



**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 WAYS AND MEANS
ON SENATE BILL NO. 97, SD 1
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

February 28, 2019

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 97, SD 1. This bill requires the Office of Elections to join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).

Joining ERIC would help us to maintain the accuracy of the voter registration rolls by allowing us to compare our voter registration file and driver license/identification card file with other member states. This will permit our election officials to determine if voters have moved to other jurisdictions, as they register to vote or obtain a driver license in another jurisdiction. Additionally, ERIC membership requires all driver license/identification card holders who are eligible to register to vote, but are not currently registered, to be sent a mailer encouraging them to register.

It will initially cost \$25,000 to join ERIC, and approximately \$63,000 to conduct the initial mailing to non-registered driver license and state identification card holders. We also estimate the annual membership fee would be \$23,000 based on voter registration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 97, SD 1.

SB-97-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 6:33:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

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:



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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

THURSDAY, February 28, 2019, 10:30 A.M., Room 211
SB 97 SD1 RELATING TO ELECTIONS

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Wakai and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB 97 SD1 which requires the Office of Elections to join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) and share information with counties to encourage voter participation and ensure integrity of voter registration rolls. The SD1 version of this measure also authorizes election officials to electronically access driver's license and civil identification databases; this supports implementation of an automatic voter registration system in Hawaii...

Joining ERIC would permit Hawaii voting officials to have the benefit of cross-checking voting list information from voter registration, motor vehicle lists, and US Post Office changes-of-address records from twenty states and the District of Columbia.

ERIC may help to resolve unintentional errors in a voter's Hawaii registration while preventing voter registration in more than one State. This is important for Hawaii, since we regularly have many people moving into and out of the State. We know registration officials are diligent in trying to maintain the integrity of our registration rolls; this modest investment with ERIC would be helpful.

According to a 2016 report from the federal Government Accounting Office,¹ a state's participation in ERIC leads to more accurate voter registration lists and cost savings for state and local election offices. State officials noted that ERIC data improve the accuracy of voter registration lists by identifying registrants whom elections administrators should remove for various reasons. For example, local officials in Oregon noted that ERIC lists identified over 900 registrants who died in another state, enabling election officials to remove most these registrants from Oregon's registration list.

¹ United States Government Accountability Office, "Elections; Issues Related to Registering Voters and Administering Elections," June 2016, p. 31



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This same report found that improved accuracy of registration lists translates into cost savings from decreased mailing costs as well as decreased staff time to maintain the voter registration lists. “Vote-by-mail” states, such as Colorado and Oregon, have a heightened interest in maintaining clean voter registration lists because of the costs associated with mailing a ballot to an incorrect address.²

In a study by The Pew Charitable Trusts, of King County, Washington, which conducts elections entirely by mail, there was a drop in undeliverable ballots from 17,911 in the 2013 primary to 11,174 in the 2014 primary, which county election officials attributed to Washington’s participation in ERIC.³

States without all vote-by-mail elections cited similar benefits. In Delaware, officials reported receiving about three bins of returned postcards instead of eight bins from the state’s bi-annual mailing to verify voters’ addresses, resulting in less money wasted on printing and postage for mailings that do not reach the intended recipient. And according to a Pew Charitable Trusts report, the director of elections in Minnesota cited approximately \$116,250 in savings to counties since the state joined ERIC in August 2014.⁴

The goal is to get voters registered accurately and \$25,000 for Hawaii to join ERIC strikes us as reasonable.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

² Officials in Oregon specifically cited the identification of deceased registrants from ERIC as particularly helpful.

³ The Pew Charitable Trusts, ERIC Reduces Undeliverable Ballots in King County, Washington, October 16, 2014.

⁴ The Pew Charitable Trusts, ERIC Promotes Long-Term Cost Savings in Minnesota, March 24, 2015.

SB-97-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 1:08:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Davlantes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-97-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2019 6:09:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB97, which will help reverse the pathetic voter turnout we've seen in recent elections,

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei