

Hawaii
Holding Power Accountable

Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
3:00 PM
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

in consideration of
SB 597
RELATING TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE.

Chair SAN BUENAVENTURA, Vice Chair IHARA, and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 597, which would allow candidates seeking election to use campaign funds for child care costs, under certain conditions.

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.

Common Cause Hawaii understands that parenthood and care for one's dependents should not be a barrier to political office. One solution to this unnecessary obstacle to this problem is to allow candidates to use campaign funds to defray the expensive costs of a candidates' child care or dependent family care. A growing number of candidates and good governance organizations are pushing state legislatures and elections commission to adopt such a proposal because it would encourage more women and low-income candidates to run for office by clearing a restrictive financial barrier to offices for parents and caregivers.

Common Cause Hawaii suggests that SB 597 be broadened to include the care of a candidate's other vital household dependents, such as family members living in the candidate's household who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care. Regulations that expressly allow campaign funds to be spent on both child care and dependent care will help keep campaign finance models modernized.

Common Cause Hawaii further suggests lowering the age of the child to under 18. Persons 18 years of age or thereabouts may not need childcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 597. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



of Hawaii

To: Hawaii State Senate Committee on Human Services
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday February 16, 3PM
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 225
Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 597

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii are grateful for this opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 597, which would allow candidates seeking election to use campaign funds for child care costs under certain conditions.

This measure would defray the expensive costs of candidates' dependent family care which would encourage more women and low-income candidates to run for office. Caring for one's dependents should not be a barrier to political office. Benefits of diversity in government include better serving our community, being more socially responsible, more innovation and overall better return on investment.¹

We also request for an amendment to broaden to include the care of a candidate's other household dependents, such as family members living in the candidate's household who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care.

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 measure, especially for the working parents. Mahalo.

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

Younghee Overly, Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Hawaii

¹ <https://www.opm.gov/faqs/QA.aspx?fid=72bcd219-0b9f-4de8-b366-4817028fbc6e&pid=f2ef3151-b4f2-4f47-a319-acad8175b0b7>

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 1:36:09 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Younghi Overly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support for S.B. 597, which would allow candidates seeking election to use campaign funds for child care costs under certain conditions. Parenthood and caregiving for one's dependents should not be a barrier to running for a political office. I also request for an amendment to broaden this measure to include the care of a candidate's other household dependents who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 9:26:04 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara and Committee on Human Services,

Please support SB597.

Without dependent care for a younger child or aging parent, most working people would need to stop working to care for their loved ones. During COVID-19, many working mothers left the workforce to care for their children. Let's support SB597 to help working adults with dependents (who cannot be left on their own) to run for office.

I understand that parenthood and care for one's dependents should not be a barrier to political office. One solution to this unnecessary obstacle to this problem is to allow candidates to use campaign funds to defray the expensive costs of a candidates' child care or dependent family care. A growing number of candidates and good governance organizations are pushing state legislatures and elections commission to adopt such a proposal because it would encourage more women and low-income candidates to run for office by clearing a restrictive financial barrier to offices for parents and caregivers.

I suggest that SB 597 be broadened to include the care of a candidate's other vital household dependents, such as family members living in the candidate's household who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care. Regulations that expressly allow campaign funds to be spent on both child care and dependent care will help keep campaign finance models modernized.

I further suggest lowering the age of the child to under 18. Persons 18 years of age or thereabouts may not need childcare.

Thank you for your time to review this issue. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB597.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 4:58:09 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Democracy is a costly business. Helping wit child care costs is worth funding to expand access for potential andidates who otherwise would have difficulty meeting such costs. Concur with Common Cause Hawaii comments supporting passage of SB597

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 8:26:43 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Parenthood and care for one's dependents should not be a barrier to political office. One solution to this problem is to allow candidates to use campaign funds to defray the expensive costs of a candidates' child care or dependent family care. A growing number of candidates and good governance organizations are pushing state legislatures and elections commission to adopt such a proposal because it would encourage more women and low-income candidates to run for office by clearing a restrictive financial barrier to offices for parents and caregivers.

Suggest that SB 597 be broadened to include the care of a candidate's other vital household dependents, such as family members living in the candidate's household who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care. Regulations that expressly allow campaign funds to be spent on both child care and dependent care will help keep campaign finance models modernized.

Also suggest lowering the age of the child to under 18. Persons 18 years of age or thereabouts may not need childcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill.

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 3:52:35 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please lower the age of the child to under 18 and broaden the bill to include care of candidate's household who are incapable of self-care.

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 5:05:25 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Donna Ambrose	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

In order to attract a fresh crop of candidates for government office, we should help them defray the cost of child care so they can campaign. In addition to allowing candidates to access campaign funds for minor children, those funds should be available to help with older dependents incapable of taking care of themselves.

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 6:34:25 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Parenthood and care for one's dependents should not be a barrier to political office. The barrier can be avoided if we allow candidates to use campaign funds to defray the expensive costs of a candidates' child care or dependent family care.

I suggest that SB 597 be amended to include the care of a candidate's other vital household dependents, such as family members living in the candidate's household who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care. Regulations that expressly allow campaign funds to be spent on both child care and dependent care will help keep campaign finance models be modernized.

I further suggest lowering the age of the child to under 18. Persons 18 years of age or thereabouts may not need childcare.

SB-597

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 8:45:19 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/16/2021 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support SB597 for the simple reason that it more fairly levels the playing field for anyone running for office the affordability of childcare while campaigning.

This bill should be broadened to include the cost of care for any family member, including children, disabled, or ill.

Mahalo for your attention.