



HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawai'i · Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 · Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Committee: Senate Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts
Bill Number: H.B. 1475, HD 1
Hearing Date/Time: March 16, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission **SUPPORTING**
H.B. 1475, HD 1, Relating to Mandatory Ethics Training

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission ("Commission") **strongly supports** H.B. 1475, HD 1, which requires all state employees to undergo mandatory ethics training within ninety days of becoming an employee and at least once every four years thereafter.

The Hawai'i State Constitution requires all public officers and employees to "exhibit the highest standards of ethical conduct. . . ."¹ The Commission supports mandatory training for all state employees as a critical component to meeting the high bar established by the Hawai'i Constitution. Over the past several years, the Commission developed an online training program – that can be taken at any time or place -- specifically in anticipation of a broader ethics training requirement. While previous training requirements were limited to elected officials and high-profile positions, the advent of an online system allows training requirements to be extended more broadly to all state employees.

Thank you for your continuing support of the Ethics Commission's work and for considering its testimony on H.B. 1475

Very truly yours,

/S/ Robert D. Harris
Robert D. Harris
Executive Director and General Counsel

¹ Article XIV, Constitution of the State of Hawai'i.

Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

3:00 PM

Via Video Conference and Conference Room 225

in consideration of
HB 1475, HD1**RELATING TO MANDATORY ETHICS TRAINING.**

Chair TANIGUCHI, Vice Chair IHARA, and Members of the Senate Labor, Culture and the Arts Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports with suggested amendments HB 1475, HD1, which requires state legislators and employees to complete mandatory ethics training courses every four years, subject to certain requirements.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening our representative democracy through improving governmental ethics, transparency, and accountability.

Mandatory ethics training of governmental employees is a necessity. Common Cause Hawaii suggests that mandatory ethics training be required of every employee **every year**, especially legislators, members of the board of education, trustees of the office of Hawaiian affairs, the governor, the lieutenant governor, executive department heads and deputies, and every other person whose financial disclosure statement is a public record pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes § 84-17(d). Mandatory, yearly ethics training should not be that onerous of an administrative burden especially as the State Ethics Commission currently offers the training program online, which can be taken at any time or place. HB 1475, HD1, which, only requires ethics training once every four years, must be amended to once every year.

Further, those legislators and employees who do not attend the required ethics training must be put on leave without pay or otherwise removed from their positions and committees until they complete their trainings.

Hawaii needs strong and uncompromising ethics measures to start the long road to restoring trust in our government. Ethics reforms are probably the most important tools to restoring the people's trust in their elected leaders and government – to show people that their government is acting for the people's interest versus serving their own interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support with suggested amendments on HB 1475, HD1. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

HB-1475-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2022 8:39:57 PM

Testimony for LCA on 3/16/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear LCA Chair and Committee,

I support HB1475, HD1 because mandatory ethics training of governmental employees is a necessity. Common Cause suggest that mandatory ethics training be required of every employee **every year** and i agree. Mandatory, yearly ethics training should not be that onerous of an administrative burden especially as the State Ethics Commission currently offers the training program online, which can be taken at any time or place. HB 1475, HD1, which, only requires ethics training once every four years, must be amended to once every year. Further, those legislators and employees who do not attend the required ethics training must be put on leave without pay or otherwise removed from their positions and committees until they complete their trainings.

My supportive statement isn't original. However I am a volunteer for Common Cause and believe in their mission and action across the US. I usually agree with their positions and if not I will express those views.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona HI 96740

HB-1475-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 12:48:21 AM

Testimony for LCA on 3/16/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mandatory ethics training of governmental employees is a necessity. I suggest that mandatory ethics training be required of every employee **every year**.

Mandatory, yearly ethics training should not be that onerous of an administrative burden especially as the State Ethics Commission currently offers the training program online, which can be taken at any time or place.

HB 1475, HD1, which, only requires ethics training once every four years, must be amended to once every year.

Further, those legislators and employees who do not attend the required ethics training must be put on leave without pay or otherwise removed from their positions and committees until they complete their trainings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support with suggested amendments on HB 1475, HD1.

HB-1475-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 12:20:16 PM

Testimony for LCA on 3/16/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Jaycox	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Senators --

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments about HB 1475. While I fully support the concept of mandatory ethics training, I feel this bill needs to be amended. Specifically, the training should be annual and there should be repercussions for those who fail to attend.

HB-1475-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 1:21:25 PM

Testimony for LCA on 3/16/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Huynh Eller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I suggest that mandatory ethics training be required of every employee **every year**.

Mandatory, yearly ethics training should not be that onerous of an administrative burden especially as the State Ethics Commission currently offers the training program online, which can be taken at any time or place.

HB 1475, HD1, which, only requires ethics training once every four years, must be amended to once every year.

Further, those legislators and employees who do not attend the required ethics training must be put on leave without pay or otherwise removed from their positions and committees until they complete their trainings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support with suggested amendments on HB 1475, HD1.

HB-1475-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 6:51:51 PM

Testimony for LCA on 3/16/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurie boyle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB1475 with amendment for the simple reason that legislators and staffers should be required to take an ethics course and yearly refresher courses to keep their behavior and actions on the side of ethics, especially knowing how easy it can be to get involved in Unethical behaviors.

Mahalo for your time.