



STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 15, 2021

TO: The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
House Committee on Government Reform

The Honorable Tina Wildberger, Vice Chair
House Committee on Government Reform

Members of the House Committee on Government Reform

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 405, SD1, Relating to Campaign Contributions**

Wednesday, March 17, 2021
10:00 a.m., Via Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.¹ The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports this bill, a house-keeping measure.

This measure amends subsection (a) of Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-364 by including excess nonresident contributions to the list of prohibited contributions that committees must return to contributors within thirty days. Thereafter, if not returned, the excess nonresident contributions escheat to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund. The Commission urges this Committee to pass this measure.

¹ The companion bill is H.B. No. 145.

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
Wednesday, March 17, 2021
10:00 AM
Via Videoconference and Conference Room 309

in consideration of
SB 405, SD1
RELATING TO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

Chair McKELVEY, Vice Chair WILDBERGER, and Members of the House Government Reform Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 405, SD1, with amendments, which provides that excess contributions by nonresident contributors shall escheat to the Hawaii election campaign fund if not returned to the contributor within 30 days of the end of the election period.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through improving our campaign finance system with laws that amplify the voices of everyday Americans.

SB 405, the original bill, would have provided another source of income for the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund, which candidates may use, if they choose, to partially publicly fund their campaigns. SB 405 as amended by SD1 appears to reduce this funding source by (1) extending the time frame for candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to return excess contributions to 30 days after the election period, which would permit more time to return excess contributions, and (2) allow candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to decide which candidate contributions to return and thereby certain contributions may be returned to curvy further future donations.

Every endeavor should be made to shore-up the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and encourage candidates to use it. Common Cause Hawaii suggests amending SB 405, SD1 to the original form.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 405, SD1 with suggested amendments. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
WEDNESDAY, 3/17/21, 10 AM, Room No. 309

SB405 SD1 RELATING TO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair McKelvey, Vice-Chair Wildberger and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports this bill, which provides that excess contributions by nonresident contributors shall escheat to the Hawaii election campaign fund if not returned to the contributor within 30 days.

The League of Women Voters is a grassroots, non-partisan activist organization which believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should: protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; enable candidates to compete equitably for public office; ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

This bill complements existing law and will help ensure adequate funding for the partial public funding program.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2021 8:45:10 AM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please amend this bill to its original form to provide another source of income to the HI Election Campaigns.

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2021 1:05:43 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Golojuch Jr | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I support SB 405 and Common Cause - Hawaii's requested amendments.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2021 6:14:20 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Linda Morgan | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

I support SB405 and suggest amending it to its original form. Improving campaign finance would enhance our democracy and reduce the effect of donations from rich people and rich corporations which come with strings attached. Those who make large campaign contributions expect to influence the actions of the officials to whom they contribute. Having more money should not give one more influence on the government!

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2021 8:28:36 AM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB 405, the original bill, would have provided another source of income for the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund, which candidates may use, if they choose, to partially publicly fund their campaigns.

SB 405 as amended by SD1 appears to reduce this funding source by (1) extending the time frame for candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to return excess contributions to 30 days after the election period, which would permit more time to return excess contributions, and (2) allow candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to decide which candidate contributions to return, which certain funds may be returned to curry further future donations.

Every endeavor should be made to shore-up the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and encourage candidates to use it. It is suggested that the legislature amend SB 405, SD1 to the original form.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 405, SD1 with suggested amendments.

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2021 2:35:46 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee members,

- SB 405, the original bill, would have provided another source of income for the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund, which candidates may use, if they choose, to partially publicly fund their campaigns.
- SB 405 as amended by SD1 appears to reduce this funding source by (1) extending the time frame for candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to return excess contributions to 30 days after the election period, which would permit more time to return excess contributions, and (2) allow candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to decide which candidate contributions to return, which certain funds may be returned to curry further future donations.
- Every endeavor should be made to shore-up the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and encourage candidates to use it. Common Cause Hawaii suggests amending SB 405, SD1 to the original form.
- Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 405, SD1 with suggested amendments.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2021 4:13:55 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Wildberg, and Committee on Government Reform,

Please support SB405 SD1 with amendments.

SB 405, the original bill, would have provided another source of income for the perennially underfunded Hawaii Election Campaign Fund, which candidates may use, if they choose, to partially publicly fund their campaigns.

SB 405 as amended by SD1 appears to reduce this funding source by (1) extending the time frame for candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to return excess contributions to 30 days after the election period, which would permit more time to return excess contributions, and (2) allow candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees to decide which candidate contributions to return, which certain funds may be returned to carry further future donations.

Please consider changing this bill to its original form in order to preserve the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund.

Thank you for taking the time to review this issues. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2021 11:56:29 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB405 should promote wider participation in state elections. That is a worthwhile goal. Concur with Common Cause Hawaii comments. Pass SB405 SD1.

SB-405-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2021 6:08:45 PM

Testimony for GVR on 3/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support sb405 for the simple reason that unreturned campaign donations should be available to candidates who opt to use the Hawai'i campaign Fund.

Mahalo for uh our attention.