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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU  
State of Hawaii  
State Capitol, Room 446  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

## Written Comments

### SCR29

## REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF IMPLEMENTING TERM LIMITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director  
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the Senate Committee on Government Operations

Thursday, March 18, 2021, 3:10 p.m.  
Conference Room 016

Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee:

I am Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB). Thank you for this opportunity to provide written **comments** on S.C.R. No. 29, Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Conduct a Study of the Benefits and Drawbacks of Implementing Term Limits for Members of the Legislature.

The purpose of this measure is to require the Legislative Reference Bureau to:

- (1) Conduct a study of the benefits and drawbacks of implementing term limits for members of the Legislature; and
- (2) Submit a report of the Bureau's findings to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2022.

The Bureau takes no position on this measure but submits the following comments for your consideration.

The Bureau notes that extensive information about the potential benefits and drawbacks of legislative term limits already exists and is publicly available. Of particular note,

from 2001 through 2004, a Joint Project on Term Limits (JPTL) was conducted as a cooperative effort by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Council of State Governments (CSG), State Legislative Leaders Foundation, and a number of legislative scholars. This massive project assessed the effects of term limits on state legislatures and identified approaches for coping with term limits. The JPTL employed in-depth case studies (of six states with term limits and three without), data collection, and surveys. A summary of the JPTL's findings may be accessed at the CSG website: <https://www.csq.org/knowledgecenter/docs/BOS2005-LegislativeTermLimits.pdf>.

The Bureau further notes that, according to an overview of legislative term limits on NCSL's website dated December 2017 (<https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/legislative-term-limits-overview.aspx>), fifteen state legislatures have term limits and **no state has adopted term limits since 2000**. Current information from U.S. Term Limits, an advocacy group that favors term limits, appears to confirm this (<https://www.termlimits.com>). Therefore, the Bureau believes that the JPTL's report on the effects of legislative term limits likely continues to be the most authoritative and comprehensive information available. Consequently, it is unclear what the Bureau could add to the exhaustive information already uncovered by the JPTL. Accordingly, the Bureau believes this is not the most productive use of its resources.

That said, the Bureau believes that, if the scope of the mandated report is not altered, then the report requested under this measure is manageable and that the Bureau will be able to provide the information in the time allotted; provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting, writing, or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or both, for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written comments.

# IRON WORKERS STABILIZATION FUND

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March 18, 2021; 3:10 pm

Senate  
Committee on Government Operations  
Via Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**LATE**

Re: SCR29/SR18 – REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF IMPLEMENTING TERM LIMITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE

Aloha Chair Moriwaki, Vice-Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Senate Government Operations Committee,

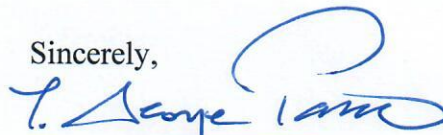
We **SUPPORT** SCR29/SR18. These resolutions request the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study of the benefits and drawbacks of implementing term limits for members of the Legislature.

The Ironworkers have supported term limits (and their study) for over twenty years.

Term limits could encourage politicians to have courage and enact unpopular but needed legislation, limit corruption in government, increase access of citizens to decision making by legislative bodies, limit the impact of monied lobbyist interests, decrease political games, encourage voting, and other positive things for democratic forms of government. Term limits could also force good politicians to retire, decrease the accountability of politicians to their constituents, decrease the power of voters, decrease legislative expertise only gained by being a legislator, and other positive things for democratic forms of government. The state could benefit from an overview of the findings on term limits given studies over the years, including the one done by the National Council of State Legislatures' Joint Project on Term Limits.

Voter confidence in government would be bolstered through a Legislative Reference Bureau or other governmental report specific to Hawaii that shares both the pros and cons of implementing term limits on Senate and House members.

Sincerely,



T. George Paris  
Managing Director

TGP: MP

**Hawaii**  
*Holding Power Accountable*Statement Before The  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

Thursday, March 18, 2021

3:10 PM

Conference Room 016 and Video Conference

in consideration of

**SCR 29 / SR 18****REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF IMPLEMENTING TERM LIMITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE.**

Chairs MORIWAKI, Vice Chair DELA CRUZ, and Members of the Senate Government Operations Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides written comments on SCR 29 / SR 18, which requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study of the benefits and drawbacks of implementing term limits for members of the Legislature.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. We work to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest and promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all.

Common Cause Hawaii suggests that the committee may want to consider having the Legislative Reference Bureau also study the benefits and drawbacks of implementing term limits for Senate and House leadership positions and chairs of committees. Leadership positions and chairs of committees may have an equivalent impact to continuous years of elected service, and the pros and cons of term limits for leadership positions and committee chairs deserve study as well by the Legislative Reference Bureau.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SCR 29 / SR 18. If you have questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

**SCR-29**

Submitted on: 3/15/2021 3:51:21 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/18/2021 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lynn Murakami-Akatsuka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of SCR 29. As there are established term limits for the Governor's and Mayor's positions, the information gleaned from the study of the benefits and drawbacks of implementing term limits for members of the Legislature would provide hard data for the public to decide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SCR 29.

**SCR-29**

Submitted on: 3/16/2021 2:45:14 AM

Testimony for GVO on 3/18/2021 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

You don't need to create, develop and conduct a study regarding term limits. The Voice of the People deserves to be heard, and the maintenance of long-term, corrupt career politicians is what is causing this state to be off balance. You can review past statistics or history to see that.

**SCR-29**

Submitted on: 3/16/2021 2:34:06 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/18/2021 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is Money Laundering and a wast of time. They all need to be Removed!