

HB2533

HD2



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwvhawaii.com

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 10:00 am
Conference Room 016
HB2533, HD2 RELATING TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE

TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro for the League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Hee, Vice-Chair Shimabukuro, Members of the Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports the intent of HB 2533, HD2 which would amend Hawai'i's campaign finance law to provide public funding for elections to the state House of Representatives, subject to qualifying collection of signatures and donations, and to other requirements.

Following recent SCOTUS rulings, particularly the *Citizen's United* decision allowing unlimited independent expenditures supporting candidates for election, Hawai'i like other states has experienced troubling increases in expenditures to influence voters' perception of candidates. I'm sure it did not escape your attention that a lot of money spent in the last election in Hawaii came from out of state, and also that wealthy individuals and "independent" committees made some eye-popping expenditures. We are not convinced that these expenditures were primarily motivated by the public interest of citizens of Hawaii as a whole.

Large private expenditures on elections also raise the cost of campaigning, threatening to prevent the election of ordinary citizens and requiring sitting legislators to spend excessive time and energy fund-raising for their next election rather than attending to the peoples' business.

Public funding has been recognized by the State of Hawaii (as well as a long-standing and well-supported position of the League of Women Voters), as a preferable way to pay for elections. That's why we have a tax check-off to support public funding of elections.



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwvhawaii.com

The League takes no position on Sections 4 and 5 which define maximum public funding for specific offices (Mayor, Governor etc.) because we have not studied this adequately to form an opinion.

The League wishes to call attention to the admirable performance of the Campaign Spending Commission in implementing the previous pilot of public funding for Hawaii County Council elections. We are happy to see that Section 9 of HB 2533 provides for extra funding for the additional responsibilities and costs which the Commission office (as well as County Election offices) will incur under this legislation. The CSC has shown innovative and responsible management of its duties; it deserves a guarantee of adequate and stable funding for its important work in supporting democratic elections.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



HAWAII

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS

John Bickel, President
Barbara Polk, Vice-President
Fritz Fritschel, Treasurer
Chuck Huxel, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Guy Archer
Juliet Begley
Josh Frost
Karin Gill

Brien Hallett
Jan Lubin
Stephen O'Harrow
Jim Olson

George Simson
Bart Dame (Alt)
Marsha Schweitzer (Alt)

MAILING ADDRESS

PO. Box23404
Honolulu
Hawai'i 96823

March 17, 2014

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

FROM: John Bickel, President
Americans for Democratic Action/Hawai'i

RE: Support and Comments on HB 2533 HD 2 Relating to Campaign Finance

Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii supports HB 2533 HD 2. For over a half century, Americans for Democratic Action has been advocating for public policies to pursue social justice. Much of the public is cynical about government however. A good deal of that cynicism is the perception that money is corrupting public policy. After the *Citizens United* decision came down from the Supreme Court, a Washington Post-ABC News poll showed 76 percent of Republicans and 85 percent of Democrats opposed the ruling. The opposition to the corrupting influence of money in politics is bipartisan. A nice step forward would be passing HB 2533 to provide public funding for state representative elections. That would indeed go far to restoring public confidence in good elected officials such as yourselves. The bill also has an important feature in improving the financing of the Campaign Spending Commission. I thank you for your attention to this bill and for your favorable consideration.



Senate Judiciary & Labor Committee
Chair Clayton Hee, Vice Chair Maile Shimabukuro

Tuesday 03/18/2014 at 10:00AM in Room 016
HB2533HD2 - Relating to Campaign Finance
Public Funding for Election Candidates

TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT
Carmille Lim, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and members of the Committee:

Common Cause Hawaii supports the HB2533 HD2, which would create a public funding program of candidates for the offices of state representative.

According to a 2005 AARP survey, 86% of voting age residents in Hawaii think campaign contributions moderately or greatly influence policies supported by elected officials. The survey goes on to state: Realizing that politicians have to raise money for their election campaigns, almost half of all Hawai'i residents strongly agree, and over one-third somewhat agree, they become obligated to the people who contributed money to their campaign. ⁽¹⁾

Similar programs are in use in Arizona, Connecticut, and Maine and in a number of localities scattered across the country. An increasing number of Hawaii residents are familiar with this system's success in other states. Given their growing awareness of, and disappointment in money's influence in politics, Hawaii residents are becoming more vocal in their support of a publicly funded election system. Among the many "good government" issues Common Cause advocates for, Publicly Funded Elections has resonated longest with our 4,000 members and supporters.

The heart of Common Cause's mission is to create a robust democracy by and responsive to an engaged public. We believe that implementing a public funding option would significantly reduce the perception of pay-to-play politics and by increasing competition, can reengage the citizenry in the democratic process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2533.

(1) AARP, "Campaign Finance Reform in Hawai'i: A Survey of Residents 18+" 2005.
<http://www.voterownedhawaii.org/uploads/AARPSurvey.pdf>

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: jemray@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2533 on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM
Date: Sunday, March 16, 2014 4:29:22 AM

HB2533

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for JDL on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jan Murray	Individual	Support	No

Comments: We support public funding of Elections. Preserving people's rights and freedoms is the will of the people. Thank you.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: mh@interpac.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2533 on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM
Date: Sunday, March 16, 2014 6:46:51 PM

HB2533

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for JDL on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Hello legislators, Wouldn't it be great if no one could ever claim your vote was swayed by donations to your campaign? We've had AWESOME County Council members who only were able to run because of public funding. mahalo, Cory Harden, Hilo

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: coreen.williams@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2533 on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM
Date: Monday, March 17, 2014 5:11:59 AM

HB2533

Submitted on: 3/17/2014

Testimony for JDL on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Coreen Williams	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I OPPOSE this bill. The tax payer should not be compelled to pay for a politician's campaign. The tax payer may have to pay for a politician that they normally do not agree with. This is a terrible use of tax payer's dollars.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: juggler@aloha.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2533 on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM*
Date: Sunday, March 16, 2014 6:53:19 AM

HB2533

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for JDL on Mar 18, 2014 10:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Graham Ellis	Individual	Support	No

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov