



STATE OF HAWAII  
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 22, 2019

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

Members of the House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on H.B. No. 1279, Relating to the Oversight of Election Activities**

Monday, February 25, 2019  
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 308

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports this bill but requests a budget adjustment to provide a higher trust fund ceiling in an election year (i.e., FY 21).

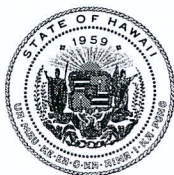
Section 3 sets forth the Commission’s base general fund appropriations and trust fund ceilings for FY 20 and FY 21. The general fund appropriation represents the base amount to run Commission operations.<sup>1</sup> The trust fund ceiling of \$343,732 in FY 20 should be satisfactory, but we respectfully recommend a trust fund increase from \$343,732 to \$700,000 in FY 21 since it is an election year. Although the Commission has not gone over the present budget ceiling of \$308,062 in the past, the Commission needs to have the ability to provide enough public funding to meet the State Constitutional mandate to distribute public funding to all eligible candidates (see Article II, Section 5, under the State of Hawaii Constitution). Public funding distributions are unpredictable. It is unknown who will qualify for public funds, and thus, the Commission must allocate maximum amounts to be able to provide funding to qualified candidates. In the event that the need for public funding exceeds the trust fund ceiling while there is sufficient funding in the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund (which is currently at \$906,071 as of December 31, 2018), rejecting requests for public funds to qualified candidates due to the ceiling restriction could result in legal actions against the State. Further, although we appreciate the fact that we

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<sup>1</sup> Notably, HB 1350 sets forth the Commission’s additional requests for general fund appropriations for FY 20 (an increase of \$29,000) and FY 21 (an increase of \$22,000) to run operations. This bill passed unamended on 2/8/19 and was referred to the House Committee on Finance and is scheduled to be heard today.

can request the Governor to lift this ceiling through the Department of Budget and Finance, our law provides that public funds “shall be distributed to the candidate within twenty days from the date that the candidate’s initial application and qualifying contribution statement is approved by the commission.” HRS §11-431. This time frame will make the request to lift the ceiling challenging.

The Commission respectfully requests that this Committee pass this measure with a budget adjustment for a higher trust fund ceiling in FY 21.



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE  
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
elections.hawaii.gov

SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1279  
RELATING TO THE OVERSIGHT OF ELECTION ACTIVITIES

February 25, 2019

Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding House Bill No. 1279. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the fiscal biennium 2019-2021 operating budget of the Campaign Spending Commission and the Office of Elections under the purview of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Judiciary.

The mission of the Office of Elections is to provide secure, accessible, and convenient election services to all citizens statewide. We are responsible for conducting candidate filing, printing ballots, operating the polling places, counting and tabulating ballots, as well as maximizing voter registration. Our office also develops voter education programs to educate the public about voting and elections. This includes a media campaign, voter education presentations, and tabling events. Additionally, our office houses and supports the Statewide Voter Registration System and Online Voter Registration System.

Our base operating biennium budget includes funding for staffing, operating expenses, and costs associated with conducting the 2020 Elections. Currently, we have 21 permanent staff, of which 4 are vacant, and 17 temporary positions which are hired for the election year. We also fund regular operating expenses, such as facility and vehicle maintenance, office supplies, and office equipment leases. Our election costs include supplies and equipment, travel for trainings, tests and audits, printing of public notices, election day meals, freight costs to deliver and collect ballots and equipment to and from polling places, and the vote counting system contract.

In HB1356, relating to the Office of Elections Operating Budget, we are requesting a budget ceiling adjustment of \$789,598 in FY2019-20 to our base budget to fund election expenses. Since elections are conducted in even-numbered years, our operating budget varies between fiscal years of the biennium.

**Fiscal Year 2019-20 Operating Budget**

	<b>Base</b>	<b>Adjusted</b>
Staff Salaries	1,060,781	1,060,781
Operating Expenses	133,875	133,875
Election Costs	1,140,361	1,140,361
Vote Counting System	818,902	1,608,500
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>3,153,919</b>	<b>3,943,517</b>
Federal	99,694	99,694
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>3,253,613</u></b>	<b><u>4,043,211</u></b>

**Fiscal Year 2020-21 Operating Budget**

	<b>Base</b>
Staff Salaries	1,063,209
Temporary staff, election day workers, contract hires	1,155,329
Operating Expenses	139,925
Election Costs	797,284
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>3,155,747</b>
Federal	99,694
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>3,255,441</u></b>

**Positions**

<b>Position</b>	<b>MOF</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Status</b>
Account Clerk III	A	1.0	
Chief Election Officer	A	1.0	
Election Assistant (CCOP)	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Assistant (POPS)	A	0.50	
Election Assistant (POPS)	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Assistant (POPS)	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Clerk	A	0.50	
Election Clerk	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Clerk	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire

<b>Position</b>	<b>MOF</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Status</b>
Election Clerk	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Clerk (P/T)	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Logistics Worker	A	1.0	
Election Logistics Worker	A	0.42	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Logistics Worker	A	0.42	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Logistics Worker	A	0.42	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Logistics Worker	A	0.42	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Specialist (BOPS)	A	0.50	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Election Specialist (ESS)	A	1.0	
General Counsel	A	1.0	
General Professional IV	A	1.0	
General Professional IV	A	1.0	
General Professional V (BOPS)	A	1.0	
General Professional V (CCOP)	A	1.0	
General Professional V (ESS)	A	1.0	
General Professional V (POPS)	A	1.0	Vacant, Temporary Assignment
General Professional V (VS)	A	1.0	Vacant, Recruiting applicants
Hotline Operator (VS)	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Hotline Operator (VS)	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Hotline Operator (VS)	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Hotline Operator (VS)	A	0.21	Vacant, Election Year Hire
Info Technology Band A	A	1.0	Vacant, Interviewing applicants
Info Technology Band B	A	1.0	Vacant, Interviewing applicants
Info Technology Band C	A	1.0	
Office Assistant III	A	1.0	
Office Assistant III	A	1.0	
Secretary III	A	1.0	
Warehouse Supervisor	A	1.0	
Election Assistant (POPS)	N	0.50	
Election Info Specialist	N	1.0	

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1279.

**HB-1279**

Submitted on: 2/22/2019 3:02:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2019 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

It would be so great if someone oversaw the office of elections and their use of money and time. What do they do in a non-election year? I think you might be surprised. Time to look into the persons who have been long a part of that office and what is done. Justifying money for their off years, they should be working somewhere else where help is needed instead of sitting around.