:03 AM

SB381

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia Gillette-Wenner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 2:42 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: pc70@cornell.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB381 on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM

SB381

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Callahan	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Make equal funding for all candidates!

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FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 2:41 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: pc70@cornell.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB381 on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM

SB381

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PATRICK CALLAHAN	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Equal funding for all candidates!

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SB381

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 27, 2013 16:45PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Drake	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I interviewed some of the candidates who used public funding in Hawaii County. I support this bill.

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