

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi
Director

Shawn K. Nakama
First Assistant

Research (808) 587-0666
Revisor (808) 587-0670
Fax (808) 587-0681



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 446
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Comments

HCR116

CONVENING A GAMBLING ADVISORY GROUP TO EXAMINE AND ASSESS THE IMPACTS OF GROWING ACCESS TO ONLINE AND ILLEGAL GAMBLING IN HAWAII

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the House Committee on Judiciary

Friday, March 22, 2019, 2:10 p.m.
Conference Room 325

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon Chair Lee and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on H.C.R. No. 116, Convening a Gambling Advisory Group to Examine and Assess the Impacts of Growing Access to Online and Illegal Gambling in Hawaii.

The purpose of this measure is to convene a Gambling Advisory Group to examine and assess the impacts of the growing access to online and illegal gambling in Hawaii.

The Gambling Advisory Group is:

- (1) To be co-chaired by the Chairs of the House and Senate Standing Committees on Judiciary, and include the Attorney General or the Attorney General's designee, the Executive Director of the Office of Consumer Protection in the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs or the Executive Director's designee, the Director of Health or the Director's designee, a member with experience and background in public education, and any other members who may appointed by the co-chairs; and

- (2) Requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than 20 days before the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2020 and 2021.

The measure also requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to provide staff support and administrative support to the Gambling Advisory Group, including clerical and research services, as needed.

The Bureau takes no position on the merits of this measure, but submits the following comments for your consideration.

As a general matter, we note that, although the Gambling Advisory Group is to be co-chaired by legislators, every other member of the Advisory Group is not of the Legislature.

Accordingly, we have some concerns with how the measure is currently drafted with respect to the work requested of the Bureau. The language of the measure requires the Bureau to assist the Gambling Advisory Group with "staff support and administrative support to the Gambling Advisory Group, including clerical and research services, as needed." The Bureau does not possess the human, financial, or physical resources to provide such comprehensive services to the Advisory Group. Such an allocation of Bureau resources would result in the reduction of services to other members of the Legislature during the interim.

If the Committee decides to recommend the adoption of this measure and desires to keep the Bureau involved, we respectfully request that the measure be amended to specifically clarify that the Bureau assist with only finalizing the Task Force's report and drafting proposed legislation. We also would request that it be specified that the draft report be submitted to the Bureau no later than September 1, 2019, so that work on the report and proposed legislation would not adversely impact our ability to provide our core services to the Legislature for the upcoming Regular Session.

If the measure is amended to address the concerns noted above to have the Bureau assist with finalizing the report and drafting proposed legislation, the Bureau believes that the services requested under the measure would be manageable and that the Bureau will be able to provide the services in the time allotted; provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting studies, writing or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or any combination of these for the Legislature or for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

Thank you again for your consideration.



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www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Friday, March 22, 2019, 2:10 p.m., Room 325
HCR116 RELATING TO A GAMBLING ADVISORY GROUP
TESTIMONY

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

Chair Lee, Vice-Chair San Buenaventura and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii wishes to offer comments on HCR116, which would convene a gambling advisory group to examine and assess the impacts of growing access to online and illegal gambling in Hawaii.

For many years, the League of Women Voters of Hawaii has opposed legalized gambling in the belief that no government should fund its activities out of programs that bring social ills and financial ruin to many of its people. At the same time, the League is always in favor of well-grounded study and sound decision-making.

HCR116 acknowledges the growing access to online gambling platforms and the consequent growing illegal wagering in Hawaii. Since the U.S. Supreme Court decision of May, 2018, which permitted states to authorize sports wagering, the movement across the country has become a tsunami. Hawaii, of all states except Utah, faces an especially momentous decision.

The League finds several aspects of this resolution well-taken.

HCR116 appears to focus its advisory group on Hawaii's singular situation with no legal gambling other than social gambling. Presumably, impacts of legalizing any form of gambling would be explored.

The resolution also stresses the consequence of online gambling and the vulnerable demographic groups targeted by marketing organizations. The Advisory Group includes members from health and education rather than concentrating heavily on potential revenue.

The timeline seems to offer adequate time to study the question of online gaming in depth. It does require a report of findings and recommendations before the 2020 Legislative Session, but appears to offer the possibility of continuing the investigation at least into the following year. Surely, looking at the evolving experience of states who have initiated sports wagering will be helpful to the Advisory Group.



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Finally, the Advisory Group achieves real stature with co-chairs from both Senate and House Judiciary committees. That move signals the importance of the issue and the promise that the study will be made with real seriousness.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

HCR-116

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 3:56:50 PM

Testimony for JUD on 3/22/2019 2:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cathy Goeggel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HCR-116

Submitted on: 3/21/2019 12:09:56 AM

Testimony for JUD on 3/22/2019 2:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: