

Legislative Testimony

SB150 SD1
RELATING TO VOTING
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 27, 2015

10:05 a.m.

Room 211

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following **COMMENTS** on SB150 SD1, which would reduce barriers to voting, and could increase voter participation, by requiring registrants for a driver's license or state-issued identification card to more actively consider registering to vote and affirmatively decline if they so choose.

It is well known that Hawai'i has historically suffered from low voter turnout. Hawai'i consistently ranks lower than the national average for voter participation among those eligible to vote in the presidential election.¹ In response to historical data also reflecting the underrepresentation of Native Hawaiians in the polls, during the past two election seasons OHA has implemented a "Hawaiian Voice, Hawaiian Vote: I Mana Ka Leo" campaign to increase Native Hawaiian voter registration, education, and turnout. In line with our efforts, OHA generally supports the reduction of barriers to the complex system of voter registration, voter education, and election day polls.

Although Hawai'i's electorate may grow if every citizen is asked to affirmatively decide whether to register when they apply for a driver's license or state-issued identification card, we recognize that consistency with federal law is of paramount importance and the logistics of implementation can be complex and costly. Therefore, on these matters, we defer to the Attorney General's Office, Office of Elections, and County Clerks' Offices.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

¹ Editorial Board, *The Worst Voter Turnout in 72 Years*, THE NEW YORK TIMES, Nov. 11, 2014, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/12/opinion/the-worst-voter-turnout-in-72-years.html>.



**STATE OF HAWAII
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SCOTT T. NAGO
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TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
AND
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON SENATE BILL NO. 150, SD 1
RELATING TO VOTING

February 27, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaran and Chair Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 150, SD 1. The purpose of this bill is to require an applicant for a driver license or civil identification cards to explicitly choose to register to vote or not, before their application will be processed.

The Office of Elections believes that this bill will increase voter registration as it will require applicants to directly address the question of whether they wish to register to vote and that most applicants when given this option will choose to participate in our electoral system.

It is our understanding that currently, the examiner of drivers' electronic database does not include whether an applicant has also applied to register to vote. We propose the following language that would authorize the electronic transmission and accessibility of voter registration applications associated with the examiner of drivers in order to streamline procedures.

SECTION __. Chapter 11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

§11- Electronic Accessibility of Voter Registration

Applications Associated with the Examiner of Drivers. (a) The examiner of drivers of each county shall ensure that the contents of the affidavit on application for voter registration provided by applicants in conjunction with their driver license and civil identification card application are electronically stored in their databases.

(b) The examiner of drivers of each county shall provide the respective county clerk with the voter registration information set forth in the affidavit on application for voter registration electronically. This information shall include a digital copy of the applicant's signature.

(c) Upon receipt of the electronic information, the county clerk shall treat it as constituting an application to register under section 11-15.

(d) Databases maintained by the counties and the state department of transportation containing driver license and civil identification card information shall be electronically accessible by the statewide voter registration system, so as to permit the timely processing of voter registration applications made in conjunction with driver license and civil identification cards, to facilitate verification of information provided by online voter registration applicants under section 11-15.3, and to otherwise ensure the integrity of the voter registration rolls.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 150,
SD 1.

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TESTIMONY OF JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
AND SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON SENATE BILL NO. 150, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO VOTING
February 27, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaran and Chair Tokuda, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 150, SD 1. This Bill would require applicants for a driver license or civil identification card to explicitly choose to register to vote or not, before their application is processed.

We support this Bill since it will likely increase voter registration and request that the Legislature consider establishing an electronic means for the examiner of drivers to transmit voter registration information and a digital copy of an applicant's signature to the respective county clerk.

The electronic transmittal of voter information would streamline and modernize a process in dire need of improvement, and also allow our office to efficiently accommodate any potential increases in the volume of voter registrants transmitted from the office of the examiner of drivers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 150.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
Deputy County Clerk

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB150 on Feb 27, 2015 10:05AM*
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 12:27:54 PM

SB150

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for JDL/WAM on Feb 27, 2015 10:05AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB150 on Feb 27, 2015 10:05AM*
Date: Thursday, February 26, 2015 10:39:26 AM

SB150

Submitted on: 2/26/2015

Testimony for JDL/WAM on Feb 27, 2015 10:05AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shawna L. Kaanaana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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