



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE  
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
[www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://www.hawaii.gov/elections)

SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 442  
RELATING TO PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOTS

February 4, 2015

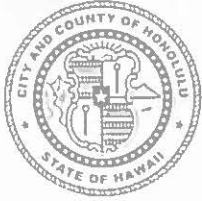
Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support on Senate Bill No. 442. The purpose of this bill is to require that the forwarding address for a permanent absentee mail voter be the mailing address contained in the voter's registration record.

Currently, a voter may request an absentee mail ballot for a particular election, or permanently. Specifically, we have a seasonal application that permits a voter to request a mail ballot be forwarded to an address for the Primary Election, General Election, or both. The permanent absentee application requires a voter to provide a permanent forwarding address for all future ballots.

The seasonal form is meant for students who are away at school, members of the military deployed out-of-state, or any other person who will simply be out-of-the state at the time of the election. These individuals will only be out-of-the state temporarily and have the intent to return. This is consistent with our voter registration laws regarding in-state residency that speak of a voter having the intention to return to one's residence, when the person is absent. HRS § 11-13. The permanent absentee form is for residents who prefer the convenience of receiving their ballot at home.

Unfortunately, some voters are now listing an out-of-state address as their permanent forwarding address. While we understand that a voter may envision that they will be out of the state for an extended period of time, it is inconsistent with the concept of in-state residency to declare that one will be permanently out-of-state. Such individuals should be utilizing the seasonal application each election cycle.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 442.



## OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 100  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3077  
TELEPHONE:(808)768-3810 • FAX:(808)768-3835

**GLEN TAKAHASHI**  
ACTING CITY CLERK

### **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

TESTIMONY OF GLEN TAKAHASHI  
ACTING CITY CLERK, CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 442  
RELATING TO PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOTS

February 3, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaron and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We support the intent of this bill to help preserve the permanent absentee status of a registered voter by synchronizing the ballot forwarding address with the voter's registration mailing address. We feel if the ballot forwarding address were limited to the county in which the voter is registered, it would better support the integrity of the permanent absentee voter list.

We would like to propose for your consideration a conforming amendment to HRS § 11-15 (a) (4) as follows:

(4) Residence, including mailing address within the county;

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 442.

DANNY A. MATEO  
County Clerk



JOSIAH K. NISHITA  
Deputy County Clerk

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk](http://www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk)

TESTIMONY OF DANNY A. MATEO  
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF MAUI  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 442  
RELATING TO PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOTS  
FEBRUARY 4, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on Senate Bill No. 442. The purpose of this bill is to specify the mailing address in a voter's registration record as the forwarding address for receiving absentee ballots permanently. Also, this bill requires voters seeking a permanent absentee ballot with a different forwarding address to re-apply for an absentee ballot.

The Office of the County Clerk, County of Maui, supports Senate Bill No. 442.

The purpose of the permanent absentee application is to allow voters to remain on the absentee mail list for each election without having to re-apply every year, provided they follow certain conditions. However, we found that voters were updating their voter registration information, but not their permanent absentee record.

Allowing permanent absentee voters to have their ballot mailed to the mailing address on their most recently completed affidavit on application for voter registration will ensure that their permanent absentee record is also updated and reduce the number of undeliverable absentee mail ballots.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 442.

**RICKY R. WATANABE**  
County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4800  
TTY: (808) 241-5116



**JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA**  
Deputy County Clerk

Facsimile: (808) 241-6207  
E-mail: elections@kauai.gov

**ELECTIONS DIVISION**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**  
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101  
LĪHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAI'I 96766-1819

**TESTIMONY OF RICKY R. WATANABE**  
**COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I**  
**TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR**  
**ON SENATE BILL NO. 442**  
**RELATING TO PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOTS**  
February 4, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 442. This Bill specifies the mailing address in a voter's registration record as the forwarding address for receiving absentee ballots permanently and requires voters seeking to have permanent absentee ballots forwarded to another address to re-apply for an absentee ballot.

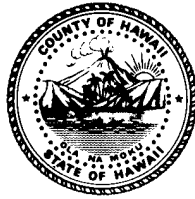
Currently, permanent absentee ballot (PAB) voters are required to maintain separate addresses for their voter registration and PAB records within the statewide voter registration system. While cumbersome, this process is necessary due to the current provision in law which allows a PAB voter to have their absentee ballots permanently mailed to a different address.

While most PAB voters are fairly good at keeping their voter registration information current, a significant number of them fail to also maintain updated ballot forwarding addresses in their PAB records so the U.S. Postal Service cannot deliver their ballots and are forced to return them to the county clerks. Returned PAB ballots trigger a very time-consuming follow-up process which prevents the timely delivery of a PAB voter's ballot.

If approved, this Bill will resolve the aforementioned issues because a PAB voter's ballot forwarding address will be automatically updated during the voter reregistration process. PAB voter's needing ballots temporarily mailed to a different address can still do so via a "seasonal" absentee ballot application submitted prior to each election.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 442.

STEWART MAEDA  
*County Clerk*



JON HENRICKS  
*Deputy County Clerk*

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

**Elections Division**  
*County of Hawai'i*  
*Hawai'i County Building*  
*25 Aupuni Street*  
*Hilo, Hawai'i 96720*

TESTIMONY OF STEWART MAEDA

COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF HAWAII

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

ON SENATE BILL NO. 442

RELATING TO PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOTS

FEBRUARY 4, 2015

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 442. The purpose of this bill specifies the mailing address in a voter's registration record as the forwarding address for receiving absentee ballots permanently. This bill also, requires voters seeking to have permanent absentee ballots forwarded to another address to re-apply for an absentee ballot.

The office of the County Clerk, County of Hawai'i, supports Senate Bill No. 442.

The purpose of the permanent absentee application is to allow voters to remain on the absentee mail list without having to reapply every election year. Presently a permanent absentee voter is required to maintain current information in two separate records, a voter registration record and a permanent absentee record. Permanent absentee ballots are mailed to the mailing address on the permanent absentee record.

However, we have found that permanent absentee voters will update their voter registration record but not their permanent absentee record. In this situation, the absentee ballots are being returned to the elections office by the Postal Service as undeliverable.

Senate Bill No. 442 will allow permanent absentee voters to have their ballot mailed to the mailing address on their most recently completed voter registration affidavit. This would significantly improve and simplify the application and re-application process for the permanent absentee voter.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 442.





49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
[www.lwv-hawaii.com](http://www.lwv-hawaii.com) | 808.531.7448 | [voters@lwvhawaii.com](mailto:voters@lwvhawaii.com)

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 9:00 a.m., Conference Room 016  
SB 442 RELATING TO ELECTIONS  
TESTIMONY

Susan Irvine, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabakuro and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB 442 that specifies the mailing address in a voter's registration record as the forwarding address for receiving absentee ballots permanently and that requires voters seeking to have permanent absentee ballots forwarded to another address to re-apply for an absentee ballot.**

The League supports this bill, which has been introduced by the Office of Elections and is supported by County Clerks in their testimony on companion bill, HB 179. As Chief Elections Officer, Scott Nago, said in his testimony supporting the house bill, "The permanent absentee form is meant to be used by residents who no longer want to go to the polls and would prefer the convenience of receiving their ballot at home. ...some voters are now listing an out-of- state address as their permanent forwarding address. ...it is inconsistent with the concept of in-state residency to essentially declare that one will be permanently out-of-state." The League of Women Voters agrees. Permanent absentee addresses need to be in the State of Hawaii. If one is temporarily out-of-state, one can apply for a seasonal absentee ballot for an election or election cycle.

According to testimony from our County Clerks, this bill will relieve them of time-consuming problems with returned permanent absentee ballots.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 442.