



SB728 SD1
RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 26, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Room 211

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following **COMMENTS** on SB728 SD1, which would increase the maximum amount of public funds available to each candidate running for the OHA Board of Trustees.

OHA appreciates that SB728 SD1 would raise the amount of public campaign funding that OHA Board of Trustee candidates would be eligible to receive; however, OHA does note that other candidates running statewide campaigns are eligible to receive substantially more public funds. Under Section 13D-1 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, all nine OHA Trustees are elected at-large by all qualified voters in the state. Similar to other statewide offices, considerable resources may therefore be required for an OHA Trustee candidate to run a viable statewide campaign. According to the testimony of the State of Hawai'i Campaign Spending Commission, providing OHA Trustee candidates with the same access to public campaign funds as other candidates for statewide offices, such as the lieutenant governor, would allow OHA candidates to receive up to \$99,787 in public funds; SB728 SD1 would instead provide OHA candidates with less than \$22,000. OHA respectfully suggests that the Committees may wish to consider increasing the public campaign funding limit for OHA Trustee candidates to an amount more commensurate with that currently established for other statewide campaigns.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

February 22, 2019

Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, Ways and Means
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, Ways and Means
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair, Judiciary
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair, Judiciary, and the Senate Members of Both Committees

Re: SB 728, SD1 Relating to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Judiciary
Decision Making February 26, 2019
Conference Room 211

Honorable Senate Committee Members of the Senate Ways and Means and Senate Judiciary Committees:

The Council for Native Hawaiian Affairs testifies in **Strong Support of SB 728 SD1** which increases the amount of money available from partial public funding to candidates running for the statewide office of Trustee for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to match the amount now available to candidates running for the statewide office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Such a change is necessary because OHA candidates are elected statewide, just as the Lieutenant Governor is, yet OHA candidates are authorized by HRS 11-423(d)(5) to only receive partial public funding at the rate of \$.20 multiplied by the number of voters in the last general election, whereas a candidate for Lieutenant Governor is able to receive public funding at the rate of \$1.40 multiplied by the number of voters in the last general election. This \$1.20 in lesser funding per voter available to an OHA candidate compared to what the Lieutenant Governor is now able to receive is unfair and inequitable on its face, especially when one considers that both offices must run for election across the entire state.

We support the amendments adopted by the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs through SB 728 SD1 as a means to increase OHA candidates' access to public funding while taking into account the historical data demonstrating that most OHA electoral campaigns spend at much lower amounts than do candidates for the Lieutenant Governor's office. The amounts set forth in SB 728 SD1 appear to strike a reasonable compromise in the amount of public funding which OHA candidates should be allowed to access.

Passage of SB 728 SD1 will decrease the financial burden on one's candidacy for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, may increase the quality of the candidates running for the OHA board, and may encourage more individuals to stand and run for election for these OHA offices.

Respectfully,



J. Kuhio Lewis
Chief Executive Officer



Tuesday, February 26, 2019

Senate Bill 728 SD1
Supporting the Intent

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Keith-Agaran and Wakai, and Members of the Committees on Ways & Means and Judiciary,

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i (The Party) **supports the intent of SB728 SD1 Relating to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs**, which increases the maximum amount of public funds available to each candidate running for the board of trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to fifteen percent of the expenditure limit established for each election and increases the amount each Board of Trustees candidate must raise in order to qualify for public funds.

The Party appreciates the legislature's interest in and ongoing discussion of public funding for candidates seeking public office, in this case for the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The Party supports public funding for all elections for public office.

For these reasons we support the intent of this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Josh Frost
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Zahava Zaidoff
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

SB-728-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 7:22:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY OF ESTHER KIA'AINA
IN SUPPORT OF SB 728, SD1 BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

February 26, 2019, 10 a.m., Conference Room 211

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

My name is Esther Kia'aina of Nanakuli, Oahu. I am testifying in support of SB 728, SD1, which increases the maximum amount of public funds available to candidates running for the Board of Trustees, Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

The importance of SB 728, SD1 is that it provides some form of equity in the amount of funds available to all OHA candidates, whether they are At-Large or Island Resident candidates, who must run a state-wide campaign. Such funds can be used for the necessary costs associated with outreach and campaigning on each of the islands.

I appreciate the Campaign Spending Commission's recommendations that have been incorporated into this current version of the bill. SB 728, SD1 will increase the amount of funds that OHA candidates are eligible to receive in public funding from \$1500 cumulatively for an election to \$21,383 each for the primary and general elections. This is an increase of \$41,266 from current state law. I believe it will incentivize qualified OHA candidates to run and increase vibrancy and competition.

I respectfully urge the committee members to support the passage of SB 728, SD1 out of your Committees.

Respectfully,

Esther Kia'aina
estherkiaaina@aol.com