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## HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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

Committee: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Bill Number: H.B. 1475, HD 1, SD1  
Hearing Date/Time: March 31, 2022, 9:30 a.m.  
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission in **STRONG SUPPORT** of H.B. 1475, HD1, SD1 Requiring Mandatory Ethics Training

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission ("Commission") **strongly supports** H.B. 1475, HD1, SD1, 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. . . ."<sup>1</sup> 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.

Mahalo for your continuing support of the Commission's work and for considering its testimony on HB 1475, HD1, SD1.

Very truly yours,

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

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<sup>1</sup> Article XIV, Constitution of the State of Hawai'i.

Statement Before The  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

Thursday, March 31, 2022

9:30 AM

Via Video Conference and Conference Room 016

in consideration of  
**HB 1475, HD1, SD1****RELATING TO MANDATORY ETHICS TRAINING.**

Chair RHOADS, Vice Chair KEOHOKALOLE, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports with suggested amendments HB 1475, HD1, SD1, 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, SD1, 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, SD1. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:03:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan B Roberts Emery	Testifying for Green Party Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Green Party of Hawai'i wishes to offer strong support of HB 1475 HD1 SD1 with amendments that the ethics training happens every year. Ethics matter and our legislators need to be upholding the strongest Ethics possible for the peoples of Hawai'i. Please vote yes, with amendments on HB 1475 HD1 SD1, ethics training every year.



**LATE**

**Senate Committee on Judiciary**

Thursday, March 31st, 2022 9:30am, Conference Room 016

**HAPA Supports with Amendments: HB1475 HD1 SD1**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) I am submitting testimony in support of HB1475 HD1 SD1, with amendments.

HB1475 HD1 SD1 requires state legislators and employees to complete mandatory ethics training courses every four years, subject to certain requirements.

HAPA supports this measure and measures that help to boost faith in government process and elected officials. We are well aware of, and concerned about, the lack of participation in the government process and encourage all measures that will help boost engagement by restoring faith in our elected officials.

HAPA believes that mandatory ethics training courses for all officials is a necessity and will help to ensure that officials are aware of and following ethics requirements.

We support yearly mandatory ethics training for all officials and legislative staff. Please amend HB1475 HD1 SD1, which only requires ethics training once every four years, be amended to yearly training.

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.

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 training.

Please pass HB1475 HD1 SD1, with suggested amendments.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is written below the text 'Mahalo for your consideration,'.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:34:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
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**, 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, SD1, 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 submit testimony in support of this bill.

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 1:23:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kauanoë Batangan	Individual	Comments	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**, 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, SD1, 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.

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:53:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha JDC Chair, Vice Chair and Committee,**

I support Bill HB1475 because the bill requires state legislators and employees to complete mandatory ethics training courses every four years. There are a number of industries: real estate, lending institutions/used car sales etc that should do this but definitely the Legislature should have ethics training!

I belong to Common Cause and they have suggested a couple of changes to which I agree. CC suggest 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, SD1, which, only requires ethics training once every four years, must be amended to once every year.

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Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona HI 96740

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:17:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill does not go far enough. It appears almost weekly we are hearing about transgressions by legislators and/or appointed officials and employees. The training must be annually, not every four years. Given that the training is offered online, it should not be onerous to require annual training. Annual training will help restore the public's trust in government, which has been lost through the guilty pleas to bribery by former Senator English and former Representative Cullen. Recently the ethics committee fined Senator Keohokalole for campaign spending violations. He also had to return a reimbursement. This is the tip of the iceberg.

Any person who does not complete the required training should be placed on unpaid leave until it is completed. Any elected official who does not complete the training should be censured, fined, removed from committees, and not allowed to vote until the training is complete.

As Ben Franklin said, you can always learn something new. Those who require to take the training should take heart, they WILL learn something new every time.



**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:44:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Mandatory ethics training of governmental employees is a necessity.

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**LATE**

**HB-1475-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:41:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/31/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara Best	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**, 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).
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