



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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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 CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 108**

**REQUESTING THE CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER TO CONVENE AN  
AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE THE  
FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING AN AUTOMATIC  
VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM IN HAWAII**

March 22, 2017

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 108. The purpose of this resolution is to convene a task force to explore the feasibility of establishing and implementing an automatic voter registration system in Hawaii.

The Office of Elections supports automatic voter registration because it is convenient for voters and it may increase registration. Additionally, we believe the electronic sharing of data between driver license and election officials will help to ensure the accuracy of the voter registration rolls.

The Office of Elections and the Department of Transportation have had ongoing discussions to formalize a memorandum of agreement to share data electronically. These discussions began as we moved towards upgrading the statewide voter registration system and to ensure the timely transfer of driver license/state identification data. We believe this task force may help us to understand and resolve challenges of the various stakeholders such as the Clerks' Offices, representatives of the Office of Enterprise Technology Services, the City Licensing Administrator, and the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Information Technology.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 108.



Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee  
Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Vice Chair Karl Rhoads

03/22/2017 at 9:35 AM in Room 016

SCR108 – Requesting the Chief Election Officer to Convene an Automatic Voter Registration Task Force to Explore the Feasibility of Establishing and Implementing an Automatic Voter Registration System in Hawaii

TESTIMONY / SUPPORT

Corie Tanida, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

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Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and committee members:

**Common Cause Hawaii supports SCR108** which would establish a task force to explore the feasibility of establishing and implanting an Automatic Voter Registration system in Hawaii.

As a state that consistently ranks last in the nation for voter participation, we commend your consideration of this important step to use existing technology and pathways to improve the process for registering eligible voters.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), which would automatically register eligible citizens, who apply for or renew their driver's license or identification card, to vote; unless they decline. It also authorizes the electronic transfer of voter registration information from the counties and Department of Transportation, to election officials and the statewide voter registration system.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) is a critical step toward modernizing our elections system. With AVR:

- Elections will be more secure. The electronic transfer of data in real time will lead to fewer typos, duplicates, and lost forms, thus our voter rolls will be more accurate and the chances of voter fraud will be reduced.
- The state will save money. States that have upgraded their systems estimate it costs approximately 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application.<sup>1</sup>
- Privacy remains protected. If an individual chooses to decline to participate, their personal information will not be shared with election officials. For those who do participate, only information needed to register the voter will be shared.
- Hawaii will become a "model" state for voting reforms. AVR complements recent voting reforms, such as online voter registration (2015) and same day voter registration (2018), aimed at reducing barriers and ensuring access to the polls. AVR would also complement Voting By Mail, if passed, as more accurate voter rolls will reduce the amount of returned mail.

Automatic Voter Registration works. Oregon was the first state to implement this system in 2016. Over 270,000 were registered via Automatic Voter Registration, of those 42.73% (or 97,184) voted in the 2016 General Election, which helped Oregon set a new state record for number of votes cast.<sup>2</sup>

We believe that with the creation of this task force Hawaii will be one step closer to reducing another barrier to voting. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SCR108**.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Secure and Modern Elections. (2016). *Modernelections.org*.

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Secretary of State. (2016). *Oregon Breaks 2 Million Ballots in Nov. 8 General Election, Setting New Record*. Retrieved from <http://oregonsosblog.us/2016/11/oregon-breaks-2-million-ballots-nov-8-general-election-setting-new-record/>



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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
WEDNESDAY, March 22, 2017, 9:35 A.M., CONFERENCE ROOM 016

SCR 108, REQUESTING THE CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER TO CONVENE AN AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATIN TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING AN AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM IN HAWAII

**TESTIMONY**

Janet Mason, Legislative Co-Chair, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

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

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SCR 108.**

To us, it's already clear that establishing automatic voter registration is feasible; the only remaining questions concern how it could be cooperatively implemented among the State and County officials responsible for driver's license, state identification cards and voter registration services.

In recent years, Hawaii has done much to modernize how citizens can register to vote. Despite this, recent estimates show that more than 250,000 eligible persons – some 26% of those eligible- are still not registered.<sup>1</sup> We will not be able to make inroads with voter turnout until we boost the number of persons registered to vote as a percent of those eligible to vote. Of course, the League acknowledges motivating registered voters to vote also remains a challenge, and we are committed to working on this effort as well.

Convening a task force will enable members to anticipate any unexpected procedural issues in automatic voter registration while drafting complementary legislation. We respectfully urge that the task force be created so that work can begin as soon as possible. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Elections Project,  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1VAcF0eJ06y\\_8T4o2gvlL4YcyQy8pxb1zYkgXF76Uu1s/edit#gid=2030096602](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1VAcF0eJ06y_8T4o2gvlL4YcyQy8pxb1zYkgXF76Uu1s/edit#gid=2030096602)

**From:** [Benjamin Trevino](#)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Subject:** In strong support SCR108 - Automatic Voter Registration Task Force  
**Date:** Sunday, March 19, 2017 10:12:26 PM

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I am a resident of Ala Moana, an active voter and a member of the board of Common Cause Hawaii.

I strongly support SCR108

Automatic voter registration is an incredibly important tool in giving the residents of this state a voice in the government process. Participation in elections is one of the most basic forms of engagement and with the lowest voter turnout in the country, we need all the help we can get.

On a personal note, as a software developer, I've worked on a lot of projects and applications that have asked people to register for a new service. Having enough users to the service was often the difference between success and failure of the product, possibly the company. It was thus, always smart to look at the registration process and make it as convenient and efficient as possible, after all a user that decided to abandon the signup process was a significant loss. And if we could make it even easier for someone to sign up, say by using their existing and trusted Google or Facebook accounts instead of having every new user enter their information all over again, even better!

Why should our voter registration work any different? Our democracy is an application that directs the substantial and critical resources of the public sector -- our roads, our parks, our infrastructure, our natural environment -- things we all share, and is successful or unsuccessful based on the number of people it can engage. We want to onboard as many people as possible, really everyone who is eligible, not lose potential users to a sign-up process that is a drag. The question isn't should we implement automatic voter registration, it's really what has taken us so long to do it?

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Ben Trevino....  
808-225-4725

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR108 on Mar 22, 2017 09:35AM  
**Date:** Sunday, March 19, 2017 4:34:35 PM

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**SCR108**

Submitted on: 3/19/2017

Testimony for JDL on Mar 22, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
christine trecker	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Convening an Automatic Voter Registration Task Force is a step in the right direction. Hawaii needs to take advantage of newer technology to streamline the process, save money and make our elections more secure.

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**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR108 on Mar 22, 2017 09:35AM  
**Date:** Saturday, March 18, 2017 8:17:35 AM

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**SCR108**

Submitted on: 3/18/2017

Testimony for JDL on Mar 22, 2017 09:35AM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Support SCR108, REQUESTING THE CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER TO CONVENE AN AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING AN AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM IN HAWAII. However, recommend that the task force include representatives of the major political parties in Hawaii and/or a requirement to consult with them as major stakeholders. Respectfully, Marilyn L. Khan

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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*Capt. T. J. Davies, Jr. (Ret.)*

17 March 2017

To: Committee on Judiciary and Labor, Senator Keith-Agaran, Chair, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 9:35 a.m., Room 016

**Re: SCR 108, Requesting the Chief Election Officer to convene an Automatic Voter Registration Task Force to explore the feasibility of establishing and implementing an Automatic Voter Registration System in Hawaii.**

Chair Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Senator Karl Rhoads and members of the committee:

My name is T. J. Davies Jr. I am 82 years old, retired, handicapped and live in Kakaako. I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SCR 108, Requesting the Chief Election Officer to convene an Automatic Voter Registration Task Force to explore the feasibility of establishing and implementing an Automatic Voter Registration System in Hawaii.

**Modernizing our elections:** Thanks to advances in technology, we no longer have to stick to traditional paper forms which require staff to literally take the forms from one agency to the next and then manually enter data. Updating and modernizing our system will lead to increased processing efficiency and productivity.

**Save money:** States that have switched to electronic systems have reported that it costs about 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application

**Elections will be more secure:** Due to the increased accuracy of voter rolls—thanks to real time data transfers, fewer typos, fewer duplicate records, no more lost forms, etc. the chances of voter fraud will be reduced. The use of an encrypted system, rather than paper forms to transfer data, will also make our elections more secure.

Privacy and the right to choose to participate is assured, as those who do not want to register to vote can opt-out and their information will not be shared with the Office of Elections.

Your favorable consideration of SCR 108 is requested. Mahalo & Aloha

T. J. Davies Jr., Volunteer  
Treasurer, AARP Chapter 60 Honolulu  
Treasurer, Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund  
Director, Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans  
Kakaako (District 26 / Senate District 12)