



## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 4, 2021    2:00 PM    Room 325

**In SUPPORT of HB 760:** Relating to Voting

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Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **supports HB 760.**

This makes completion of a voter registration application affidavit a mandatory part of all driver's license and identification card applications, automatically registers each applicant for voting, and requires sharing of information among the counties, Department of Transportation, and election personnel.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i is committed to ensuring a fair, open, and transparent democratic process. We encourage our members and supporters to actively protect their right to vote, have their voices heard in government, and engage in the legislative process. Automatic voter registration would make these efforts just that much easier for many Hawai'i residents. By making registration automatic whenever someone gets a driver's license or updates their address at the DMV, voters are more likely to be engaged and ready to participate in our electoral process. We welcome that—and so should our lawmakers.

Automatic voter registration is the logical next step in modernizing our elections by eliminating needless paperwork. It has been estimated that paper registration costs 30 times more than AVR. The possibility of human error in transcribing voter information from paper forms will be reduced and the state could save the nearly \$600,000 it spent in 2016 alone in processing paper forms. Furthermore, Hawai'i has had the lowest voter turnout in the U.S. for the last twenty years. AVR will not only simplify the process to register to vote, but is likely to save us money and result in increased turnout on Election Day.

Automatic voter registration has already been approved in 23 other states and is a common sense solution for Hawai'i. AVR will strengthen our democracy, increase the security of our elections, and is simply the most cost effective, efficient, and modern system available.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB 760.**

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 1:33:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HB740.

Hawaii needs to modernize it's voter registration system. Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) is one way to create efficiency while saving approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle.

I believe that AVR is a crucial step to ensuring that Hawaii US citizens have ease of access to voter registration, especially during non-election years.

Vote by Mail was a huge step forward and essential for maintaining physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. AVR, which is not new, is another step to removing voter registration barriers.

Hawaii's voter turnout needs to improve. AVR will help to increase voter turnout by increasing voter registration.

Thank you for your time and your public service.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

**Chair Mark Nakashima**  
**Vice Chair Scot Matayoshi**

**House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

**Thursday, February 4, 2021**  
**2:00 PM**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB740 RELATING TO VOTING**

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Jun Shin, I am a Junior at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and currently serve as an at-large board member for the Young Progressives Demanding Action. I am testifying today as an individual in **SUPPORT** of **HB740**, Relating to Voting.

Automatic voter registration (AVR) will make the process of being a registered voter easier and efficient, and we wouldn't even need to create a new process. We all go to the DMV, even as a non driving busser, I went to the DMV in order to get a State ID. In the future, I will have to go back to renew my State ID and if necessary, I will have to update the information I gave them previously.

With all that information already at the DMV, we have the opportunity here to smoothly make willing participants into new voters. No wonder AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Of course, this does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote. This would be a simple, but very important way to expand democratic participation.

I **SUPPORT HB740** and request for you to pass this bill out of your committee..

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,  
1561 Kanunu Street  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
Cell: 808-255-6663  
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 2:34:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Talofa -

I Support HB740

1. AVR will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not “opt-out” of being a registered voter, the person’s information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced with AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people’s current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters’ ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

2. AVR is cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

3. AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Fa'afetai



## **SUPPORT FOR HB740: RELATING TO VOTING**

House of Representatives Judiciary Committee (JHA)

Thursday, February 4, 2021 | 2:00 pm | via Video Conference

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the Committee,

Faith Action for Community Equity is a grassroots, interfaith organization driven by our members' deep spiritual commitment to addressing the root causes of social justice issues facing our community. **Faith Action is in support of HB740**, which would make an application for voter registration, including an affidavit, part of all driver license and state identification card applications. HB740 would also automatically register each applicant who elects to be registered to vote, unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote. HB740 would require the sharing of information among the counties, department of transportation, and election personnel.

Automatic Voter Registration will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not "opt-out" of being a registered voter, the person's information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be "automatically" registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced by AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people's current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters' ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

Two, AVR is cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

Three, AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Mahalo for considering our testimony in support of HB740.

If you have any questions, please contact Faith Action Executive Director Ashleigh Loa (808-746-2741, [aloa@faithactionhawaii.org](mailto:aloa@faithactionhawaii.org)).

Faith Action for Community Equity, P.O. Box 235950, Honolulu, HI 96823

[www.faithactionhawaii.org](http://www.faithactionhawaii.org)

(808) 746-2741



**Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Scot Matayoshi, Vice-Chair  
Thursday, February 4, 2021, 2:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference  
HB 740, Relating to Voting**

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Matayoshi and members of the JHA Committee:

On behalf of the Hawai`i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations, I would like to express our support for HB 740, Relating to Voting.

Hawai`i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) is a statewide, sector-wide professional association of nonprofits. Our mission is to unite and strengthen the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve the quality of life in Hawai`i. Our member organizations provide essential services to every community in the state.

HANO supports a civically engaged populace and believes all citizens should participate in the democratic process of voting to have a say in community matters.

HB 740 requires that any person who is eligible to vote and applies for a new or renewal motor vehicle driver's license, provisional license, or instruction permit, or a new, renewal, or duplicate state identification card be automatically registered to vote if that person is not already registered to vote unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote. Hawaii's voting turnout has been one of the lowest in the country for the last 20 years. Automatic voter registration (AVR) will help improve access to voting.

AVR will help modernize the election system and make it more accurate and secure. AVR is cost-effective, estimated to possibly save more than \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues.

AVR will help vote-by-mail implementation which is now done statewide. With the improved voter turnout in the 2020 election, vote-by-mail has shown that if the process of registering and voting is made more convenient, more people will vote. AVR will also ensure that Hawaii's voter rolls are accurate and up to date.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

Lisa Maruyama  
President and CEO



**ADA**

**HAWAII**

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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P.O. Box 23404  
Honolulu  
Hawaii 96823

February 2, 2021

TO: Chair Nakashima and members of JUD Committee

RE: HB 740 Relating to Voting

Support for hearing on Feb. 4

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support HB 740 as it would automatically register for voting when one gets a driver's license. These motor voter laws have helped to increase voter registration and therefore voter turnout. Critics have correctly pointed out people even with registration need a reason to vote. Yet the classic book on the topic is Who Votes by Ray Wolfinger. He argues easier registration laws can account for up to a 9 percentage point increase in voting over more restrictive states.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,  
John Bickel, President





Young Progressives Demanding Action  
P.O. Box 11105  
Honolulu, HI 96828

February 2, 2021

**TO: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**  
**RE: Testimony in support of HB740**

Dear Representatives,

Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) advocates for public policies that reflect the values of young people throughout the State of Hawai'i. One of those values is that an open democracy is a necessary component to ensuring a healthy society that is free of oppression.

Too often, the economic and social realities of life make participating in the democratic and civic processes unnecessarily burdensome for average citizens. Between working multiple jobs, studying to earn a degree to help us get ahead, taking care of our families—both keiki and aging kupuna—and allowing for the necessary level of social interactions we need to stay connected with our communities, young people in particular find it challenging to participate.

But recent improvements to our democratic system, including the option to testify here via zoom, as well as the state's highly successful vote by mail program have brought democracy a little closer to all of us. Democracy is not something that is ever complete—it is something we must work at and actively engage and participate in at every possible level of input if we hope to keep at bay the forces of fascism that prey on apathy and ignorance.

Passing Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) is the logical next step in strengthening our democracy through increased participation.

While AVR won't eliminate voter apathy—that will require the hard work of organizing—it will eliminate one barrier to participation. It's a quick and easy step that the state can take this year that will have dramatic results. How do we know? Because in other jurisdictions, implementation of Automatic Voter Registration policies have made huge differences in participation rates. One early-adopting jurisdiction (Oregon), now has a 90 percent registration



rate, and blew the rest of the country out of the water for voter participation in the 2018 midterm elections—68 percent compared to the national average of 49 percent. (Read more: <https://www.sightline.org/2018/12/13/voter-turnout-oregon-tops-charts-2018-midterms>).

Oregon also demonstrated that Automatic Voter Registration increases the diversity of voters too by enfranchising the very demographic groups that have the most difficulty finding time in their busy days to participate in the process: young people, struggling working class families, minorities—all of whom need to have an electoral voice and a seat at the policy table if we are to develop well-rounded, inclusive solutions to our problems that have genuine community buy-in.

If we are serious when we say that we value democracy, then let us show that we are willing to take action to live up to are values. Let us demonstrate that we mean what we say when we insist that a healthy democracy is the only practical defense against fascism. To live up to that value, we must make sure that we provide access to democracy for groups who struggle to find time to engage with the process. We lose out as a society when potential solutions to our problems are not heard. We lose out as a society when simple technical barriers keep people from participating.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Will Caron  
Board President & Secretary (2020–21)  
action@ypdahawaii.org



## HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 4, 2021

### H.B. 740 – RELATING TO VOTING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 740 which automatically registers each applicant who elects to be registered to vote and requires sharing of information among the counties, department of transportation, and election personnel.

The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy and essential to protect all other rights, therefore we must ensure that the voting process is easy to understand and participate in. Given Hawaii's infamously low voter turn out, the Legislature has taken appropriate steps to make it easier for residents to vote, which include implementing online voter registration in 2015, phasing in same-day registration in 2016, and establishing an all-mail election in 2019. The next logical step to improve and increase access to voting is to implement automatic voter registration, as many other states have done. Automatic voter registration reduces the time and effort it takes to register, ensures current addresses are on file, and reduces the overall costs to the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 740.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 6:46:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support this bill. Automatic voter registration is needed. We need our citizenry to vote. The easier you make it, the more people will vote. This is good poocy and governance. I see no drawbacks.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 6:57:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am a member of Common Cause Hawaii and though I have copied by their respond to many of the bills. I feel the same way on the issues raised.

One, AVR will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not “opt-out” of being a registered voter, the person’s information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced with AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people’s current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters’ ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

Two, AVR is cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing

undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

Three, AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 740.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona, 96740 HI

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 7:03:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shyla Moon	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Please make sure all registered voters are American citizens that are alive and not felons. Mahalo

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 8:14:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

This bill will encourage greater voter participation by making it easier to register to vote. Who could oppose that?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com | @LWVHawaii on Facebook

## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Thursday, February 4, 2021, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Room 325  
HB 740 RELATING TO VOTING

### TESTIMONY

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

Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Matayoshi, and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HB740. At the start of this session, 20 states and the District of Columbia have passed this voter-friendly reform<sup>1</sup>, and six bills have already been introduced on this subject in this session of the Legislature. The demand signal from the public is clear - we want “Opt-Out” Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).**

“Opt-Out” AVR builds upon Congress’s findings in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 that 1) voting is a fundamental right and 2) it is the duty of governments to promote the exercise of that right<sup>2</sup>.

This bill empowers voters by 1) including the process for registration with the application for a driver’s license or civil identification card, 2) including an opportunity for an applicant to participate in the State’s Address Confidentiality Program, and 3) not transmitting any information necessary to vote or change voter registration information if the applicant declines to register to vote or to update an existing record. “Opt-Out” AVR will promote - but not mandate - registration by making it convenient and cost-effective. The same proven and secure processes will continue to be used by the DMV to enter and update a voter’s information.

We note that this bill specifically identifies stakeholders who will have access to the voter registration data: the Department of Transportation, County Clerks, and the Office of Elections. We thank these agencies for preparatory work already done to make it possible to enact this law by January 1, 2022.

Accurate, frequently updated voter rolls complement the State’s new Voting by Mail elections by helping reduce erroneous and/or duplicate ballot mailing and offsetting the demand for registration services at Voter Service Centers. The savings in time and money can add up quickly.

Voting is a right, and voters must be registered to exercise that right. “Opt-Out” AVR reinforces those facts by providing a secure, convenient, and cost-effective way to get and keep voters registered. It does not guarantee that turnout will rise, but it will remove a barrier to that turnout.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

1. “Automatic Voter Registration.” *National Conference of State Legislatures*. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/automatic-voter-registration.aspx>, accessed 25 January 2021.

2. 52 USC §20501(a).



**Marcella Alohalani Boido, M. A.**

***Hawaii State Judiciary Certified Spanish Court Interpreter, Tier 4***

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Resident & Voter, Senate District !0, House District 21, Moili'ili, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

To: Chair Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair Scot Z. Matayoshi  
Members, House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian  
Affairs

Re: HB 740, **SUPPORT**

Date: 2/4/2021, 2 p.m.

Thank you for hearing this bill, which I have read carefully.

By now I am sure you are aware of efforts to either enfranchise voters or disenfranchise them, across the country. This bill is a step towards furthering the enfranchisement of all of Hawaii's current and potential voters. It facilitates voter registration, which, of course, is the first step in the voting process.

As such, I support this bill.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 12:12:03 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Automatic Voter Registration will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. It is estimated that it will save \$1 million statewide in EACH election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues.

Also, it will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated.

Overall, it encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:06:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

This bill about Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not “opt-out” of being a registered voter, the person’s information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced with AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people’s current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters’ ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

AVR is also cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii's US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 740.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:09:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / [kat.caphi@gmail.com](mailto:kat.caphi@gmail.com)



## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair

Representative Scott Matayoshi, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 4, 2021

2:00 PM

## SUPPORT FOR HB 740 - AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai'i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the more than 4,100 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that 1,000 of Hawai'i's imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports this measure. A vibrant democracy demands participation and voting is an expression of that right and responsibility. Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure by keeping our voter rolls more updated and secure.

AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Especially during this challenging time for Hawai'i - AVR is a great idea!

Community Alliance on Prisons urges you to pass this measure to encourage more participation.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

*"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."*

*Harriet Tubman*

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:36:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Edward B Hanel Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Concur with comments submitted by Common Cause Hawaii. Upgrading the voter registration process is the logical thing to do to support voter participation.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:41:44 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Testimony SUPPORTING HB 740, Automatic Voter Registration

Thank you to the Chair and the Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony.

In this age of attacks on the legitimacy of our elections, we need to safeguard and enhance everyone's ability to vote. One important tool is Automatic Voter Registration. AVR has several advantages:

-It will modernize voter registration and make it more accurate and secure, by registering everyone who gets their driver's license at the DMV, rather than requiring people to go through an extra procedure to vote, by obtaining their correct address, and by matching their voter and ID information.

-In this time of budget austerity, it saves money versus paper registration and reduces undeliverable mail.

-AVR is more inclusive by increasing access to voting.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

-Larry Meacham

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 9:45:29 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is very encouraging that at a time when our democracy is being severely tested nationally, that lawmakers in Hawaii are taking steps to make sure democracy works for everyone. Income level, location, and the stresses of daily living should not keep people from participating in the voting process. This bill helps ensure that voting is accessible to all by making voter registration and updates something that happens with very little extra effort when visiting the DMV. Yet it preserves the freedom of people to opt out as well. Especially after the success of Vote By Mail statewide, this measure-- which also saves thousands of dollars by ensuring greater accuracy in voter addresses-- makes great sense. Thank you for introducing it. I urge the committee to pass it and move this important aid to democracy forward. Mahalo.



**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:11:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice-chair Matayoshi, and members of the JHA Committee,

My name is Dyson Chee and I am testifying in support of HB740 for three reasons.

One, AVR will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not “opt-out” of being a registered voter, the person’s information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced with AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people’s current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters’ ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

Two, AVR is cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

Three, AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 740.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:20:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

In this legislative session, we are presented with an idea of such importance and of such

non-partisan good sense, that only simple inertia could possibly prevent its passage. And, it

comes at a time when common cause is dearly needed as we rebound from a recent

insurrection at our nation's Capitol and challenges to the very foundation of our democracy.

That idea is Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), already passed by 23 states and the District of Columbia. The idea is as simple as it is smart: The Department of Motor Vehicles would electronically submit to election officials, updated information for voter registration of US citizens whenever citizens apply for, or renew their driver's license or State ID. Applicants can choose to opt out and not have their information transmitted if they have no desire to exercise their right to vote. This simple procedure would yield an estimated cost savings to the state of more than a million dollars per election cycle. No small matter when the state is crying poverty at every turn and looking for savings.

**The state must make voting accessible to all, wherever they live, regardless of income**

As the late Congressman, John Lewis famously said, "The vote is precious. It is the most

powerful non-violent tool we have in a democratic society, and we must use it."

Clearly, the moment has come when we need to rededicate ourselves to building trust in

government, and that starts with making the vote accessible to all. Living in a rural area

without easy access to broadband; struggling to make ends meet; being stressed for time. All of

these are factors that inhibit voter engagement. We have seen too many pernicious efforts to

suppress the vote. Making AVR a reality in Hawaii is an idea so worthy that only inertia could

prevent its passage. Please pass AVR in Hawaii.

Thank you.

John Webster

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:21:43 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Younghi Overly	AAUW of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Members of AAUW of Hawaii are grateful for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 740, which would automatically register any person who is eligible to vote and applies for state issued license/ID. AVR would make our voter registration system more accurate, secure, and cost-effective. It would expand access to voting which is crucial for our democracy.

Please pass this important measure and join 18 states and Washington DC who already have AVR law.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is a state-wide organization made up of six branches (Hilo, Honolulu, Kauai, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu) and includes just over 650 active members with over 3800 supporters statewide. As advocates for gender equity, AAUW of Hawaii promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons.

Malaho.

Younghee Overly, public policy chair of AAUW of Hawaii

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[1] <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/automatic-voter-registration.aspx>

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:46:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
amy agbayani	Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha.

Please accept my testimony in strong support of HB740.

FYI I have included my OpEd Star Advertiser 03/30/2020 in support of AVR.

Amy Agbayani

Agbayani, Chair of Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights

These are tough times. And tough times demand we do more. We must truly take seriously our responsibilities to take care of ourselves, our families and our community during the COVID 19 local and global crisis. And part of our personal and civic responsibility is to keep us functioning well as a democracy. I count making voting accessible to all communities-- regardless of ethnicity or geography or economic standing-- a critical part of the essential housekeeping that ensures the health of our democracy. That is why I am so pleased that Hawai'i has moved to Vote By Mail this year statewide. It is a smart move that saves time and money and makes it possible for everyone who wants to make their voice heard to do so. But Vote By Mail will work as it should only if our voter rolls are current and updated.

Automatic Voter Registration(AVR) is the next logical step to ensure that we, the people, are not inadvertently disenfranchised. If we enact AVR, the updated information we provide the Division of Motor Vehicles will be automatically transmitted to the Office of Elections— unless we decline to allow them to do so. All of us, no matter how busy, do make sure we renew our driving license or get a state ID. It is important to note that AVR does not compel people to vote. It simply ensures a state of readiness so that when elections are upon us, people who may have been too busy to pay attention to the status of their voter registration are in fact ready to vote.

As an educator and civil rights advocate for women, lgbt, persons with disabilities, immigrants and underrepresented ethnic groups, I support equality and inclusion. I want to remove barriers to voter participation. It is not enough to lament the poor voter turnout in Hawai'i. It is also necessary to acknowledge that when people are rushing between two or three low wage jobs, taking care of their family and putting food on the table, updating their voter registration is a task that can easily fall by the wayside. AVR is one answer to that challenge: it will make it easier for voters to update their voter registration and vote.

As we are addressing the COVID 19 crisis and everyday tasks, let's also take the opportunity to make government work better for people. I urge lawmakers to pass AVR this year. Any policy that improves community engagement and saves the state and individuals time and money is something that we should seize and implement without delay. I hope lawmakers don't take their eye off the ball relative to this smart measure to make us a more vibrant democracy. AVR can make voting just a little bit less stressful and make our state a lot more inclusive. That is something we should all welcome.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:48:41 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i fully supports HB 740.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
Chair

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:04:03 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted K Blake	Koloa District Community	Support	No

Comments:

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) Will Help Improve Life In The Islands.

By Ted Kawahinehelelani Blake

Last year was a terrible year. Who can disagree? So many things we wanted to get done got shunted to the side because of COVID19. But now we must catch up. That means getting more eligible voters engaged in our electoral politics just as they were engaged in helping to feed their

neighbors. Ordinary people stepped up. We cannot lose that momentum and that level of civic engagement. That's why I am happy that Speaker Saiki and a number of other lawmakers have introduced bills to make Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) a reality in Hawaii. This year we can make it happen.

AVR will make voting more accessible, secure, and convenient. Here's how it works. When you go to the DMV to apply for, or renew your driving license or your State of Hawai'i ID, eligible citizens will have their updated information automatically sent to the Office of Elections to allow them to vote when Election Day rolls around. The bill includes an "opt-out" provision if an individual decides they do not want to exercise their right to vote. But hopefully that is a provision few will choose. After all, as we like to say here, "no vote, no grumble."

During the 1960s and 1970s Kaua'i led the state with 80% or more registered voters turning out to vote? Politicians paid attention to their voting constituents. Citizen's complaints were taken seriously, and politicians responded.

But the demographics of our islands have changed, as have the issues. Too often we have opinions about various issues, but do nothing to change things. This is something you can help make happen. The implementation of statewide Vote-By-Mail last year was very successful. We need to build on that and make our election infrastructure work more efficiently to give communities everywhere access to the vote. That includes rural areas where the internet may be slow or nonexistent, or areas where people are struggling with multiple jobs and don't make voter registration a high priority. That includes predominantly native Hawaiian communities.



If we want to have more of a say in how your community and our islands are served—if we want good public infrastructure, affordable housing, and our special places kept special—tell your lawmakers to support Speaker Saiki in passing AVR.

It will ensure that your address is correct so you can get your ballot in the mail and make your voice heard. AVR will mean less waste because there will be fewer undeliverable ballots. That means less labor and less waste on printing and postage. One estimate is that we could save up to a million dollars per election cycle if we had AVR. We cannot afford to pass up savings of that magnitude.

Lawmakers have a great opportunity here to ensure every eligible Hawaiian has access to the polls and make government more efficient and secure. Please let your legislator know you want

them to pass Automatic Voter Registration this year. Now, thanks to changes brought on by the pandemic, you can register to testify via ZOOM. I hope you will.

Bionote:

Ted Kawahinehelelni Blake was born and raised in Kā• loa, Kaua'i. He is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools Attended Orange Coast College, the College of Idaho and the University of Hawai'i. He is a member of Mā• lama Kā• loa, Kā• loa Community Assn, E Alu Pā« and KUA (Kua'Āina Ulu 'Auamo) and the Kā• loa District Community.

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 740

TO: Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Matayoshi, & JHA Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz  
Grants, Development & Policy Manager

DATE: February 4, 2021 (2:00 PM)

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Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** HB 740, which provides for automatic voter registration (AVR) for anyone eligible to vote who applies for a new, renewal, or duplicate driver's license or state identification, with an opt-out provision.

Last year's elections raised issues that require legislative attention, including more voter service centers and the ongoing need to update voter addresses. The state reportedly spent considerable sums on postal charges in mailing ballots that were returned because of address changes. AVR would help streamline and safeguard the mail ballot process by capturing a good number of those who have moved.

HHRC supports measures that facilitate increased voter registration and participation. HHRC works with many individuals who are impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Making voter registration automatic, particularly when combined with an all-mail election, would give many currently not inclined to participate in the electoral process a tangible opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

As noted by the Brennan Center for Justice (BCJ), automatic voter registration reforms that have an opt-out provision where agencies transfer voter registration information electronically to elections officials "[increase registration rates, clean up the voter rolls, and save states money.](#)" BCJ also notes that 16 states and D.C. have approved the policy, with over a third of all Americans living in a jurisdiction that features AVR of some kind.

This is an important measure that will foreseeably expand registration and voter participation. It builds upon reforms, including vote-by-mail, enacted by the Hawai'i Legislature and signed into law in recent years. Ideally, Hawai'i would be among those states where voter information is provided to elections officials by other social service agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**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 JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 740  
RELATING TO VOTING

February 4, 2021

Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 740. The purpose of this bill is to make an application for voter registration, including an affidavit, part of all driver license and state identification card applications; automatically registers each applicant who elects to be registered to vote, unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote; and requires sharing of information among the counties, department of transportation, and election personnel.

This bill would provide more access to voter registration, as it requires the applicant, for a driver license or state identification card, to directly address the question of whether they want to register to vote or to opt out as part of the application process. This bill also ensures the accuracy of the voter registration rolls by electronically transmitting voter registration data between the driver licensing and identification card database and the statewide voter registration system. The electronic sharing of data between driver licensing officials and election officials helps to ensure timely compliance with the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act. 52 USC § 21083(a)(5)(B) & 52 USC § 20504.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 740.

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:48:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support HB740.

Statement Before The  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Thursday, February 4, 2021

2:00 PM

Via Videoconference, Conference Room 325

in consideration of  
**HB 740**  
**RELATING TO VOTING.**

Chair NAKASHIMA, Vice Chair MATAYOSHI, and Members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Common Cause Hawaii is testifying in support of HB 740, which (1) makes an application for voter registration, including an affidavit, part of all driver license and state identification card applications, (2) automatically registers each applicant who elects to be registered to vote, unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote, and (3) requires sharing of information among the counties, department of transportation, and election personnel. HB 740 is known as Automatic Voter Registration (“AVR”).

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to strengthening democracy through voting modernization efforts. Common Cause Hawaii supports AVR as a much-needed voter modernization tool for the benefit Hawaii.

One, AVR will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. When a person goes to the County of Department of Motor Vehicles and does not “opt-out” of being a registered voter, the person’s information and data are automatically transferred between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections offices. This does not mean that a U.S. citizen will be “automatically” registered to vote by simply enacting AVR. It will still be necessary for a U.S. citizen to interact with a government official through the DMV—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote.

Thus, AVR will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system augmented by AVR, ballots will then be mailed to people’s current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters’ ballots will match their identification for election security. AVR would lessen the number of people who would need to go in-person to a voter service center to register to vote and, thereby, shorten the wait times.

Two, AVR is cost-effective. AVR has been estimated, according to one evaluation, to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail related to registration issues. Given the budget crisis facing the state as a result of the COVID-pandemic, cost-saving from AVR is not something that we can ignore.

Three, AVR encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. AVR is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii US citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 740. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



Hawaii  
Holding Power Accountable

350

Hawaii



empowering women since 1881  
of Hawaii



DATE: Thursday, February 3, 2021  
TIME: 2:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Via Videoconference, Conference Room 325

**Testimony in support of HB 740, Relating to Voting**

Aloha, we are testifying on behalf of the AVR Hawaii Coalition in **support** of automatic voter registration, which provides for the voter registration through the Department of Motor Vehicles of any U.S. citizen who is eligible to vote. Through this process, voters automatically register to vote when they apply for a new or renewal motor vehicle driver's license, provisional license, instruction permit, or a new, renewal, or duplicate identification unless they decline registration. This bill also authorizes access to and electronic transmission of databases maintained or operated by the counties or the department of transportation to election officials.

This past year during the pandemic, we saw that mail-in voting allowed registered voters to more conveniently exercise their right to vote. As voters become more comfortable using mail ballots, it becomes even more important for us to have a system in place to ensure eligible voters in Hawaii are registered at the proper address to streamline and safeguard the mail ballot process. Hawaii's voter rolls need to be accurate, secure, and complete for voting by mail to function properly, and automatic voter registration helps to achieve these goals. Ultimately, this policy improves our democracy and our voter participation rates.

- Automatic voter registration will give voters the opportunity to register to vote or update their address at the same time they complete their driver license application or application for a state identification card. They will also have the opportunity to decline to register to vote. For any applicant who does not decline, the driver licensing office then transmits application information securely and electronically to election officials. Please be assured that no U.S. citizen is "automatically" registered to vote simply by the passing of this legislation. It will be necessary for the U.S. citizen to interact with a government official—and not decline voter registration—to be registered to vote or to update their address.
- Any person who does not want to register to vote or to update their address simply ticks a checkbox on the application to decline. No information will be transmitted for any person who ticks the decline checkbox. "Automatic" simply refers to the transfer of information and data between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the elections offices in charge of voter registration for those who want to vote.

If voting is the cornerstone of democracy, voter registration is its bedrock. 'A 'ohe hana nui ke alu 'ia – no task is too big when done together by all. Please support automatic voter registration.

The AVR Hawaii Coalition is comprised of organizations and individuals who support automatic voter registration in Hawaii. For more information go to [avrhawaii.com](http://avrhawaii.com)

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 12:36:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erika Johnson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I moved to Hawai'i from Lima, Peru a few years ago and recently became an American citizen. I am so proud that I will be able to vote in the next federal and state elections. Voting is a right and a responsibility of all citizens, and I think voter registration should be more convenient and accessible. In my native country, voter registration is not necessary. Any citizen is able and expected to vote after they reach the age of 18 years old. They just need to keep their addresses updated in the *Documento Nacional de Identidad* (National Identity Card) system so that they can vote at an official polling place close to where they live; and because of this, voter turnout is over 80%.

For the last two U.S. federal elections, I was surprised to learn how low the voter turnout was in Hawai'i—about 51% for the Primary and nearly 70% for the General in 2020. In 2016 that was about 35% for the Primary and more than 58% for the General. It appears that the higher turnout in the recent election may have been linked to the added convenience of registered voters receiving a mail-in ballot automatically at their home addresses. This simple convenience contributed to a significant increase in civic engagement, something that is very good for our democracy.

Since most adults, even in the U.S., need a government identification card, providing the option to register to vote when an eligible citizen applies for, or updates a Hawai'i driver's license or state identification card makes very good sense. There is no reason not to include an option for all eligible voters to register to vote, or make the voter registration automatic, unless the person decides to opt-out of registering to vote. Having implemented Vote by Mail so successfully, it is time to take the next step of enacting automatic voter registration.

I recognize how having the convenience of automatic voter registration will help Hawai'i's citizens participate in the political process by reducing barriers to access. Voting is the most basic right of all citizens. Anything we can do to make voting more accessible will only contribute to more citizens' voices being heard. It is time for Hawai'i to join the growing number of states nationwide who recognize the efficiency and cost-savings in automatic voter registration and have made it a law. As a new American, I am one of those aspiring voters who would welcome the convenience of automatic voter registration because I believe it will help strengthen our democracy. I strongly support House Bill 740.



Thank you for providing this opportunity for me to testify,

Erika Johnson



Committee: Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 4, 2021, 2:00 p.m.  
Place: Via videoconference  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in Support of H.B. 740, Relating to Voting

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") writes **in support of H.B. 740, which would automatically register eligible people to vote or update voter information when they apply for or renew a state identification card or driver's license, with the option to decline registration.**

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and a fundamental right upon which all our civil liberties rest. With the correct safeguards in place, automatic voter registration helps remove barriers to registration for eligible voters, updates voter registration rolls, and leads to more efficient elections. The automatic voter registration program created by H.B. 740 would make our DMVs more efficient by electronically transmitting voter registration information from the agency to election officials. Eligible U.S. citizens will be registered to vote, unless they opt out, and people who are ineligible to vote would be protected from erroneous registration. If a person is already registered to vote, the process established by H.B. 740 will update their address unless they opt out. The ACLU of Hawai'i believes that H.B. 740 contains the appropriate safeguards to ensure greater access to the vote, while also protecting people against erroneous registration.

The ACLU of Hawai'i urges the Committee to pass this measure, and respectfully requests that in its committee report, the Committee recommend that in the future, the automatic voter registration program be expanded to apply to forms or applications submitted to a government office, such as applications for public assistance and intake forms at jails. Limiting automatic voter registration to applications to renew or obtain a driver's license or State ID may disadvantage marginalized communities who are less likely to obtain licenses or IDs. If the Committee is inclined to make this recommendation, we would be happy to assist in reviewing government forms that could potentially be used for automatic voter registration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96801  
T: 808.522-5900  
F: 808.522-5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)

Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
February 4, 2021  
Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,



Mandy Fernandes  
Policy Director  
ACLU of Hawai'i

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.*

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96801  
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F: 808.522-5909  
E: [office@acluHawai'i.org](mailto:office@acluHawai'i.org)  
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[facebook.com/AARPHawaii](https://facebook.com/AARPHawaii)

**The State Legislature  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Thursday, February 4, 2021  
2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Mark Nakashima, Chair

RE: H.B. 740 Relating to Voting

Dear Rep. Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with nearly 145,000 members in Hawai'i.

AARP Hawai'i supports H.B. 740 which makes an application for voter registration a part of all driver license and state identification card applications. We believe that Hawaii should adopt voter registration and voting systems and procedures that expand the range of voting choices. Public policy should encourage and promote maximum participation in the electoral process.

Requiring those who get or update a license to register to vote (or change address) – or opt-out of doing so – does indeed promote maximum participation. It doesn't require drivers to register vote but does require them to make the affirmative choice to decline to do so, which is their right. Doing it through this opt-out process encourages participation in what AARP believes is among the most basic of all political rights – the right to vote.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to support H.B. 740.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keali'i Lopez".

Keali'i Lopez, AARP Hawai'i  
State Director

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 1:54:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I urge you to enact Automatic Voter Registration this legislative session. It will make Hawai'i's voter registration system more accurate and secure. When citizens update their address at the DMV, it will transfer to the county elections office without the need for anyone to re-enter the data. With voter rolls updated automatically, fewer ballots will go to the wrong address. More people registering at the DMV and receiving ballots in the mail will reduce the number of voters needing to access a voter service center. In these tough economic times, the estimated \$1M this measure will save each voting cycle seems like a no-brainer. Mahalo.

LATE

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 2:02:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support



To: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and committee members

From: Amy Monk, Democratic Women Caucus Co-Chair

Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 740 Re Automatic Voter Registration

Date: February 3, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of H.B. 740

There are so many positive aspects of automatic voter registration (AVR). There is money to be saved by using the drivers license form for automatic voter registration. It would eliminate a separate voter registration form. I'd like to tell you my personal election experience.

A few weeks before my driver's license expired, I finally decided to get up at 5 a.m. to stand in the DMV line to renew my driver's license. I got an appointment and returned in the afternoon with completed a renewal form and supporting documentation. But to register to vote, I had to complete a different form. I did notice everything on the voter form was also asked on the driver's license form, but no problem since I spent the day renewing my license.

In 2018 and 2020, I was an election observer. Ballot signatures are verified electronically and only sent to for human review if the signatures don't match. I watched as the election staff called up samples of signatures for comparison, and there they were...the Driver's License form and the voter form. Perhaps there was once a good reason for a separate voter form, but it's does not appear necessary any longer.

More importantly, automatic voter registration will make our elections more democratic because more people will find it convenient to register and hopefully more citizens will exercise their right to vote.

Voters rolls will be more accurate because people will eventually change their address on a driver's license, but they will never send in a change of address to a county clerk. From the point of view of an elected official, a political party, or the County Clerk, we would all benefit from a more accurate voter roll.

LATE

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 9:53:22 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support HB740. Just look at the voter suppression in the last election. Now is the time for AVR!

Brodie Lockard  
Board Member, Common Cause Hawaii



LATE

**HB-740**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 12:09:11 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. We need AVR to ensure that we are doing everything we can to support an effective and efficient voting process.



LATE

TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN  
DEREK J. CHOW  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 4, 2021  
2:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Teleconference

**H.B. 740**  
**RELATING TO VOTING**

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

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The Department of Transportation **supports** this bill with modifications. This bill makes an application for voter registration, including an affidavit, part of all driver license and state identification card applications. Automatically registers each applicant who elects to be registered to vote, unless the applicant affirmatively declines to be registered to vote. Requires sharing of information among the counties, department of transportation, and election personnel.

We have reservations about the voter registration portion that requires the driver's licensing clerk to assist applicants to participate in the address confidentiality program. For those parts, we defer to the Counties.

The word "directly" should be removed from subsection (d) on Page 4, line 11 of the bill, because election officials do not have direct access to the desired data; rather, they have indirect access via a web service.

On lines 15 and 16 of subsection (d) the chief election officer should be replaced with the Director of Transportation. Pursuant to Section 286-172, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Director of Transportation has the authority to determine the distribution of the personal information contained in the driver license and civil identification statewide traffic records system. The Federal Drivers Privacy Protection Act, 18 U.S.C. §2721, prohibits the release and use of data to any government agency except when used to carry out its function. Similarly, Section 92F-19, Hawaii Revised Statutes, limits the disclosure of government records to any other agency unless it is necessary for the performance of the requesting agency's duties and functions. Therefore, we do not support giving the chief election officer full access to the driver license and State ID file as proposed. Such a proposal would result in a direct conflict with Federal and existing State laws.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.