

Honolulu, Hawaii
February 18, 2016

RE: H.B. No. 1653
H.D. 1

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2016
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred H.B. No. 1653 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to adopt elections by mail for the entire State by expanding the procedures used for absentee voting to transition all voters to permanent absentee status by 2022. The transition to all mail elections will occur incrementally as follows: the County of Kauai in 2018; the County of Hawaii and County of Maui in 2020; and all counties in 2022.

The Office of Elections, Maui Office of the County Clerk, Kauai Office of the County Clerk, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Common Cause Hawaii, The League of Women Voters of Hawaii, and two concerned individuals testified in support of this measure. The Honolulu Office of the City Clerk provided comments.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Providing a means for the voter to correct an error or discrepancy with the signature on the return envelope of the ballot;
- (2) Requiring a person who registers to vote to acknowledge that providing false information is a class C felony;



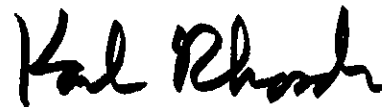
- (3) Repealing the Election Day state holiday, effective January 1, 2022; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, style, and consistency.

Your Committee finds that increased citizen participation in the electoral process is a crucial component of maintaining a successful democracy. This measure would reduce hurdles for voter participation by allowing the convenience of voting by mail.

The elimination of the Election Day state holiday is not intended to impact any collective bargaining agreements.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1653, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1653, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



