



**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 SENATE BILL NO. 159, SD 1, HD 1
RELATING TO VOTING

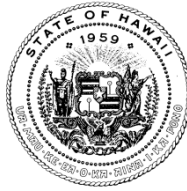
April 1, 2021

Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 159, SD 1, HD 1. The purpose of this bill is to make an application for voter registration part of all state identification card or driver license applications; require applicants to choose to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's voter registration information; require sharing of certain information among the counties, Department of Transportation, election personnel, and the online voter registration system.

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 as part of the application process. Additionally, this bill 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 Senate Bill No. 159, SD 1, HD 1.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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

April 1, 2021
1:30 P.M.

State Capitol, Teleconference

LATE

S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1
RELATING TO VOTING

House Committee on Finance

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports with amendments** S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, that intends to revise the examiner of drivers' duties and responsibilities regarding voter registration. The DOT has already been working closely with the State Office of Elections (SOE) to satisfy the requirements of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. The current driver's license and state ID card application forms already allow for the voter registration of the applicant and the computer systems are being modified to electronically transmit the voter information. A sample of the online driver's license application form is attached that demonstrates that the name and address information that is entered onto the driver's license application part of the form is automatically transferred to the voter registration part of the application. The hardcopy application is a two-part carbonless form.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the DOT and SOE was signed by both parties in August 2017. Should there be a need to modify the voter registration form or computer systems, the counties, DOT and the SOE will continue to work collaboratively as they have already demonstrated with the current application forms and MOA to ensure the driver's license and state identification card application forms reflect all future state and federally legislated requirements.

The bill does clarify when the information is allowed to be transmitted to the voter registration database. It is recommended that the bill be amended to remove who the voter information is to be delivered to because it is our understanding that the clerk of the county and election officials have access to the online voter registration system.

Revise Page 4, Line 21 and Page 5, Line 1 as follows:

Page 4:

14 (b) The submission of the application for voter
15 registration together with the license or permit application
16 shall be deemed to authorize the examiner of drivers to collect
17 and transmit the information necessary to register the qualified
18 applicant as a voter or make changes to the qualified
19 applicant's voter registration information if the applicant made
20 such a choice, and the examiner of drivers shall electronically
21 transmit the necessary information to ~~[the clerk of the county in]~~

Page 5:

1 ~~[which the qualified applicant resides, election officials, and]~~
2 the online voter registration system pursuant to
3 section 11- (d).

It is recommended that the bill clarify SECTION 1, Page 2, Lines 10 thru 18, for the scenario that the applicant chooses to register as a voter but did not provide documents to prove U. S. citizenship. If the intent is to not transmit any voter registration information for an applicant that does not demonstrate U.S. citizenship even if the applicant chooses to register to vote or make changes to their voter registration information, then the bill should be amended as follows:

10 The examiner of drivers shall not transmit any information
11 necessary to register an applicant as a voter nor change any
12 voter registration information if the applicant makes a choice
13 not to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's
14 voter registration information~~[-], or [The examiner of drivers shall~~
15 ~~not transmit any information related to a voter application or~~
16 ~~changes to the applicant's voter registration information if]~~the
17 applicant presents a document demonstrating a lack of United
18 States citizenship.

Similar amendments to the above would also be needed in SECTION 2, Page 5, Lines 4 thru 13, and SECTON 3, Page 6, Lines 20 – 21 thru Page 7, Lines 1 – 8.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4800
TTY: (808) 241-5116



SCOTT K. SATO
Deputy County Clerk

Facsimile: (808) 241-6207
E-mail: elections@kauai.gov

**ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101
LIHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAII 96766-1819

LATE

April 1, 2021

**TESTIMONY OF JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON SENATE BILL NO. 159, SD 1, HD 1
RELATING TO VOTING**

Dear Chair Luke and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 159, SD 1, HD 1. This Bill makes an application for voter registration a part of all state identification card or driver's license applications; requires applicants to choose to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's voter registration information; and requires the sharing of certain information among the counties, department of transportation, election personnel, and the online voter registration system.

Senate Bill 159, SD 1, HD 1 will also require any person who is eligible to vote and who applies for a driver's license or identification card to automatically be registered to vote and will allow the electronic transmission of necessary information to the clerk of the county in which the applicant resides, to election officials, and to the online voter registration system.

The Bill will prohibit the transmission of any information related to voter registration or any changes to the applicant's voter registration information, if the applicant presents a document that demonstrates a lack of United States citizenship.

Finally, adopting automatic voter registration will significantly reduce the number of unregistered individuals appearing at the voter service center and the resulting service delays caused by the same day voter registration process.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 159, SD 1, HD 1.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:25:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
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, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization, supports Senate Bill 159 SD1 HD 1.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.

Chair

LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:37:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pride at Work - Hawaii	Pride @ Work - Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Pride at Work - Hawai'i, the state-wide chapter of Pride At Work (a constituency group of the national AFL-CIO) and an affiliate of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO, fully supports Senate Bill 159 SD 1 HD 1.

Mahalo nui loa,

Pride at Work - Hawai'i



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 FINANCE

Thursday, April 1, 2021, 1:30 p.m. VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Room 308
SB 159 SD1 HD1 RELATING TO VOTING

TESTIMONY

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

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB 159 SD1 HD1. As of the start of this session, 20 states and the District of Columbia have passed this voter-friendly reform¹; 4 bills were introduced on this subject in this session. The demand signal from Hawaii's voters is clear - they want "Opt-Out" Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).

This bill 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 right².

The measure empowers voters by letting them affirmatively choose whether their information is used to register to vote or update their registration when they interact with the Department of Motor Vehicles. AVR promotes - but does not mandate - voter registration by making it convenient and cost-effective. Proven and secure processes are already in place to handle this information and will continue to be used to enter and update a voter's information. AVR would also help County Clerks keep the voter registration rolls more current. With registrations more accurate and more frequently updated, errors in ballot delivery and demand for registration services at Voter Service Centers could be reduced as well. The savings in time and money should add up quickly.

We are pleased that this version of the measure requires providing voters information about the "Address Confidentiality Program" and hope the bill can be further amended to make it possible for voters to request this assistance in a separate application as part of registering to vote, further eliminating another barrier to registering and enrolling applicants from the outset without a separate application for this program. It should be possible to do this while avoiding making the affidavit for voter registration too wordy.

We do not think it is appropriate to suggest the Examiner of Drivers Licenses should be determining whether an applicant is a United States citizen, as would be required under language in Section 11 (b) and 286-A, (b). We recognize why the Department of Transportation is concerned about this question but believe that the determination of citizenship eligibility should continue to be the responsibility of registration officials in the County Clerks offices, as currently required by law.



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Voting is a right, and voters must be registered to exercise that right. AVR reinforces these 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.

This version of the measure contains a defective date. We urge the bill be effective January 1, 2022.

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).



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

March 30, 2021

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
RE: Testimony in support of SB159 SD1 HD1

Dear Representatives,

Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) **supports** SB159 SD1 HD1. Our organization 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 we would prefer an opt-out program, which would be more effective, we will support an opt-in program this year.

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

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 3:12:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Rainbow Family 808	Support	No

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 definitely is in strong support of SB159. Please pass this bill. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr. Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 1, 2021 1:30 PM

In **SUPPORT** of **SB159 SD1 HD1**: Relating to Voting

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **supports SB159 SD1 HD1** to enact automatic voter registration, whether it be either opt-in or opt-out.

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 SB159**.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 4:54:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Field	Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports SB 159, SD1, HD1. Thank you!



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
The Senate
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

April 1, 2021

S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO VOTING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 which makes an application for voter registration part of all state identification card or driver's license applications, requires applicants to choose to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's voter registration information, and requires the sharing of certain information among the counties, department of transportation, election personnel, and online voter registration system.

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 turnout, 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 S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 1, 2021

1:30 p.m.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB 159 SD1 HD1 - AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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 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 1,075 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 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 sacred right and responsibility. Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) will modernize our voter registration system making it more accurate and secure by keeping our voter rolls more updated and secure.

We support AVR regardless of whether AVR is opt-out or opt-in because, as Common Cause has articulated in their testimony, the difference between opt-in and opt-out is not great. AVR will **NOT** alter long-standing existing privacy laws¹ and cause the disclosure of voter registration information².

Our 2020 election during this public health pandemic is evidence that mail-in voting allowed registered voters to more conveniently exercise their right and responsibility 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 Hawai`i are registered at the proper address to streamline and safeguard the mail ballot process.

¹ Hawaii Revised Statutes § 11-97(a)

² Hawaii Administrative Rules § 3-177-160(c)

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.

AVR WILL NOT	AVR WILL
<p>AVR WILL NOT force people to register to vote.</p> <p>AVR WILL NOT force people to vote once registered or if already registered.</p>	<p>AVR WILL improve election security by updating our voter rolls.</p> <p>AVR WILL improve election security by making sure our ballots go to the correct, current addresses.</p> <p>AVR WILL save money by reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and mail delivery problems with either opt-out or opt-in.</p>

AVR has been estimated to save approximately \$1 million statewide in each election cycle by eliminating paper-based registrations and decreasing undeliverable mail that is related to registration issues.

Ultimately, this policy improves our democracy and our voter participation rates. Especially during this challenging time for Hawai`i – AVR strives toward a more vibrant democracy!

Community Alliance on Prisons respectfully asks the committee to pass this measure so that the people of Hawai`i are reassured that their votes truly do count. Please give the people hope.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

“Voting is a civic sacrament.”

Theodore Hesburgh

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 6:30:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Shimei	Indivisible Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

IN SUPPORT

SB 159 will increase intragovernment efficiency, streamline costs, and provide up-to-date voter rolls and addresses. We are working on making voting as easy, efficient, and comprehensive as possible, and we need to do the same for registering to vote.

DMV and voter registration are two functions for which the State is already responsible. Increased efficiency and accuracy should always be goals in government, especially when money is tight.

Hawaii has been a leader in voting by mail. Let us continue to be a leader in making voting as safe, secure, inclusive, and painless as possible - registering to vote is the first step.



March 31, 2021

To: House Committee on Finance Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Ty Cullen and Finance Committee members
From: Hawai'i Democratic Party Women's Caucus
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 159 SD1 HD 1

Thank you for allowing this testimony in SUPPORT of SB 159.

In 2015, California and Oregon were the first two states initiating automatic voter registration. Today, a total of 20 states have adopted some form of automatic voter registration. These states have discovered the many benefits to Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).

Automatic Voter Registration removes barriers to registration for eligible voters and increase voter participation. By registering through a routine and necessary transaction such as those at the DMV, voters won't have to worry about registration deadlines or application submissions. In a sense, they are automatically enfranchised.

Automatic registration also leads to more accurate Hawai'i voter registration rolls because the process updates existing registrations with current addresses. This, in turn, leads to more efficient elections, with the added benefit of reducing the use of costly provisional ballots and returned ballots. Hawai'i's all mail-in election led to higher voter turnout in 2020, AVR will improve on this turnout by enfranchising more voters who can take advantage of mail-in voting.

AVR will allow Hawaii to better comply with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (also known as the "NVRA" or "motor voter law") which requires for federal office States offer voter registration opportunities at State motor vehicle agencies. By using the DMV form and not a separate registration form, the AVR will reduce the possibility of human error.

The 2017 report by the Brennan Center for Justice said, "Automatic voter registration makes two transformative, yet simple, changes to voter registration: Eligible citizens who interact with government agencies are registered to vote unless they decline, and agencies transfer voter registration information electronically to election officials. These two changes create a seamless process that is more convenient and less error-prone for both voters and government officials. This policy boosts registration rates, cleans up the rolls, makes voting more convenient, and reduces the potential for voter fraud, all while lowering costs."

Automatic voter registration will increase the registered Hawai'i voters, eliminate the expense and labor of processing a separate voter registration application, result in more accurate and current voter rolls. Combined with mail-in voting, voting in Hawai'i will be the easiest and safest it has ever been. Maintaining and updating voter rolls will be less expensive and more accurate. Please enact this in time for the 2022 election.

Amy Monk, Co-Chair
Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus



Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui, Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: SB 159, SD1, HD1 - RELATING TO VOTING

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 159, SD1, HD1**, relating to voting **with suggested amendment**. This bill makes an application for voter registration part of all state identification card or driver's license applications. Requires applicants to choose to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's voter registration information. Requires the sharing of certain information among the counties, department of transportation, election personnel, and online voter registration system. Effective 7/1/3021. (HD1)

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) will modernize our voter registration system to make it more accurate and secure. It will make our voter rolls more accurate and secure by helping to keep them updated. With our vote by mail system enhanced by automatic voter registration, ballots will then be mailed to people's current, correct addresses. Additionally, names on voters' ballots will match their identification for election security. Automatic voter registration 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.

Automatic voter registration is also cost-effective. It has been estimated that it would, 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 automatic voter registration is not something that we can ignore.

Lastly, automatic voter registration encourages good policy and governance through the promotion of a more inclusive and vibrant society. Automatic voter registration is a vital step to making sure that Hawaii U.S. citizens have access to our democracy, building a stronger democracy, by allowing voters to automatically register to vote when they interact with DMV. **Therefore, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to support this bill.**



of Hawaii

Hawaii State House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday April 1, 2021 1:30PM
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of S.B. 159 SD1 HD1

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committees,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 159 SD1 HD1, which would make an application for voter registration part of all state identification card or driver's license applications.

Automatic Voter Registration would make our voter registration system more accurate, secure, and cost-effective. Eighteen states and Washington DC already have AVR law; twelve states and Washington DC have already implemented AVR.¹

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 over 3800 members and supporters statewide. As advocates for gender equity, AAUW of Hawaii promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons.

Please pass this important bill to modernize our voting system. Mahalo.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Younghee Overly".

Younghee Overly
Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

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



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS

John Bickel, President
Alan Burdick, Vice President
Dave Nagajji, Treasurer
Doug Pyle, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Melodie Aduja
Juliet Begley
Stephanie Fitzpatrick
Jan Lubin
John Miller
Jenny Nomura
Stephen O'Harrow
Lyn Pyle

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 23404
Honolulu
Hawaii 96823

March 30, 2021

TO: Chair Luke and members of Finance Committee

RE: SB 159 SD1 HD1 Relating to Voting

Support for hearing on April 1

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 SB 159 SD1 HD1 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. In it, he argues easier registration laws can account for up to a nine-percentage point increase in voting over more restrictive states.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel, President





HIPHI Board

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KM Consulting LLC

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Hawai'i Pacific Health

JoAnn Tsark, MPH
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Center

Keawe'aimoku
Kaholokula, PhD
John A. Burns School of
Medicine, Department of
Native Hawaiian Health

Mark Levin, JD
William S. Richardson School
of Law

Rachel Novotny, PhD, RDN, LD
University of Hawai'i at
Mānoa, College of Tropical
Agriculture and Human
Resources

May Okihiro, MD, MS
John A. Burns School of
Medicine, Department of
Pediatrics

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
University of Hawai'i at Hilo,
Department of Kinesiology and
Exercise Sciences

Garret Sugai
Kaiser Permanente

Date: March 30, 2021

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Members of the House Finance Committee

Re: Support for SB 1402, SD2, HD1, Relating to Transportation

Hrg: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 PM via Videoconference

The Obesity Prevention Task Force of the Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ is in **Support of SB 1402, SD2, HD1**, which will help to modernize Hawaii's ground transportation infrastructure through the creation of pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle networks, thus improving public health and addressing climate change.

Modernizing Hawaii's ground transportation is good for health and the environment.

Hawai'i must move away from an auto-centric society and invest in infrastructure that prioritizes public transportation, biking, and walking. Not only will this improve health by making active transportation more accessible, but it will make our roads safer for all users, lower the cost of transportation and reduce greenhouse gas emissionsⁱⁱ. This would also align the state's complete streets policy.

Establishing metrics, considerations, and goals for the ground transportation modernization will help with accountability. This aligns with the National Complete Streets Partnership's recommendations that effective complete streets policy include "clear accountable expectations," and "performance standards that are specific, equitable, and available to the publicⁱⁱⁱ."

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of SB 1402, SD2, HD1**.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jaylen Murakami".

Jaylen Murakami
Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape

Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

ⁱⁱ Atherton, E. & Osborne, B. (2016). Driving Public Health with Transportation. [Powerpoint Slides]

ⁱⁱⁱ National Complete Streets Coalition *Elements of a Complete Streets Policy* (2018)

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 9:52:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
amy agbayani	Hawai`i Friends of Civil Rights	Support	No

Comments:

Amy Agbayani, co-chair Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights

We strongly support AVR. Sb159, sd1, hd1. We support the Opt-in AVR as it will expand citizen participation and will not change existing privacy laws.

We respectfully urge you pass this bill and thank you for your consideration.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 159, SD 1, HD 1

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

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
Grants, Development & Policy Manager

DATE: March 18, 2021 (2:00 PM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** SB 159, SD 1, HD 1, which provides for "opt-in" automatic voter registration (AVR) for anyone eligible to vote who applies for a new, renewal, or duplicate driver's license or state identification.

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 implementation will help streamline and safeguard the mail ballot process by capturing a good number of those who have moved.*

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.

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.

This is an important measure that will foreseeably expand registration and voter participation. It builds upon reforms, including vote-by-mail, that have been implemented in recent years. Ideally, Hawai'i would be among those states where voter information is provided to elections officials by other government agencies, including those that enroll individuals in need for social services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



April 1, 2021
House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308 and Videoconference

RE: Testimony in Support of SB159 SD1 HD1
Relating to Voting

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

My name is Christine Sakuda and I serve as the executive director of Transform Hawai'i Government (THG), a coalition of organizations and individuals who advocate for an accessible, accountable and responsive state government that leverages technology to help citizens, communities, and businesses throughout Hawai'i to thrive. We provide a consistent and persistent voice to keep modernization a top priority of state government.

THG is in support of SB159 SD1 HD1, requiring any person who is eligible to vote and applies for a motor vehicle driver's license or identification card to be automatically registered to vote unless the applicant affirmatively declines.

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 chooses to be 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 DM and choose to be a registered voter in order 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.

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.

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.

We believe that this bill will facilitate and help accelerate technology transformation in the state and is consistent with the Hawaii Information Technology Strategic Plan.

We urge you to pass Senate Bill 159 SD1 HD1 and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Sakuda', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christine Sakuda

Executive Director

Transform Hawai'i Government

email: csakuda@TransformHawaiiGov.org | phone: (808) 321-2811



House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) SUPPORTS: SB159 SD1 HD1

Thursday, April 1st, 2021 1:30 p.m.

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports Opt-in Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and SB159 SD1 HD1, which would allow customers during their DMV transaction to provide information needed to register to vote.

HAPA supports Opt-in AVR and believes that it is good for democracy. AVR will remove barriers to registration for eligible voters, the first step on the way to increasing voter participation. Automatic voter registration has been shown to help create a more diverse and representative voting population, lowers cost for voter registration, eliminates human error and decreases voter fraud ^[1].

We believe that this measure will improve election security by updating voter rolls and improve election security by making sure our ballots go to the correct, current addresses and save money by reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and undeliverable mail.

SB159 does not force anyone to register to vote, but allows an easy safe way to conveniently register. The service does not require any commitment to vote or follow up but simply allows the person to register with ease.

We understand that SB159 will not alter long-standing existing privacy laws and cause the disclosure of voter registration information.

Hawaii Revised Statutes § 11-97(a) provides that "A voter's full name, district/precinct designation, and voter status shall be public; but all other personal information, as provided on the voter registration affidavit, shall be confidential except for election or government purposes in accordance with rules adopted by the chief election officer, pursuant to chapter 91."

Furthermore, a county clerk may not disclose voter registration information if it compromises the privacy of voters or interferes with the operations of elections, according to Hawaii Administrative Rules § 3-177-160(c).

Candidates and advocates should have access to voter registration data so they may communicate with voters to make sure that voters' concerns are being addressed and to inform voters of their actions.

Please support SB159 SD1 HD1 and efforts to encourage voter registration and involvement.

Respectfully,



Anne Frederick
Executive Director

[1]-
https://www.fairvote.org/4_reasons_why_adopting_automatic_voter_registration_is_good_for_american_democracy



Committee: Committee on Finance
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, April 1, 2021, 1:30 p.m.
Place: Via Videoconference
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in Support of S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 Relating to Voting

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") writes **in support of S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 which would allow eligible people the option to register to vote or update voter information when they apply for or renew a state identification card or driver's license.**

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and a fundamental right upon which all our civil liberties rest. With the correct safeguards in place, this bill helps remove barriers to registration for eligible voters, updates voter registration rolls, and leads to more efficient elections. The voter registration program created by S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 would make our DMVs more efficient by electronically transmitting voter registration information from the agency to election officials. Eligible U.S. citizens will be able to choose to register to vote at the DMV, 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 S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 will also enable that person to update the address associated with their voter registration. The ACLU of Hawai'i believes that S.B. 159, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 contains critical mechanisms that will ensure greater access to the vote in our state.

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
www.acluhawaii.org

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee on Finance
April 1, 2021
Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,



Hope Kerpelman
Legal and Legislative Fellow
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
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www.acluHawai'i.org

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, April 1, 2021

1:30 PM

Via Video Conference, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
SB 159, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO VOTING.

Chair LUKE, Vice Chair CULLEN, and Members of the House Finance Committee

Common Cause Hawaii is testifying in support of SB 159, SD1, HD1, which (1) makes an application for voter registration part of all state identification card or driver's license applications, (2) requires applicants to choose to be registered to vote or make changes to the applicant's voter registration information, and (3) requires the sharing of certain information among the counties, department of transportation, election personnel, and online voter registration system. SB 159, SD1, HD1 is known as Automatic Voter Registration ("AVR"), which is currently an "opt-in" bill.

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 chooses to be a registered voter, the person's information and data are automatically, electronically 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 affirmatively choose to be a registered voter through opting in to being a registered voter. Common Cause Hawaii supports an opt-in AVR bill as this comports with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

Opt-in AVR will **not** require people to register to vote, and it will **not** require people to vote once registered to vote. Moreover, opt-in AVR will **not** alter long-standing Hawaii voter registration privacy laws. Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 11-97 specifically provides that a voter's full name, district/precinct designation, and voter status shall be public; but all other personal information, as provided on the voter registration affidavit, shall be confidential except for election or government purposes. It is good policy for elected officials and advocates to be able to reach out to voters to ensure that they are being responsive to community concerns and to alert the community as to their efforts. Hawaii Administrative Rules § 3-177-160(c) also provides that a county clerk may not disclose voter registration information if it compromises the privacy of voters or interferes with the operations of election. Additionally, HRS § 11-14.5 provides for address confidentiality in life threatening circumstances or harmful situations. For example, a person may ask the clerk to keep his/her/their residence address and telephone number contained in the affidavit of registration confidential for personal safety reasons.

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. Further, AVR does not alter existing voter registration privacy laws.

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 choose to register to vote when they interact with DMV and have their data electronically, safely, and seamlessly transmitted to the elections office.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 159, SD1, HD1, opt-in AVR. We suggest that the effective date of the bill be January 1, 2022 as AVR may be implemented starting then.

If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



DATE: Thursday, April 1, 2021
 TIME: 1:30 p.m.
 PLACE: Via Videoconference



Testimony in support of SB 159, SD1, HD1 Relating to Voting



Aloha, we are testifying on behalf of the AVR Hawaii Coalition in support of SB159, SD1, HD1, which provides for automatic voter registration in the state of Hawaii. With AVR, voter registration has the ability to take place through the Department of Motor Vehicles of any U.S. citizen who is eligible to vote and for those who would like to register. Through this process, voters have the option to register to vote when they apply for a new or renewal motor vehicle driver's license or a new, renewal, or duplicate identification. 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.



As SB159 is written now, Hawaii residents will be able to make a choice to register to vote at the DMV. It's important to note that AVR will not alter long-standing existing privacy laws and cause the disclosure of voter registration information.



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 with the choice to be registered 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's license application or application for a state identification card. They will also have the choice to refrain from registering to vote if they do not choose to become a registered voter. For any applicant who does choose to become a registered voter, the driver's licensing office will transmit the 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 choose to be a registered voter—to be registered to vote or to update their address. Thus, the privacy of all Hawaii citizens will be protected.
- Each unregistered client has the opportunity to choose whether to become registered to vote as part of their DMV transaction. "Automatic" simply refers to the automated, electronic transfer of information and data between the County Department of Motor Vehicles and the county elections office for those who want to vote.



We respectfully suggest amending SB 159, SD1, HD1 to have an effective date of January 1, 2022, as AVR may be implemented by then.



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.



1001 Bishop Street | Suite 625 | Honolulu, HI 96813-2830
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-536-2882
aarp.org/hi | aarphi@aarp.org | twitter.com/AARPHawaii
facebook.com/AARPHawaii

**The State Legislature
The House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
Thursday, April 1, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair

RE: S.B. 159 SD 1, HD1 Relating to Voting

Dear Chair Luke 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 S.B. 159 SD1, HD1 which requires any person who is eligible to vote and applies for a driver's license or identification card to be automatically registered to vote unless the applicant affirmatively declines. 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 to 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 S.B. 159 SD1,HD1.

Sincerely,

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

Keali'i Lopez, AARP Hawai'i
State Director

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:58:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Alice	HOPE Services Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

Hope Services Hawai'i, Hawai'i Island's largest homeless services provider, **strongly supports** SB159 Automatic Voter Registration.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:21:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I do not support the passage of this bill. If people do not make the effort to register to vote, what makes the Legislature believe that this particular set of people will make the effort to vote?

If this measure passes, among other possible negative consequences, we will see a percentage decrease in voter participation.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:39:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members, I strongly support this measure which will help increase our dismal voter participation in Hawaii. An important step towards revitalizing citizen participation in our democracy.

Mahalo, Ann S. Freed in Mililani

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 12:43:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Committee on Finance,

Please support SB159 SD1 HD1.

I am very excited that Hawaii may join the ranks of other states that implement Automatic Voter Registration (AVR). AVR is a practical way to modernize our voting system to encourage eligible voters to register during election and non-election years.

- Opt-in AVR will **NOT** force people to register to vote.
- Opt-in AVR will **NOT** force people to vote once registered or if already registered.
- Opt-in AVR AVR **WILL** improve election security by updating our voter rolls.
- Opt-in AVR AVR **WILL** improve election security by making sure our ballots go to the correct, current addresses.
- Opt-in AVR AVR **WILL** save money by reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and undeliverable mail.

Thank you for taking the to review this issue. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of AVR.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:01:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB159, SD1 HD1. We need to make it as seamless as possible for our citizens to have a voice and participate in our democracy!

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:19:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John D. Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this to be passed through legislature.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:38:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dyson Chee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB159.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:39:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

If you allow someone to become a registered voter merely because they have applied for a driver license, you WILL be allowing people to become registered voters despite the fact that they are not citizens.

It is IMPORTANT to amend this bill to require that any person seeking to be registered as a voter MUST provide proof of U.S. citizenship. Such proof could be either a copy of that person's birth certificate showing a place of birth that is in the United States or a copy of a certificate of naturalization.

No earlier version of this bill had paid any attention to the requirement for citizenship; thus this bill could be seen as a trojan horse to allow non-citizen legal residents or even illegal aliens to vote.

Stop that nonsense!

One purpose of this bill is to make voter registration as automatic as possible during driver license application or renewal, without requiring additional actions by applicant or additional paperwork. However, a driver license application or renewal to be done by mail instead of in-person (which includes the onsite vision test) already requires submission of a physician's letter confirming that the applicant has good vision, and whether good vision is achieved with or without eyeglasses. Thus the requirement for a document proving citizenship does not impose any extra burden on the driver licensing bureaucracy.

Would it be sufficient to satisfy the citizenship requirement by allowing a driver license applicant to check a box on the application form, accompanied by a signature, affirming under penalties of perjury and deportation that applicant is a citizen either by birth or naturalization? Perhaps that would be a reasonable compromise acceptable to people opposing a requirement for a copy of birth certificate or naturalization document. It is notable that after many previous versions of this bill containing merely an opt-out checkbox for applicants who do not wish to apply for voter registration, this final version has now changed that to an opt-in box requiring applicant to act affirmatively and not merely to refrain from opting out. So the obvious place to include a checkbox and

signature affirming citizenship, under penalties of perjury and deportation, would be immediately below the checkbox for opting in to applying for voter registration.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:13:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Thank you for holding this hearing to move AVR forward in Hawaii.

SB 159 holds the promise of making democracy work 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 decline to register as well. Especially after the success of Vote By Mail statewide, this measure--which could save an estimated million dollars per election cycle--will ensure greater accuracy in voter addresses and minimize wasted labor and printing costs. The spectacle of the Jan 6 insurrection in Washington D.C. and voter suppression legislation in multiple states led by the GOP should make us here in Hawaii more mindful of the need to do all we can to protect our democracy. This bill will help do that by improving access to the ballot for ALL and ensuring greater accuracy in our voter rolls. Thank you for giving SB159 your serious consideration. Please make Automatic Voter Registration a reality in Hawaii this year. Mahalo nui.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 6:49:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rosemarie Muller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Opt-in AVR is a important measure to ease access to the ballot . Hawaii is one of the few states that is not rolling back voting rights! It will modernize our voter registration system and make it more accurate and secure.

Thank you

Rosemarie Muller

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 7:52:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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 chooses to be 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 DM and choose to be a registered voter in order 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 7:58:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This modernize, make more accurate & secure, is cost-effective, more inclusive the voter registration.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 8:48:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Tomchak	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB159, which establishes automatic voter registration through the department of motor vehicles. This bill establishes a support system for mail-in voting, providing up to date voter rolls to avoid ballots sent to outdated addresses or to deceased people. It helps the elderly and disabled, and registers young people to vote as soon as they have reached the age to vote. This bill provides what we need for a truly democratic system that expresses the will of the people. When in place, the system will save money and effort and make elections run more smoothly.

Aloha,

Laurie Tomchak, Ph.D.

Retired College Instructor, UH and HPU

Election and Vote Count Observer, Precinct Worker

Member Legislative Committee, Honolulu League of Women Voters

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 9:13:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Bilyk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support Opt-in Automatic Voter Registration in SB 159 SD1 HD1 Relating To Voting!

Patricia L Bilyk, MPH, MSN

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 9:27:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Webster	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

The purpose of this note is to again declare my support for much needed SB 159. The debate over opt-in vs. opt out, seems to have been settled and I feel that the bill's enactment is absolutely crucial in these challenging times for democracy. Faced with the option of registering to vote or not, we adults are perfectly able to make that decision when getting or renewing our driver's license or state ID. AVR enhances election security because ballots will go to the correct updated addresses. Being registered does not translate into any kind of compulsion to vote.

I trust that Automatic Voter Registration has been gathering momentum because many realize that AVR, already enacted by 23 red and blue states and the District of Columbia, saves money. Please do not fail to enact this measure at this time of tremendous challenge to our democracy.

Thank you!

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 9:48:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward B Hanel Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Democracy depends on the general public participating in elections. SB159 is a logical way to offer citizens the opportunity to vote. I support passage of SB159.

Concur with Common Cause Hawaii comments

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:00:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha FIN Committee members,

I support this bill because:

- 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 chooses to be 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 DM and choose to be a registered voter in order 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 your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:05:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Dursin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I ask for Finance Committee support on this automatic voter registration bill. As a person who has registered voters for many years and served at polling places, I know that there are many would-be voters who believe they are registered because they have gotten a Hawaii driver's license. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

HB159 would remedy that situation, ensuring that everyone receiving a driver's license or state ID who wants to vote can do so. This is especially important with all-mail voting, when a person may not be aware until too late that no ballot has arrived.

Please vote to pass SB159, SD1, HB1.

Susan Dursin

Captain Cook, HI

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:08:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikki-Ann Yee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the SB159! Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:23:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jasmine Slovak	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e,

My name is Jasmine Slovak. I submit my testimony in support of SB159 SD1 HD! This is a necessary measure for public-service as it addresses civic and voter accessibility.

With the demands of life in Hawai'i ever-growing, affected even more so by The Pandemic, we cannot expect the individual citizen to continue to carry the burden of parsing through a bombardment of media information and navigating complex civic-systems.

We all can understand the endless "to-do" lists we each respectively face; it does not mean that because we do not desire to be engaged citizens, rather it represents the battle to create spare time between multiple jobs; weekly crises; caring for our bodies and well-being of our families.

So it's important to outline how "spare time" is another metric of privilege; to assume that that the "engaged citizen" is someone with *spare time* to check everything off the civic-checklist is to assume privilege. To assume that this person has the *spare time*; the means by which to update their voter registration data; the *spare time* to stand in line to vote; *spare time* to ensure that they express their rights and desire for their community; that they can do this freely a-top all other life demands. To make this assumption is to be ignorant of the disparity of privilege our community faces.

If the vote is "sacred" within the American value set, why are we not doing all that we can to ensure that it is available to all? What can we do to efficiently maximize dedicated public resources to ensure this is an inclusive process? This is a Constitutional Right, process, and promise that SB159 SD1 HD1 recognizes and creates a step forward for all of us into modern civic times.

Mahalo for your service, and for hearing my testimony.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 12:56:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
laurie boyle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support sb159 for the simple reason that voting should be as easy as possible and cost-effective.

Mahalo for your attention.

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 1:51:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher Edwards	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

I strongly support SB 159 SD1 HD1. As of the start of this session, 20 states and the District of Columbia have passed this voter-friendly reform(1); 4 bills were introduced on this subject in this session. The demand signal from Hawaii’s voters is clear - they want “Opt-Out” Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).

As a voting member of our populous and a dedicated defender of democracy, I support enabling voting for all eligible voters in our state. Because of our nation's past disenfranchising of certain groups from voting in our democracy, it is not as well-rooted in our society as it could be. It is important that we automatically enfranchise our community members with Automatic Voter Registration at this time to allow them the convenience to vote by mail.

“Opt-Out” AVR builds upon Congress’ 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(2).

This bill empowers voters by letting them affirmatively choose whether their information is used to register to vote or update their registration when they interact with the Department of Motor Vehicles. “Opt-Out” AVR promotes - but does not mandate – voter registration by making it convenient and cost-effective. Proven and secure processes are already in place to handle this information and will continue to be used to enter and update a voter’s information. “Opt-Out” AVR would also help County Clerks keep the voter registration rolls current. With registrations more accurate and more frequently updated, errors in ballot delivery and demand for registration services at Voter Service Centers could be reduced as well. The savings in time and money would add up quickly.

I am certainly aware that “Opt-In” automatic voter registration is an alternate means of registering people to vote. I have also learned that some key members of the Legislature strongly prefer this approach, making it more politically feasible. For this reason, I could support an “Opt-In” approach to passing this voting reform.

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. Please support SB159.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Christopher Edwards
Honolulu, HI 96822

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).

SB-159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 3:37:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2021 1:30:00 PM

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass the Automatic Voter Registration bill. This will make it easier for individuals to register to vote and, ultimately, to participate in the legislative process.

Mahalo for allowing me to provide testimony.

Barbara J. Service MSW (ret.)

Senior advocate