

HB 290

RELATING TO ETHICS

LAB, JUD

HB290



Submit Testimony

Measure Title: RELATING TO ETHICS.

Report Title: State Ethics Commission Package; Government; Ethics; Lobbyists

Description: Clarifies the powers and duties of the state ethics commission; increases fines for ethics violations. Restores protection for legislators when carrying out a legislative function. Clarifies what is an expenditure for lobbyists and what is considered lobbying. Amends requirements for filing statements of expenditures.

Companion:

Package: State Ethics Commission

Current Referral: LAB, JUD

Introducer(s): SOUKI (Introduced by request of another party)

| <u>Sort by Date</u> | | Status Text |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 1/20/2017 | H | Pending introduction. |
| 1/23/2017 | H | Pass First Reading |
| 1/23/2017 | H | Referred to LAB, JUD, referral sheet 2 |
| 2/3/2017 | H | Bill scheduled to be heard by LAB on Tuesday, 02-07-17 11:00AM in House conference room 309. |

S = Senate | **H** = House | **D** = Data Systems | **\$** = Appropriation measure | **ConAm** = Constitutional Amendment
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A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ETHICS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The legislature finds that maintaining the
2 public's trust in government officials is vital to the strength
3 of our democracy. As article XIV of the state constitution
4 proclaims, "The people of Hawaii believe that public officers
5 and employees must exhibit the highest standards of ethical
6 conduct and that these standards come from the personal
7 integrity of each individual in government." While some of our
8 sister states have been rocked by corruption scandals in recent
9 years--caused by poor ethics laws, inadequate enforcement of
10 those laws, or both--Hawaii takes pride in its strong ethics
11 laws, and the commitment of more than 50,000 state employees who
12 demonstrate the ideals of public service every day.

13 (b) The legislature recognizes the importance of ethics
14 education and advice in preventing ethics violations. This Act
15 will clarify existing statutes to enable the ethics commission
16 and its staff to better educate and advise state employees,



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1 legislators, lobbyists, and the public. This Act is based on
2 the following findings:

3 (1) A recent statutory change designed to clarify the
4 application of the ethics code to task force members
5 had the unintended effect of changing the law with
6 respect to legislators as well. This Act restores
7 earlier language that protects legislators when
8 carrying out a "legislative function";

9 (2) Hawaii's lobbyist law, chapter 97, Hawaii Revised
10 Statutes, is both under- and over-inclusive. Amending
11 the definitions of "lobbying" and "lobbyist" will
12 provide additional transparency to the public while
13 relieving some individuals (specifically, certain
14 representatives of charitable, nonprofit
15 organizations) from having to register as lobbyists.
16 Similarly, several provisions of the lobbyists law can
17 be streamlined to avoid unnecessary paperwork and to
18 remove obsolete provisions that pertain to criminal
19 penalties that no longer exist;



1 (3) Various fines for violations have not been increased
2 since they were first authorized. The following are
3 examples:

4 (A) The current maximum penalty that the ethics
5 commission can impose for a violation of the
6 ethics code is \$500 per violation. This penalty
7 amount has not been adjusted since being set by
8 the legislature in 1992. Adjusted for inflation,
9 an equivalent penalty would be approximately \$857
10 in 2016 dollars. The legislature believes that
11 the current statutory penalty should be increased
12 to \$1,000;

13 (B) The maximum penalty for violating chapter 97,
14 Hawaii Revised Statutes, regulating lobbyists has
15 remained at \$500 since 1995. This Act increases
16 the fine to \$1,000 to account for inflation;

17 (C) The fine for legislators, employees, and board or
18 commission members for failing to file a
19 financial disclosure report on time was set in
20 1995 at \$50. An equivalent fine would be
21 approximately \$80 in 2016 dollars. This Act



1 increases the fine to \$75 to account for
2 inflation; and

3 (D) The fine for candidates for state elective office
4 for failing to timely file a financial disclosure
5 report was set in 1995 at \$25. An equivalent
6 fine would be approximately \$40 in 2016 dollars.
7 This Act increases the fine to \$50 to account for
8 inflation; and

9 (4) The expense of sending letters by registered mail,
10 return receipt requested, to those who fail to file
11 their financial disclosures on time is no longer
12 justified. In 2016, the ethics commission sent nearly
13 one hundred letters, each letter costing \$14.87 in
14 postage. The commissions spent over \$1,000 in postage
15 for a communication that could have been sent to
16 users' state e-mail accounts or by first-class mail.

17 (c) The purpose of this Act is to provide additional
18 clarity and consistency in the administration and enforcement of
19 Hawaii's ethics laws, and to promote integrity in state
20 government, by:



- 1 (1) Clarifying the procedures used by the state ethics
2 commission and its staff for providing advice on
3 ethics issues; educating employees, legislators,
4 lobbyists, and the general public; collecting and
5 publishing information from public employees,
6 candidates, and lobbyists; and resolving
7 investigations;
- 8 (2) Restoring previous statutory language protecting
9 legislators when carrying out a "legislative
10 function";
- 11 (3) Clarifying the fair treatment and conflict of interest
12 law with respect to task force members and legislators
13 by restoring previous statutory language regarding a
14 legislator's "legislative function" and requiring the
15 ethics commission to adopt rules regarding disclosures
16 for task force members;
- 17 (4) Increasing the maximum penalties that the commission
18 may impose and increasing the threshold for filing
19 lobbying expenditure reports and registering as a
20 lobbyist to account for inflation;



- 1 (5) Allowing the commission to notify individuals who fail
2 to file their financial disclosures by the statutory
3 deadline by e-mail or first-class mail, or both,
4 rather than by registered mail, return receipt
5 requested;
- 6 (6) Removing the mens rea requirement to prove a violation
7 of chapter 97, Hawaii Revised Statutes, recognizing
8 that the failure to file a report required by chapter
9 97, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is no longer a criminal
10 offense;
- 11 (7) Clarifying the definition of "lobbying" to promote
12 transparency in the legislative process;
- 13 (8) Granting the employer of a lobbyist the ability to
14 terminate a registered lobbyist, in the event that a
15 lobbyist does not terminate oneself; and
- 16 (9) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the
17 purposes of clarity and consistency.

18 SECTION 2. Section 28-8.3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended as follows:

- 20 1. By amending subsection (a) to read:



1 "(a) No department of the State other than the attorney
2 general may employ or retain any attorney, by contract or
3 otherwise, for the purpose of representing the State or the
4 department in any litigation, rendering legal counsel to the
5 department, or drafting legal documents for the department;
6 provided that the foregoing provision shall not apply to the
7 employment or retention of attorneys:

8 (1) By the public utilities commission, the labor and
9 industrial relations appeals board, and the Hawaii
10 labor relations board;

11 (2) By any court or judicial or legislative office of the
12 State; provided that if the attorney general is
13 requested to provide representation to a court or
14 judicial office by the chief justice or the chief
15 justice's designee, or to a legislative office by the
16 speaker of the house of representatives and the
17 president of the senate jointly, and the attorney
18 general declines to provide [~~such~~] the representation
19 on the grounds of conflict of interest, the attorney
20 general shall retain an attorney for the court,



- 1 judicial, or legislative office, subject to approval
2 by the court, judicial, or legislative office;
- 3 (3) By the legislative reference bureau;
- 4 (4) By any compilation commission that may be constituted
5 from time to time;
- 6 (5) By the real estate commission for any action involving
7 the real estate recovery fund;
- 8 (6) By the contractors license board for any action
9 involving the contractors recovery fund;
- 10 (7) By the office of Hawaiian affairs;
- 11 (8) By the department of commerce and consumer affairs for
12 the enforcement of violations of chapters 480 and
13 485A;
- 14 (9) As grand jury counsel;
- 15 (10) By the Hawaii health systems corporation, or its
16 regional system boards, or any of their facilities;
- 17 (11) By the auditor;
- 18 (12) By the office of ombudsman;
- 19 (13) By the insurance division;
- 20 (14) By the University of Hawaii;
- 21 (15) By the Kahoolawe island reserve commission;



- 1 (16) By the division of consumer advocacy;
- 2 (17) By the office of elections;
- 3 (18) By the campaign spending commission;
- 4 (19) By the Hawaii tourism authority, as provided in
- 5 section 201B-2.5;
- 6 (20) By the division of financial institutions for any
- 7 action involving the mortgage loan recovery fund;
- 8 (21) By the office of information practices; [~~or~~]
- 9 (22) By the state ethics commission; or
- 10 (23) By a department, if the attorney general, for reasons
- 11 deemed by the attorney general to be good and
- 12 sufficient, declines to employ or retain an attorney
- 13 for a department; provided that the governor waives
- 14 the provision of this section."

15 2. By amending subsection (c) to read:

16 "(c) Every attorney employed by any department on a full-

17 time basis, except an attorney employed by the public utilities

18 commission, the labor and industrial relations appeals board,

19 the Hawaii labor relations board, the office of Hawaiian

20 affairs, the Hawaii health systems corporation or its regional

21 system boards, the department of commerce and consumer affairs



1 in prosecution of consumer complaints, insurance division, the
2 division of consumer advocacy, the University of Hawaii, the
3 Hawaii tourism authority as provided in section 201B-2.5, the
4 office of information practices, the state ethics commission, or
5 as grand jury counsel, shall be a deputy attorney general."

6 SECTION 3. Section 84-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 "**§84-13 Fair treatment.** (a) No legislator or employee
9 shall use or attempt to use the legislator's or employee's
10 official position to secure or grant unwarranted privileges,
11 exemptions, advantages, contracts, or treatment, for oneself or
12 others; including but not limited to the following:

13 (1) Seeking other employment or contract for services for
14 oneself by the use or attempted use of the
15 legislator's or employee's office or position~~(-)~~i

16 (2) Accepting, receiving, or soliciting compensation or
17 other consideration for the performance of the
18 legislator's or employee's official duties or
19 responsibilities except as provided by law~~(-)~~i

20 (3) Using state time, equipment or other facilities for
21 private business purposes~~(-)~~i or



1 (4) Soliciting, selling, or otherwise engaging in a
2 substantial financial transaction with a subordinate
3 or a person or business whom the legislator or
4 employee inspects or supervises in the legislator's or
5 employee's official capacity.

6 **(b)** Nothing [~~herein~~] in this section shall be construed to
7 prohibit a legislator from introducing bills and resolutions,
8 [~~or to prevent a person from serving on a task force or~~] from
9 serving on [~~a task force committee,~~] committees, or from making
10 statements or taking [~~official~~] action [~~as a legislator, or a~~
11 ~~task force member or a task force member's designee or~~
12 ~~representative.~~] in the exercise of the legislator's legislative
13 functions. Every legislator[, ~~or task force member or designee~~
14 ~~or representative of a task force member~~] shall [~~file a full and~~
15 ~~complete public disclosure of~~] publicly disclose the nature and
16 extent of the interest or transaction [~~which~~] that the
17 legislator [~~or task force member or task force member's designee~~
18 ~~or representative~~] believes may be affected by [~~the legislator's~~
19 ~~or task force member's official action.~~] legislative action.
20 The state ethics commission shall establish rules to provide for
21 this public disclosure.



1 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent
2 a person from serving on a task force or a task force committee,
3 or from making statements or taking official action as a task
4 force member or a task force member's designee or
5 representative. Every task force member or task force member's
6 designee or representative shall publicly disclose the nature
7 and extent of any interest or transaction which the task force
8 member or task force member's designee or representative
9 believes may be affected by the task force member's official
10 action. The state ethics commission shall establish rules to
11 provide for this public disclosure."

12 SECTION 4. Section 84-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

14 "~~(f) [Subsections (a), (b), and (d) shall not apply to a~~
15 ~~task force member or the designee or representative of that task~~
16 ~~force member whose service as a task force member would not~~
17 ~~otherwise cause that member, designee, or representative to be~~
18 ~~considered an employee, if the task force member or the designee~~
19 ~~or representative of that task force member complies with the~~
20 ~~disclosure requirements under section 84-17.]~~ Nothing in this
21 section shall be construed to prevent a person from serving on a



1 task force or a task force committee, or from making statements
2 or taking official action as a task force member or a task force
3 member's designee or representative. Every task force member or
4 task force member's designee or representative shall publicly
5 disclose the nature and extent of any interest or transaction
6 that the task force member or task force member's designee or
7 representative believes may be affected by the task force
8 member's official action. The state ethics commission shall
9 establish rules to provide for this public disclosure."

10 SECTION 5. Section 84-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended by amending subsections (i) and (j) to read as follows:

12 "(i) Failure of a legislator, a delegate to the
13 constitutional convention, or employee to file a disclosure of
14 financial interests as required by this section shall be a
15 violation of this chapter. Any legislator, delegate to a
16 constitutional convention, or employee who fails to file a
17 disclosure of financial interests when due shall be assessed an
18 administrative fine of [~~\$50.~~] \$75. The ethics commission, upon
19 the expiration of the time allowed for filing, shall release to
20 the public a list of all persons who have failed to file
21 financial disclosure statements. The [state] ethics commission



1 shall notify a person, by [~~registered mail, return receipt~~
2 ~~requested~~] electronic mail to the person's state e-mail address
3 or by first-class mail, of the failure to file, and the
4 disclosure of financial interests shall be submitted to the
5 commission not later than 4:30 p.m. on the tenth day after
6 notification of the failure to file has been mailed to the
7 person. If a disclosure of financial interests has not been
8 filed within ten days of the due date, an additional
9 administrative fine of \$10 for each day a disclosure remains
10 unfiled shall be added to the administrative fine. All
11 administrative fines collected under this section shall be
12 deposited in the State's general fund. Any administrative fine
13 for late filing shall be in addition to any other action the
14 commission may take under this chapter for violations of the
15 state ethics code. The commission may waive any administrative
16 fines assessed under this subsection for good cause shown.

17 (j) The chief election officer, upon receipt of the
18 nomination paper of any person seeking a state elective office,
19 including the office of delegate to the constitutional
20 convention, shall notify the ethics commission of the name of
21 the candidate for state office and the date on which the person



1 filed the nomination paper. The ethics commission, upon the
2 expiration of the time allowed for filing, shall release to the
3 public a list of all candidates who have failed to file
4 financial disclosure statements and shall immediately assess a
5 late filing penalty fee against those candidates of [~~\$25~~] \$50,
6 which shall be collected by the [~~state~~] ethics commission and
7 deposited into the general fund. The ethics commission may
8 investigate, initiate, or receive charges as to whether a
9 candidate's financial disclosure statement discloses the
10 financial interests required to be disclosed. After proceeding
11 in conformance with section 84-31, the ethics commission may
12 issue a decision as to whether a candidate has complied with
13 section 84-17(f) and this decision shall be a matter of public
14 record."

15 SECTION 6. Section 84-31, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

17 "(a) The ethics commission shall have the following powers
18 and duties:

19 (1) It shall prescribe forms for the disclosures required
20 by article XIV of the Hawaii constitution and section
21 84-17 and the gifts disclosure statements required by



1 section 84-11.5 and shall establish orderly procedures
2 for implementing the requirements of those provisions;
3 (2) It shall render advisory opinions upon the request of
4 any legislator, employee, or delegate to the
5 constitutional convention, or person formerly holding
6 [~~such~~] the office or employment as to whether the
7 facts and circumstances of a particular case
8 constitute or will constitute a violation of the code
9 of ethics, section 11-8, or section 11-316. If no
10 advisory opinion is rendered within [~~thirty~~] ninety
11 days after the request is filed with the commission,
12 it shall be deemed that an advisory opinion was
13 rendered and that the facts and circumstances of that
14 particular case do not constitute a violation of the
15 code of ethics. The opinion rendered or deemed
16 rendered, until amended or revoked, shall be binding
17 on the commission in any subsequent charges concerning
18 the legislator, employee, or delegate to the
19 constitutional convention, or person formerly holding
20 [~~such~~] the office or employment, who sought the
21 opinion and acted in reliance on it in good faith,



1 unless material facts were omitted or misstated by
2 [~~such~~] the persons in the request for an advisory
3 opinion;

4 (3) It shall initiate, receive, and consider charges
5 concerning alleged violation of this chapter, initiate
6 or make investigation, and hold hearings[+]. The
7 commission and the subject of any investigation or
8 charge may agree to resolve any alleged violation of
9 this chapter at any time. The resolution shall be in
10 writing and shall be signed by three or more members
11 of the commission and by the subject of any
12 investigation or charge. The resolution shall have
13 the force and effect of a final decision and order
14 issued after a contested case hearing and shall not be
15 appealable;

16 (4) It may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, and take
17 testimony relating to matters before the commission
18 and require the production for examination of any
19 books or papers relative to any matter under
20 investigation or in question before the commission.
21 Before the commission shall exercise any of the powers



1 authorized in this section with respect to any
2 investigation or hearings, it shall by formal
3 resolution[7] supported by a vote of three or more
4 members of the commission, define the nature and scope
5 of its inquiry;

6 (5) It may, from time to time, adopt, amend, and repeal
7 any rules, not inconsistent with this chapter, that in
8 the judgment of the commission seem appropriate [~~for~~
9 ~~the carrying out of~~] to implement this chapter and for
10 the efficient administration thereof, including every
11 matter or thing required to be done or which may be
12 done with the approval or consent or by order or under
13 the direction or supervision of or as prescribed by
14 the commission. The rules, when adopted as provided
15 in chapter 91, shall have the force and effect of law;

16 (6) It shall have jurisdiction for purposes of
17 investigation and taking appropriate action on alleged
18 violations of this chapter in all proceedings
19 commenced within six years of an alleged violation of
20 this chapter by a legislator or employee or former
21 legislator or employee. A proceeding shall be deemed



1 commenced by the filing of a charge with the
2 commission or by the signing of a charge by three or
3 more members of the commission. Nothing [~~herein~~] in
4 this paragraph shall bar proceedings against a person
5 who by fraud or other device, prevents discovery of a
6 violation of this chapter;

7 (7) It shall distribute its publications without cost to
8 the public and shall initiate and maintain programs
9 with the purpose of educating the citizenry and all
10 legislators, delegates to the constitutional
11 convention, and employees on matters of ethics in
12 government employment[~~;~~and]. It may issue guidance
13 regarding the application of this chapter, provided
14 that the guidance shall not have the force and effect
15 of law;

16 (8) It shall administer any code of ethics adopted by a
17 state constitutional convention, subject to the
18 procedural requirements of this part and any rules
19 adopted thereunder[~~;~~]; and

20 (9) It may authorize its staff to provide confidential
21 guidance to any individual as to whether the facts and



1 circumstances of a particular case constitute or would
2 constitute a violation under this chapter, section 11-
3 8, or section 11-316; provided that nothing in this
4 paragraph shall establish an attorney-client
5 relationship between the person seeking advice and the
6 commission or its staff. Any written guidance
7 rendered by commission staff advising that proposed
8 conduct is allowable, until amended or revoked, shall
9 be binding upon the commission in any subsequent
10 charges concerning the individual who sought the
11 guidance and acted in reliance on it in good faith,
12 unless material facts were omitted or misstated by the
13 persons in the request for guidance.

14 Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the commission or its
15 staff from investigating alleged violations of this chapter."

16 SECTION 7. Section 84-39, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 "[+]§84-39[+] **Administrative fines.** (a) Where an
19 administrative fine has not been established for a violation of
20 a provision of this chapter, any person, including a legislator
21 or employee, who violates a provision of this chapter shall be



1 subject to an administrative fine imposed by the ethics
2 commission that shall not exceed [~~\$500~~] \$1,000 for each
3 violation. All fines collected under this section shall be
4 deposited in the general fund.

5 (b) No fine shall be assessed under this section unless:

6 (1) The commission convenes a hearing in accordance with
7 section 84-31(c) and chapter 91[~~+~~] and

8 [~~+~~] A] a decision has been rendered by the commission[~~+~~];
9 or

10 (2) The commission and respondent agree to resolve an
11 alleged violation prior to completion of the contested
12 case process and the resolution includes payment of an
13 administrative fine or restitution, or both."

14 SECTION 8. Section 97-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 "**§97-1 Definitions.** When used in this chapter:

17 [~~+~~] "Administrative action" means the proposal, drafting,
18 consideration, amendment, enactment, or defeat by any
19 administrative agency of any rule, regulation, or
20 other action governed by section 91-3.



1 [~~(2)~~] "Administrative agency" means a commission, board,
2 agency, or other body, or official in the state
3 government that is not a part of the legislative or
4 judicial branch.

5 [~~(3)~~] "Contribution" includes a gift, subscription,
6 forgiveness of a loan, advance, or deposit of money,
7 or anything of value and includes a contract, promise,
8 or agreement, whether or not enforceable, to make a
9 contribution.

10 [~~(4)~~] "Expenditure" includes a payment, distribution,
11 forgiveness of a loan, advance, deposit, or gift of
12 money, or anything of value and includes a contract,
13 promise, or agreement, whether or not enforceable, to
14 make an expenditure. "Expenditure" also includes
15 compensation or other consideration paid to a lobbyist
16 for the performance of lobbying services.

17 ~~["Expenditure" excludes the expenses of preparing~~
18 ~~written testimony and exhibits for a hearing before~~
19 ~~the legislature or an administrative agency.]~~

20 [~~(5)~~] "Legislative action" means the sponsorship, drafting,
21 introduction, consideration, modification, enactment,



1 or defeat of any bill, resolution, amendment, report,
2 nomination, appointment, or any other matter pending
3 or proposed in the legislature.

4 ~~(+6)~~ "Lobbyist" means any individual who ~~[for]~~:

5 (1) Receives or expects to receive, either by employment
6 or contract, more than \$1,000 in monetary or in-kind
7 compensation in any calendar year for engaging in
8 lobbying, either personally or through his or her
9 agents; or

10 (2) For pay or other consideration:

11 (A) ~~[engages]~~ Engages in lobbying in excess of five
12 hours in any month of any reporting period
13 described in section 97-3; ~~[or spends]~~

14 (B) Engages in lobbying in excess of ten hours during
15 any calendar year;

16 (C) Engages in lobbying on three or more bills,
17 resolutions, or both, during any legislative
18 session; or

19 (D) Spends more than ~~[\$750]~~ \$1,000 of the person's or
20 any other person's money lobbying during any
21 reporting period described in section 97-3.



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1 [~~(7)~~] "Lobbying" means communicating directly or through an
2 agent, or soliciting others to communicate, with any
3 official in the legislative or executive branch, for
4 the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or
5 administrative action or a ballot issue. "Lobbying"
6 shall not include the preparation and submission of a
7 grant application pursuant to chapter 42F by a
8 representative of a nonprofit organization, but shall
9 include any communication with any official in the
10 legislative or executive branch for the purpose of
11 attempting to influence action on any existing or
12 future grant application.

13 [~~(8)~~] "Person" means a corporation, individual, union,
14 association, firm, sole proprietorship, partnership,
15 committee, club, or any other organization or a
16 representative of a group of persons acting in
17 concert."

18 SECTION 9. Section 97-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

20 "(d) A lobbyist shall file a notice of termination within
21 ten days after the lobbyist ceases the activity which required



1 the lobbyist's registration[-]; provided that if the lobbyist
2 fails to file a notice of termination, the person who employed
3 or contracted for the services of the lobbyist may file the
4 notice of termination. The lobbyist and the [~~employer~~] person
5 who employed or contracted for the services of the lobbyist
6 shall remain subject, however, to the requirements of chapter 97
7 for the period during which the registration was effective."

8 SECTION 10. Section 97-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended by amending subsections (a), (b), and (c) to read as
10 follows:

11 "(a) The following persons shall file a statement of
12 expenditures with the state ethics commission on March 31,
13 May 31, and January 31 of each year and within thirty days after
14 adjournment sine die of any special session of the legislature:

- 15 (1) Each lobbyist;
- 16 (2) Each person who spends [~~\$750~~] \$1,000 or more of the
17 person's or any other person's money in any [~~six-month~~
18 ~~period~~] reporting period described in this section for
19 the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or
20 administrative action or a ballot issue by
21 communicating or urging others to communicate with



1 public officials; provided that any amounts expended
2 for travel costs, including incidental meals and
3 lodging, shall not be included in the tallying of the
4 [~~\$750;~~] \$1,000 and need not be reported; and provided
5 further that any amounts expended by a nonprofit
6 organization to prepare and submit a grant application
7 pursuant to chapter 42F shall likewise not be included
8 in the tallying of the \$1,000 and need not be
9 reported; and

10 (3) Each person who employs or contracts for the services
11 of one or more lobbyists, whether independently or
12 jointly with other persons. If the person is an
13 industry, trade, or professional association, only the
14 association is the employer of the lobbyist.

15 (b) The March 31 report shall cover the period from
16 January 1 through the last day of February. The May 31 report
17 shall cover the period from March 1 through April 30. The
18 January 31 report shall cover the period from May 1 through
19 December 31 of the previous year. The report to be filed within
20 thirty days after adjournment sine die of a special session of
21 the legislature shall:



- 1 (1) ~~[cover]~~ Cover the period from May 1 through
2 adjournment sine die of that special session [~~and~~
3 ~~shall apply~~];
- 4 (2) Be filed only by persons listed in subsection (a) who
5 engage in lobbying activities, or who make
6 expenditures, for the purpose of attempting to
7 influence legislative action considered during a
8 special session; and
- 9 (3) Apply to and include only those expenditures and
10 contributions that relate to legislative action
11 considered during that special session~~[-]~~;
- 12 provided that those expenditures and contributions included in
13 the report need not be included by the person filing the report
14 in any subsequent statement of expenditures.
- 15 (c) The statement shall contain the following information:
- 16 (1) The name and address of each person with respect to
17 whom expenditures for the purpose of lobbying in the
18 total sum of \$25 or more per day was made by the
19 person filing the statement during the statement
20 period and the amount or value of [~~such~~] the
21 expenditure;



- 1 (2) The name and address of each person with respect to
2 whom expenditures for the purpose of lobbying in the
3 aggregate of \$150 or more was made by the person
4 filing the statement during the statement period and
5 the amount or value of [~~such~~] the expenditures;
- 6 (3) The total sum or value of all expenditures for the
7 purpose of lobbying made by the person filing the
8 statement during the statement period [~~in excess of~~
9 ~~\$750 during the statement period~~]; provided that the
10 sum or value of each expenditure is itemized in the
11 following categories, as applicable:
- 12 (A) Preparation and distribution of lobbying
13 materials;
- 14 (B) Media advertising;
- 15 (C) Compensation paid to lobbyists;
- 16 (D) Fees paid [~~to consultants or~~] for consultant
17 services;
- 18 (E) Entertainment and events;
- 19 (F) Receptions, meals, food, and beverages;
- 20 (G) Gifts;
- 21 (H) Loans; [~~and~~]



1 (I) Interstate transportation, including incidental
2 meals and lodging; and

3 (J) Other disbursements;

4 (4) The name and address of each person making
5 contributions to the person filing the statement for
6 the purpose of lobbying in the total sum of \$25 or
7 more during the statement period and the amount or
8 value of [~~such~~] the contributions; and

9 (5) The subject area of the legislative and administrative
10 action which was supported or opposed by the person
11 filing the statement during the statement period."

12 SECTION 11. Section 97-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended to read as follows:

14 "~~[§]§97-4.5[§]~~ **Lobbyist [~~list.~~] registration statements.**

15 [~~As soon as is feasible after the commencement of each regular~~
16 ~~session of the legislature, the state ethics commission shall~~
17 ~~publish a list of registered lobbyists, the names of the persons~~
18 ~~whom they represent, and other pertinent information but shall~~
19 ~~not include in such list the addresses of the lobbyists. The~~
20 ~~list shall be supplemented from time to time as may be~~
21 ~~necessary.] All lobbyist registration statements shall be posted~~



1 on the ethics commission's website within a reasonable time
2 after filing, and may be removed from the website after four
3 years."

4 SECTION 12. Section 97-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

6 "(a) The state ethics commission shall administer and
7 implement this chapter, and shall have the following powers and
8 duties:

9 (1) Initiate, receive, and consider charges concerning
10 alleged violations of this chapter, and investigate or
11 cause to be investigated on a confidential basis, the
12 activities of any person to determine whether the
13 person is in compliance with this chapter[~~7~~]. The
14 commission and the subject of any investigation or
15 charge may agree to resolve any alleged violation of
16 this chapter at any time. The resolution shall be in
17 writing and shall be signed by three or more members
18 of the commission and by the subject of any
19 investigation or charge. The resolution shall have
20 the force and effect of a final decision and order



1 issued after a contested case hearing and shall not be
2 appealable;

3 (2) Prescribe forms for the statements and reports
4 required by sections 97-2 and 97-3 and establish
5 orderly procedures for implementing the requirements
6 of those provisions;

7 (3) Render advisory opinions upon the request of any
8 person subject to this chapter. If no advisory
9 opinion is rendered within [~~thirty~~] ninety days after
10 the request is filed with the commission, it shall be
11 deemed that an advisory opinion was rendered and that
12 the facts and circumstances of that particular case do
13 not constitute a violation of this chapter. The
14 opinion rendered or deemed rendered, until amended or
15 revoked, shall be binding on the commission in any
16 subsequent charges concerning the person subject to
17 this chapter who sought the opinion and acted in
18 reliance on it in good faith, unless material facts
19 were omitted or misstated by the person in the request
20 for an advisory opinion;



H.B. NO. 290

- 1 (4) Issue subpoenas, administer oaths, and exercise those
2 powers conferred upon the commission by section 92-16;
- 3 (5) Adopt rules, not inconsistent with this chapter, as in
4 the judgment of the commission seem appropriate for
5 the carrying out of this chapter and for the efficient
6 administration of this chapter, including every matter
7 or thing required to be done or which may be done with
8 the approval or consent or by order or under the
9 direction or supervision of, or as prescribed by, the
10 commission. The rules, when adopted as provided in
11 chapter 91, shall have the force and effect of law;
12 [and]
- 13 (6) Have jurisdiction for purposes of investigation and
14 taking appropriate action on alleged violations of
15 this chapter in all proceedings commenced within three
16 years of an alleged violation of this chapter. A
17 proceeding shall be deemed commenced by the filing of
18 a charge with the commission or by the signing of a
19 charge by three or more members of the commission.
20 Nothing shall bar proceedings against a person who by



1 fraud or other device prevents discovery of a
2 violation of this chapter[~~-~~];

3 (7) Issue guidance regarding the application of this
4 chapter, provided that the guidance shall not have the
5 force and effect of law;

6 (8) Authorize its staff to provide confidential guidance
7 to any individual as to whether the facts and
8 circumstances of a particular case constitute or will
9 constitute a violation under this chapter; provided
10 that nothing in this paragraph shall establish an
11 attorney-client relationship between the person
12 seeking advice and the commission or its staff. Any
13 written guidance rendered by commission staff advising
14 that proposed conduct is allowable, until amended or
15 revoked, shall be binding upon the commission in any
16 subsequent charges concerning the individual who
17 sought the guidance and acted in reliance on it in
18 good faith, unless material facts were omitted or
19 misstated by the persons in the request for guidance.

20 Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the commission or its
21 staff from investigating alleged violations of this chapter."



1 SECTION 13. Section 97-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

3 "(a) Any person who:

4 (1) [~~Wilfully fails~~] Fails to file any statement or report
5 required by this chapter;

6 (2) [~~Wilfully files~~] Files a statement or report
7 containing false information or material omission of
8 any fact;

9 (3) Engages in activities prohibited by section 97-5; or

10 (4) Fails to provide information required by section 97-2
11 or 97-3;

12 shall be subject to an administrative fine imposed by the
13 commission that shall not exceed [~~\$500~~] \$1,000 for each
14 violation of this chapter. All fines collected under this
15 section shall be deposited into the general fund."

16 SECTION 14. The state ethics commission, in its
17 discretion, may make any changes that it deems necessary to
18 internal procedures or forms to aid in the implementation of
19 this Act.

20 SECTION 15. If any provision of this Act, or the
21 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held



1 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or
2 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the
3 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions
4 of this Act are severable.

5 SECTION 16. This Act does not affect rights and duties
6 that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that
7 were begun before its effective date.

8 SECTION 17. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 18. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

11

INTRODUCED BY:



By Request

JAN 20 2017



H.B. NO. 290

Report Title:

State Ethics Commission Package; Government; Ethics; Lobbyists

Description:

Clarifies the powers and duties of the state ethics commission; increases fines for ethics violations. Restores protection for legislators when carrying out a legislative function. Clarifies what is an expenditure for lobbyists and what is considered lobbying. Amends requirements for filing statements of expenditures.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.





HAWAII STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawaii • Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Committee: Committee on Labor
Bill Number: H.B. 290
Hearing Date/Time: February 7, 2017, 11:00 a.m.
Re: Testimony of the Hawaii State Ethics Commission in **SUPPORT**
of H.B. No. 290, Relating to Ethics

Dear Chair Johanson and Committee Members:

The Hawaii State Ethics Commission (“Commission”) supports H.B. 290, the State Ethics Commission package, which amends numerous sections of the Ethics Code (Hawaii Revised Statutes chapter 84) and the Lobbyists Law (Hawaii Revised Statutes chapter 97).

Each section of the bill is addressed in turn.

Section 2: amendments to HRS § 28-8.3 **Ethics Commission’s ability to hire attorneys**

This section amends HRS § 28-8.3 to make clear that the Commission can hire attorneys. Currently, HRS § 28-8.3 prohibits any state agency from hiring attorneys, except for the agencies listed in that statute; the Commission’s omission from this list appears to have been an oversight. This section also makes clear that the Commission’s attorneys, like those in most other legislative and executive agencies, are not considered Deputy Attorneys General.

Sections 3 and 4: amendments to HRS §§ 84-13 and 84-14 **Applicability of fair treatment and conflict of interest laws to Task Force members; protections for legislators’ “legislative functions”**

These sections amend HRS §§ 84-13 and 84-14 to clarify the Ethics Code’s applicability to Task Force members and to legislators. The intent of these sections is twofold: (1) to ensure that Task Force members are exempted from certain Ethics Code requirements, in alignment with the Legislature’s intent in enacting Act 208 of 2012; and (2) to restore pre-2012 language regarding legislators’ constitutionally protected “legislative functions.”

1. Task Force members and the Ethics Code

In 2012, the Legislature enacted Act 208 (HB 2175) to exempt Task Force members from certain provisions of the Ethics Code. The legislative history of this measure indicates the Legislature’s clear intention to ensure that Task Force members

could offer their expertise in a limited capacity without being held to the same standards as state officials.

In so doing, however, the Legislature appears to have inadvertently created additional burdens for Task Force members. Specifically, Act 208 of 2012 required Task Force members to “file a full and complete public disclosure” of potential conflicts, and further suggested that Task Force members may be required to file financial disclosure statements (as required for many state officials in HRS § 84-17). In other words, in attempting to exempt Task Force members from some provisions of the Ethics Code, the Legislature appears to have subjected Task Force members to additional provisions of the Ethics Code (specifically, the provision requiring the filing of financial disclosures).

The Commission recognizes that Task Force members are often selected because of their positions within the community, and that these community ties should not prevent experts from serving on Task Forces. As such, the Commission respectfully suggests amendments to both HRS §§ 84-13 and 84-14 to make clear that Task Force members need not file financial disclosures, and that the Ethics Code should not be a barrier to Task Force members serving on Task Forces.

That said, the Legislature has indicated it wishes both Task Force members and legislators to disclose conflicts of interest in some manner. As such, the Commission respectfully proposes that it develop administrative rules to provide for this public disclosure for both Task Force members and for legislators. The Legislature may wish to establish these rules itself, particularly for its own members; the Commission does not object if this Committee wishes to change the phrase “state ethics commission” (page 11, line 20 and page 12, line 10) to “legislature” in one or both instances.

2. “Legislative functions” and “official action”

In enacting Act 208 in 2012, the Legislature also changed the way the Ethics Code applies to legislators themselves. Language that existed prior to 2012 made clear that the Ethics Code would not interfere with a legislator’s “legislative functions,” which are protected by Article III, section 7 of the Hawaii Constitution.¹ In other words, the language prior to 2012 made clear that the Ethics Code did not supersede legislators’ constitutional right to exercise their “legislative functions.” The 2012 amendment, however, changed the phrase “legislative functions” (which derives from the constitution) to “official action” (which is defined by HRS § 84-3).

In reviewing the legislative history of Act 208 of 2012, the Ethics Commission does not believe that the Legislature intended to create a large exemption from the

¹ In relevant part, Article III, section 7 of the Hawaii Constitution provides: “No member of the legislature shall be held to answer before any other tribunal for any statement made or action taken in the exercise of the member’s legislative functions. . . .”

Ethics Code for its members; this issue is not mentioned anywhere in the legislative history, and the change may have been inadvertent. As such, the Commission respectfully suggests that the Legislature restore the pre-2012 exemption for “legislative functions” to demonstrate that the Legislature holds its members to high ethical standards.

Section 5: amendments to HRS § 84-17²
Procedures and fines for late filing of financial disclosures

This section amends HRS § 84-17, regarding the late filing of financial disclosures. It removes the requirement that the Ethics Commission send fine notices by “registered mail, return receipt requested”; increases the fines for those who miss the filing deadline; and requires publication of a list of those who fail to file their financial disclosures on time.

1. Postage costs

Currently, HRS § 84-17 requires the Commission to impose a fine of \$50 for individuals who fail to file their financial disclosures by the May 31 deadline. However, HRS § 84-17 also requires that the Commission send notices of those fines by “registered mail, return receipt requested. In 2016, for each of these fine notices, the Commission paid \$14.87 in postage. In 2016, more than 300 individuals failed to file their financial disclosures on time; Commission staff convinced many of those individuals to file the statements (late) through e-mail and phone calls, but the Commission still spent approximately \$1,000 to mail dozens of letters as required by statute. The Commission believes that it can send these notices via e-mail and first-class U.S. mail and achieve the same result at a substantially reduced cost, and respectfully requests a statutory amendment to do so.

2. Fines for failure to file; published list of late filers

The current fines for failure to file a financial disclosure (\$50) and candidate financial disclosure (\$25) were last set in 1995. The Commission respectfully requests that the fines be increased to \$75 and \$50, respectively, to account for inflation.

The Commission also believes that publishing a list of those who fail to file their disclosures on time will help to incentivize state officials to complete their filings on time. As such, the Commission respectfully requests an amendment to HRS § 84-17 to require publication of a list of late filers.

² HB 852, also being heard on today’s agenda, contains the identical language contained in Section 5 of this measure.

Section 6: amendments to HRS § 84-31
Powers and duties of the Commission

This section amends HRS § 84-31, which sets forth the powers and duties of the Commission and its staff. The intent of this section is to memorialize long-standing practices of the Commission: that the Commission can settle cases; that Commission staff can issue confidential ethics advice; and that the Commission can issue non-binding guidance without promulgating administrative rules. This section also extends the deadline for the Commission to issue Advisory Opinions, in line with the similar process used by the Campaign Spending Commission.

1. Authority to settle cases

The Commission believes it has statutory authority to settle cases without having a full contested case hearing, but the Commission believes it prudent to have explicit statutory authority for this practice.

2. Authority for Commission and its staff to issue guidance

This section codifies the existing practice of the Commission staff to offer informal, confidential advice. Providing confidential ethics guidance to state officials, lobbyists, and others – often the same day – is one of the Commission’s core functions, and is vital to the Commission’s dedication to providing ethics education and preventing ethics violations from occurring in the first place. Pursuant to these proposed amendments, any interested individual can continue to request a formal Advisory Opinion or Declaratory Order; the proposed amendments simply memorialize longstanding practices of having staff give quick, informal advice. Again, the Commission believes that this authority is already implied by statute, but believes it prudent to make that authority explicit.

This bill also makes clear that the Commission and its staff can issue non-binding guidance on ethics questions without promulgating administrative rules. While the Commission believes that this authority is already clear (from chapter 84’s requirement that the Commission provide educational services to the public), a recent court decision suggested that the Commission can provide guidance to multiple state officials through rulemaking only. Often, the Commission and its staff receive the same ethics question from multiple sources; the Commission often finds that it can best fulfill its educational mission (and can best prevent ethics violations) by issuing general guidance memoranda to help answer these questions. The Commission is aware that these memoranda do not have the force and effect of law – the Commission may only issue binding pronouncements through formal means such as rulemaking and Advisory Opinions – but the Commission believes it can best fulfill its mission by providing fast, informal guidance in most instances.

3. Time frame to issue formal Advisory Opinions

This section extends the time frame in which the Ethics Commission issues formal Advisory Opinions. Currently, HRS § 84-31 requires the Commission to issue Advisory Opinions within thirty days; by contrast, the Campaign Spending Commission has ninety days in which to issue its advisory opinions. See HRS § 11-315. Given the requirements of HRS chapter 92 (requiring certain items to be posted on a public agenda at least six days in advance), and the fact that the Commission typically meets only once a month, the thirty-day requirement may prevent the Commission from providing a thorough and accurate response to requests for formal ethics opinions. As such, the Commission respectfully requests that the deadline be extended either to sixty or ninety days.

Section 7: amendments to HRS § 84-39 **Penalty amounts/process for violations of the Ethics Code**

This section raises the maximum administrative penalty from \$500 to \$1,000. The penalty amount was last set in 1992; adjusting for inflation, that penalty would be approximately \$858 today. This proposed bill would also make clear that the Commission can negotiate an administrative penalty (and/or restitution) as part of any negotiated settlement; again, the Commission believes that it already has statutory authority to engage in this long-standing practice, but believes it prudent to make that authority explicit.

Section 8: amendments to HRS § 97-1 **Amends definitions of “lobbyist” and “lobbying”**

This section makes several changes to the Lobbyists Law.

The Commission believes that the current standards for determining who must register as a lobbyist are both under- and over-inclusive. Currently, an individual must register as a lobbyist if s/he spends five or more hours lobbying in a month (for pay), or if the lobbyist spends \$750 or more in a reporting period. Some individuals may seek to influence many pieces of legislation through short meetings with lawmakers (thus claiming that they spend fewer than five hours a month lobbying); conversely, some individuals may have to register as lobbyists – even if they have no direct contact with lawmakers – if they spend more than five hours in a month preparing a Grant In Aid (“GIA”) application.

This section changes the definitions of “lobbyist” and “lobbying” to better effectuate the Legislature’s original intent in enacting the Lobbyist Law: to ensure transparency in the legislative process and to give the public information about who is spending money to influence legislation. This section provides that individuals who assist in preparing GIA applications – but who otherwise do not engage in “lobbying” –

need not register as lobbyists. This section also provides several additional clear and objective thresholds – in addition to the five-hour threshold (which remains) – for determining who must register as a lobbyist.

Additionally, this section clarifies statutory language that, in the Commission’s experience, has led to confusion for those reporting their lobbying expenses. It is the Commission’s intention to propose administrative rules to make clear that purely administrative expenses need not be reported as lobbying expenditures, and that those engaged in purely administrative functions need not register as lobbyists.

Section 9: amendments to HRS § 97-2
Allowing organizations to terminate their lobbyists’ registrations

Under current law, if a lobbyist stops lobbying on behalf of a client, the lobbyist must file a termination notice with the Commission within ten days. The lobbyist must do this personally – the organization cannot do this on behalf of the lobbyist. This is problematic in situations where an organization fires its lobbyist or where the lobbyist quits working, because if the lobbyist fails to file a notice of termination, the organization represented by the lobbyist must still file expenditure reports with the Commission. The proposed changes to this section will allow organizations to terminate their lobbyists’ registrations when necessary.

Section 10: amendments to HRS § 97-3
Lobbyist expenditure statements

This section contains additional language (consistent with Section 8, above) making clear that the mere preparation of a GIA application does not constitute “lobbying,” such that no expenditure reports or registration statements are necessary for this activity. Lobbying in support of a GIA application, however, would still be reportable activity.

This section adjusts the reporting requirements for lobbying expenditures. It increases the threshold for reporting lobbying expenditures from \$750 to \$1,000; it clarifies that inter-state transportation costs must be reported (and, by implication, that intra-state transportation costs need not be reported); and it makes clear that lobbyists and their clients are only required to file reports for a Special Session of the Legislature if they engaged in lobbying activities during that Special Session.

Section 11: amendments to HRS § 97-4.5
Publication of list of lobbyists

This section amends the requirement (enacted in 1980) that the Ethics Commission publish a list of lobbyists; the Commission currently publishes all lobbyist registration statements on its website, such that this extra publication is unnecessary.

Section 12: amendments to HRS § 97-6
Powers and duties of the Commission

This section contains amendments nearly identical to those in Section 6, above (amending HRS § 84-31), regarding the powers and duties of the Commission. The Commission administers both the Ethics Code (HRS chapter 84) and the Lobbyists Law (HRS chapter 97), and the powers and duties of the Commission are spelled out separately in HRS § 84-31 and HRS § 97-6. As described more thoroughly above, this section provides explicit statutory authority for the Commission's practices of settling cases and allowing staff to provide confidential advice.

Section 13: amendments to HRS § 97-7
Standard of proof, and penalties, for violations of Lobbyists Law

This section removes the mens rea requirement from HRS § 97-7. This requirement is held over from a time when the violation of the Lobbyists Law was a criminal offense. The penalties have been civil, rather than criminal, for quite some time, but the criminal law state-of-mind requirement remains. The Commission respectfully asks that this be amended accordingly.

This section also raises the maximum administrative penalty from \$500 to \$1,000. The penalty amount was last set in 1995.

Thank you for your continuing support of the Commission's work and for considering the Commission's testimony on H.B. No. 290.

Very truly yours,

Daniel Gluck
Executive Director and General Counsel



**Testimony to the House Labor and Public Employment Committee
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair
Tuesday February 7, 2017, 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 309
HB 290 - Relating to Ethics**

Dear Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt and members of the LAB Committee:

On behalf of the Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations, I would like to offer our comments in **support of HB 290** relating to ethics.

Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) is a statewide, sector-wide professional association of nonprofits. Our mission is to unite and strengthen the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve the quality of life in Hawai'i. Our member organizations provide essential services to every community in the state.

HANO appreciates the efforts being made by the Hawaii State Ethics Commission to provide clarity in the existing law around what constitutes lobbying. We offer several comments:

- While we would like to assume it is usually not the intent of a charitable nonprofit to violate state ethics law, we *do* see the change of the administrative fine in Section 84-39 from \$500 to \$1,000 to be a steep increase, especially for many smaller charitable nonprofits that may not understand their reporting requirements. We hope that the Ethics Commission is committed to doing the needed education to inform parties of these compliance requirements and will not be precipitous in fining unknowing parties. Certainly HANO will do whatever we can to inform nonprofits of these requirements to avoid their having to pay these steep fines.
- We appreciate the added definitions of what constitutes lobbying in Section 97-1, for greater clarification and understanding.
- We strongly support the clarification that applying for a Grant In Aid, does *not* constitute lobbying time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of these changes.

Mahalo,
Lisa Maruyama
President & CEO



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Tuesday, February 7, 2011, 11 AM, Conference Room 309
HB 290, RELATING TO ETHICS

TESTIMONY

Douglas Meller, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Johanson and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB 290, which clarifies the powers and duties of the state ethics commission; clarifies how the fair treatment law applies to legislators and how the fair treatment law applies to task force members other than legislators; requires public “shaming”, allows email or first class mail notification, and increases fines for failure to file timely financial disclosure statements; and clarifies who must register as a lobbyist and the content of lobbyist expenditure statements.

We support all of the proposed clarifications and reforms.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



House Labor and Public Employment Committee
Chair Aaron Johanson, Vice Chair Daniel Holt

02/07/2017 11:00 AM Room 309
HB290 – Relating to Ethics

TESTIMONY / SUPPORT
Corie Tanida, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Dear Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt, and members of the House Labor and Public Employment Committee:

Common Cause Hawaii supports HB290 which clarifies the power and duties of the State Ethics Commission, increases fines, clarifies the Fair Treatment and Lobbyist laws, and makes other housekeeping changes to the State Ethics Code.

Among the provisions we support include increasing fines for ethics violations to account for inflation, closing the loophole that exempts legislators from the Fair Treatment provision (84-13), and clarifying the definition of lobbying activities. Many of these changes are long overdue and are needed to ensure that the highest ethical standards are met and the public retains its faith in government.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony **supporting HB290**.

HB 290

LATE TESTIMONY

LATE

LATE



LATE

CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

FROM: Terrence L. Walsh, Jr. President and Chief Executive Officer

DATE: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 (11:00 a.m., Room 309)

RE: **HB 290, Relating to Ethics**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children & families, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i.

CCH would like to provide the following **COMMENTS** regarding HB 290, Relating to Ethics.

- We recommend that the following language be **DELETED**. The bill is currently adding this language to Section 97-1, HRS, the criteria to be considered as a "lobbyist":
 - (B) Engages in lobbying in excess of ten hours during any calendar year;
 - (C) Engages in lobbying on three or more bills, resolutions, or both, during any legislative session"

The above language would increase the number of individuals who would be required to register as "lobbyists". This would appear to discourage, rather than encourage, organizations and individuals to participate in the legislative process.

Also, please note that lobbying on three or more bills may actually be pertaining to one issue due to companion bills, bills with similar language/intent, etc.

- We strongly **SUPPORT** the bill's language which clarifies that applying for a Grant In Aid, is **NOT** considered lobbying.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on HB 290. For more information or questions, please contact Diane Terada, Division Administrator, at 527-4702.

