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**STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**

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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 2, 2015

TO: The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 452, Relating to Campaign Spending**

Wednesday, February 4, 2015
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 016

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission ("Commission") strongly supports this bill.

This bill amends HRS §11-334(a)(4), to more clearly align the law with present practice. Presently, every candidate files the Supplemental Report that is due on January 31st every year and not just on January 31st after an election year. That is, every elected state and county official as well as all candidate committees who are registered with the Commission, have filed the Supplemental Report that was due on January 31st in an election year (e.g., January 31, 2012 and January 31, 2014). This bill would simply align the law with present practice by deleting "after an election year" from the statutory provision and provide that the Supplemental Report is due on January 31 of each year. If this amendment is not passed, the Commission will not be able to enforce the filing of the January Supplemental Report in an election year leaving a one-year gap (July 31st of a nonelection year to sometime in July of an election year) in reporting by candidate committees. This bill does not require an additional or new report.

In the 2013 session, the Legislature passed S.B. No. 31 that was signed into law as Act 111. That measure amended HRS §11-336(d), which made the same amendment we seek in this bill to noncandidate committees. The Commission now asks that the same be done for the Supplemental Report due on January 31 for candidate committees regardless of whether it is after an election year.

This measure has a companion bill, H.B. No. 175.



House Judiciary Committee
Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Maile Shimabukuro

Wednesday 02/04/2015 at 9:00 AM in Room 016
SB452 Relating to Campaign Spending

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

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and members of the Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee:

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB452, which we see as a “housekeeping” bill. SB452 would correct a problem caused by a change in the reporting section of the campaign spending statutes. Originally, candidates and candidate committees were required to file supplementary reports by January 31 of each year and by July 31 after an election year. This resulted in a report being filed approximately every 6 months between elections, since the next required report is just prior to the next primary election.

Apparently there was an attempt to make the statements parallel by requiring the January report only following an election year. This change has had the unintended consequence of requiring no report for approximately a year—from July 31 in the year following an election until 30 days before the primary election the next year. This period of time is often a very active one for fund-raising leading up to the next election.

Common Cause Hawaii is especially concerned with transparency in government. We believe that a year gap in reporting campaign finances—by incumbents and candidates who plan to run for office again—is not in the public interest. For that reason, we urge you to pass SB452.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB452.