

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 12:34:57 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brett Kulbis	Honolulu County Republican Party	Oppose	No

Comments:

Honolulu County Republican Party opposes HB-201.

The right to vote in a free and fair election is a citizen's most basic civil right, the one on which many of the other rights of the American people depend. Every effort should be made to ensure the integrity of our elections.

However, the proposed changes in this bill while appearing to be reasonable, only opens the window for nefarious acts. Places of deposit, voting service centers, and processing ballots for tabulation should all open/begin simultaneously.

Brett Kulbis
Chairman
Honolulu County Republican Party

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

2:00 PM

Via Video Conference, Conference Room 325

in consideration of

HB 201

RELATING TO ELECTIONS.

Chair NAKASHIMA, Vice Chair MATAYOSHI, and Members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports HB 201, with amendments, which (1) amends or clarifies certain statutory deadlines relating to elections by mail, including the date to which the clerk must continue mailing ballot packages to voters who update their voter registration address and the date on which ballots may begin to be tabulated, (2) authorizes a county clerk to operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operation, (3) provides that voters standing in line at a voter service center at the time the voter service center closes may vote or register to vote, if eligible, and (4) authorizes a county clerk to open places for ballot deposit not earlier than the initial day that ballots are mailed.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through voting modernization efforts.

Common Cause Hawaii supports voting by mail and the tremendous success of the 2020 elections, due in no small part to the State and county elections administrators. However, it is clear that improvements can still be made to our vote-by-mail system, given the lines seen across the state on General Election Day November 3, 2020.

Common Cause Hawaii supports HB 201 Section 1 (having ballots mailed from at least 18 days before the election day until 7 days before election day) and HB 201 Section 2 (starting ballot tabulating 18 days before the election).

As for Section 3(a), HB 201 provides at page 3, lines 4-5 that clerks may establish voter service centers (VSCs) to service the particular needs of “each county’s voters.” Clerks always had the ability under the original vote-by-mail to establish VSCs for their voters’ needs.

As for Section 3(b), HB 201 provides at page 3, lines 10-18 that “[t]he clerks may operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operations to service the voters of particular areas that could not otherwise support the operation of a voter service center for ten business days or the same times statewide.” This is a beneficial amendment but still does not address the concerns of voters that clerks may reduce operations of VSCs to, for example, only one day or 1 hour per day over one week, especially given the budget crisis. Clerks should not have the unliteral ability to decide to open (or not open) and for how long a VSC remains open.

Common Cause Hawaii has repeatedly stated that each county clerk should establish a minimum number of VSCs and places of deposit in a county based upon a good faith determination of the following factors, which has not been done in Hawaii, in addition to other pertinent considerations not referenced below:

Transportation

- Proximity to public transit
- Access to free parking
- Traffic patterns
- Proximity to communities with low rates of vehicle ownership
- Time and distance a voter must travel to reach a location

Geography

- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations

Underrepresented Voters

- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- The need for alternate voting methods for voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote by mail usage
- Proximity to communities of eligible voters that are not registered

See California Civic Engagement Project, Best Practices: Siting Vote Centers and Drop Boxes, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/5d409b2d9ee54a0001483b84/1564515161760/CCEP+VCA+Brief+3+Companion+2-Pager+Siting.pdf>.

As for Section 3(d), HB 201 provides at page 4, lines 10-15 that clerks “may designate and provide for places of deposit” which will not be open until ballots are mailed. Common Cause Hawaii reiterates that clerks should not be able to site drop boxes without making a good faith determination of the above listed criteria. Further, ballots for the 2020 elections were mailed at different times to the different counties, and it is unclear from Section 3(d) whether a county’s drop boxes may not be open until all ballots statewide are mailed or a county may open its drop boxes when the county’s ballots are mailed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 201 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

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 8:59:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dyson Chee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB201, and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 9:54:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Anderson	Common Cause Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

As a Common Cause Hawaii Board member, I support voting by mail and applaud the tremendous success of the 2020 elections, due in no small part to the State and county elections administrators. However, it is clear that improvements may still be made to our vote-by-mail system, given the lines seen across the state on General Election Day November 3, 2020.

I support HB 201 Section 1 (having ballots mailed from at least 18 days before the election day until 7 days before election day) and HB 201 Section 2 (starting ballot tabulating 18 days before the election).

As for Section 3(a), HB201 provides that clerks may establish voter service centers (VSCs) to service the particular needs of “each county’s voters.” Clerks always had the ability under the original vote-by-mail to establish VSCs for their voters’ needs.

As for Section 3(b), HB201 provides that “[t]he clerks may operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operations to service the voters of particular areas that could not otherwise support the operation of a voter service center for ten business days or the same times statewide.” This is a beneficial amendment but still does not address the concerns of voters that clerks may reduce operations of VSCs to, for example, only one day or 1 hour per day over one week, especially given the budget crisis. Clerks should not have the unliteral ability to decide to open (or not open) and for how long a VSC remains open.

Each county clerk should establish a minimum number of VSCs and places of deposit in a county based upon a good faith determination of the following factors, which has not been done in Hawaii, in addition to other pertinent considerations not referenced below:

Transportation

- Proximity to public transit
- Access to free parking
- Traffic patterns
- Proximity to communities with low rates of vehicle ownership
- Time and distance a voter must travel to reach a location

Geography

- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations

Underrepresented Voters

- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- The need for alternate voting methods for voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote by mail usage
- Proximity to communities of eligible voters that are not registered

As for Section 3(d), HB201 provides that clerks “may designate and provide for places of deposit” which will not be open until ballots are mailed. We reiterate that clerks should not be able to site drop boxes without making a good faith determination of the above listed criteria. Further, ballots for the 2020 elections were mailed at different times to the different counties, and it is unclear from Section 3(d) whether a county’s drop boxes may not be open until all ballots statewide are mailed or a county may open its drop boxes when the county’s ballots are mailed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 201 with suggested amendments.

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 10:02:14 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Concur with comments submitted by Common Cause Hawaii. Hawaii is a leading example of how a vote by mail process can be easy, secure, and accurate. There is no reason to refrain from making the process even more accessible. This should be an easy non-partisan issue. If we truly believe in democracy, any action to make voting more accessible is a self-given goal for everyone.

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 11:56:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee members,

I am a member of Common Cause HI and i have read their info sheets about pending legislation. I have copied their suggestions as my testimony, but i totally agree with their assessment and that is why i share MY thoughts and feelings with you. Mahalo

1. [HB 201](#) to add voter service centers for improvements to the vote by mail process (SUPPORT– PRIORITY BILL).

I support voting by mail and have voted by mail for several years. The tremendous success of the 2020 elections, due in no small part to the State and county elections administrators. However, it is clear that improvements may still be made to our vote-by-mail system, given the lines seen across the state on General Election Day November 3, 2020.

I support HB 201 Section 1 (having ballots mailed from at least 18 days before the election day until 7 days before election day) and HB 201 Section 2 (starting ballot tabulating 18 days before the election).

As for Section 3(a), HB201 provides at page 3, lines 4-5 that clerks may establish voter service centers (VSCs) to service the particular needs of “each county’s voters.” Clerks always had the ability under the original vote-by-mail to establish VSCs for their voters’ needs.

As for Section 3(b), HB201 provides at page 3, lines 10-18 that “[t]he clerks may operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operations to service the voters of particular areas that could not otherwise support the operation of a voter service center for ten business days or the same times statewide.” This is a beneficial amendment but still does not address the concerns of voters that clerks may reduce operations of VSCs to, for example, only one day or 1 hour per day over one week, especially given the budget crisis. Clerks should not have the unliteral ability to decide to open (or not open) and for how long a VSC remains open.

Each county clerk should establish a minimum number of VSCs and places of deposit in a county based upon a good faith determination of the following factors, which has not been done in Hawaii, in addition to other pertinent considerations not referenced below:

Transportation

- Proximity to public transit
- Access to free parking
- Traffic patterns
- Proximity to communities with low rates of vehicle ownership
- Time and distance a voter must travel to reach a location

Geography

- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations

Underrepresented Voters

- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- The need for alternate voting methods for voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote by mail usage
- Proximity to communities of eligible voters that are not registered

See California Civic Engagement Project, Best Practices: Siting Vote Centers and Drop Boxes, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/5d409b2d9ee54a0001483b84/1564515161760/CCEP+VCA+Brief+3+Companion+2-+Pager+Siting.pdf>.

As for Section 3(d), HB201 provides at page 4, lines 10-15 that clerks “may designate and provide for places of deposit” which will not be open until ballots are mailed. I reiterate that clerks should not be able to site drop boxes without making a good faith determination of the above listed criteria. Further, ballots for the 2020 elections were mailed at different times to the different counties, and it is unclear from Section 3(d) whether a county’s drop boxes may not be open until all ballots statewide are mailed or a county may open its drop boxes when the county’s ballots are mailed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 201 with suggested amendments.

Mahalo for your consideration

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona 96740

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 1:03:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a precinct president (22-2) I was happy about the conduct of the 2020 election cycle except for the anxiety caused by the postal service, there not being enough drop boxes, and the trouble with voter service centers which were too far away from many voters and overwhelmed on the last day of voting. (There was also a problem of attempts by extremists to intimidate in-person voters.) Therefore, I strongly support the amendments proposed by Common Cause to HB201 which will resolve most of these problems and enable all our voters to safely and conveniently carry out this essential right and duty of citizenship. Thank you

Martha NAKAJIMA

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 6:12:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Shimei	Indivisible Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

IN SUPPORT

We have a very successful vote-by-mail system and the proposed changes provide additional strength and support.

In addition, we have learned that a sizeable number of our citizens still prefer to vote in person, and it is important to give election officials the flexibility of creating more voter service centers as proposed in Section 3(b) to prevent the very long lines some voters encountered.

HB-201

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 8:24:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I fully support SB 400.

Mahalo,

Michael

Testimony of
REBECCA THOMPSON

Before the
**House Committee on
Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

Tuesday, February 2, 2021
2:00 pm
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

In Consideration of
House Bill 201
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

Honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair Scot Z. Matayoshi, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill 201, relating to elections.

My name is Rebecca Thompson. I will graduate on May 15, 2021, with a Master of Social Work (MSW) from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. House Bill 201 proposes amendments, clarification, and granting county clerks authority to enable qualified residents to cast ballots during local, state, and federal elections. I am testifying to support the intent of House Bill 201.

According to data published by the Office of Elections, there were 795,248 registered voters in the State of Hawai'i on November 3, 2020, 407,190, or 51.2% of registered voters, cast ballots. The number of voters who participated in the 2020 general election rose by 12.6%, which caused a several hour delay in the tabulation of general election results because of Oahu's unprecedented voter turnout. By authorizing county clerks to operate additional voter service centers, highly populated areas, such as Honolulu, would have additional service center locations to enable registered voters who wish to cast their ballot in-person to safely vote and participate in the democratic process of electing officials. I also fully support the right of voters and qualified individuals wishing to register to vote who are in line when the voter service center closes to be able to cast their ballot.

I fully support the intent of House Bill 201. By passing the proposed amendments, additional residents who are registered to vote may be inclined to participate in the democratic process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Rebecca Thompson
RLT2@hawaii.edu

Dear Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

Please support HB201.

I believe that we can increase voter turn out in Hawaii by increasing the total number of voter service centers VSCs across the islands.

A local friend in Kaneohe shared that she was not so sure that the US Postal Service would deliver her ballot in time so she decided to drop off her ballot at VSC. I'm sure that there are other people who feel this way given the negative national scandals about the US Postal Service not being ready for the volume of mail for the 2020 presidential election.

As a state, we need to reassure the public that their vote counts. We can prove this to the public by increasing the total number of VSCs, especially in the locations that do not have sufficient access.

We support HB 201 Section 1 (having ballots mailed from at least 18 days before the election day until 7 days before election day) and HB 201 Section 2 (starting ballot tabulating 18 days before the election).

As for Section 3(a), HB201 provides at page 3, lines 4-5 that clerks may establish voter service centers (VSCs) to service the particular needs of "each county's voters." Clerks always had the ability under the original vote-by-mail to establish VSCs for their voters' needs.

As for Section 3(b), HB201 provides at page 3, lines 10-18 that "[t]he clerks may operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operations to service the voters of particular areas that could not otherwise support the operation of a voter service center for ten business days or the same times statewide." This is a beneficial amendment but still does not address the concerns of voters that clerks may reduce operations of VSCs to, for example, only one day or 1 hour per day over one week, especially given the budget crisis. Clerks should not have the unliteral ability to decide to open (or not open) and for how long a VSC remains open.

Each county clerk should establish a minimum number of VSCs and places of deposit in a county based upon a good faith determination of the following factors, which has not been done in Hawaii, in addition to other pertinent considerations not referenced below:

Transportation

- Proximity to public transit
 - Access to free parking
 - Traffic patterns
 - Proximity to communities with low rates of vehicle

ownership

- Time and distance a voter must travel to reach a location

Geography

- Proximity to population centers
 - Proximity to geographically isolated populations

Underrepresented Voters

- Proximity to language minority communities
 - Proximity to low-income communities
 - Proximity to voters with disabilities
 - The need for alternate voting methods for voters with disabilities
 - Proximity to communities with historically low vote by mail usage
 - Proximity to communities of eligible voters that are not registered

See California Civic Engagement Project, Best Practices: Siting Vote Centers and Drop Boxes, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/5d409b2d9ee54a0001483b84/1564515161760/CCEP+VCA+Brief+3+Companion+2-+Pager+Siting.pdf>.

As for Section 3(d), HB201 provides at page 4, lines 10-15 that clerks “may designate and provide for places of deposit” which will not be open until ballots are mailed. We reiterate that clerks should not be able to site drop boxes without making a good faith determination of the above listed criteria. Further, ballots for the 2020 elections were mailed at different times to the different counties, and it is unclear from Section 3(d) whether a county’s drop boxes may not be open until all ballots statewide are mailed or a county may open its drop boxes when the county’s ballots are mailed.

Thank your for your time and attention to this matter.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
elections.hawaii.gov

SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 201
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

February 2, 2021

Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 201. The purpose of this bill is to: (1) amend or clarify certain statutory deadlines relating to elections by mail, including the date to which the clerk must continue mailing ballot packages to voters who update their voter registration address, and the date on which ballots may begin to be tabulated; (2) authorize a county clerk to operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operation; (3) provide that voters standing in line at a voter service center at the time the voter service center closes may vote or register to vote, if eligible; and (4) authorize a county clerk to open places of deposit not earlier than the initial day that ballots are mailed.

This bill builds off of the experiences we learned in our implementation of elections by mail to improve services and opportunities for voters to cast their ballots and the administration of elections by state and county election officials.

By allowing election officials to mail ballots in advance of the 18th day prior to the election, we would be better able to ensure voters receive their ballot and quickly address any delays announced by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). Additionally, this bill amends the deadline to receive address updates by current voters from the 14th day prior to the election to the 7th day. This will allow voters who need to update their registration to be able to vote by mail, as opposed to needing to go to a voter service center to update their address and receive their proper ballot.

This bill expands the time frame for places of deposit to be open to coincide with the same day that ballots are mailed. The bill also provides the county clerks with more flexibility to open voter service centers with varying days and hours of operation to meet the needs of the community. Allowing flexibility to open additional voter service centers provides increased opportunities for first-time voters who miss the deadline to register to receive a ballot in the mail but may register and vote in person.

Lastly, the bill allows ballots to be opened and processed at the counting center beginning 18 days prior to the election. This amendment would allow state election officials, across the four counting centers statewide, to address the anticipated growth in turnout. At the Oahu counting center, state election officials and counting center volunteers needed all 10 days of processing allowed by law to open and count the record turnout for the both the 2020 Primary Election and General Election. While ballots are opened for processing, the results are not produced and disseminated until voting closes on Election Day.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 201.

HB-201

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 9:41:57 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am in full support of hb201 because our nascent vote-by-mail system should be analyzed and improved to meet the myriad special needs of each island county. The number of VSCs and drop boxes for each county should meet the minimum requirements while being flexible, at the determination of the county clerk to improve access to voters who may otherwise be excluded from voting.

All ballots should be mailed out so that they arrive at each island at approximately the same day, with sufficient time for voters to read and research their ballot choices and send them back by usps to arrive well within the deadlines for ballot receipt.

All registered voters should be informed of when to expect their ballot and how, when and where it must be mailed, dropped in the dropbox or delivered in person so there is less confusion, especially among the elderly, disabled, and New voters.

Mahalo

HB-201

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 9:48:00 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Given the hours long lines on election day 2020, we need more voter service centers with longer hours. The mess in 2020 delayed for more than four hours the release of election results, this should never happen again.

Ballots to voters in all counties should be mailed at the same time, not on different days. I also believe that 18 days is not sufficient times for ballots to be mailed and returned, given the deteriorating state of the U.S. Postal Service. At times it is taking five days for in state first class mail to be delivered. A turtle could do it faster, especially when the mailing point to delivery point is less than two miles.

HB-201

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 10:03:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/2/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Banner Fanene	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support all aspects of HB201, in particular the absolute necessity of adding Voting Stations based on Population for Oahu.

Mahalo

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4800
TTY: (808) 241-5116



SCOTT K. SATO
Deputy County Clerk

Facsimile: (808) 241-6207
E-mail: elections@kauai.gov

ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101
LIHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAII 96766-1819

February 2, 2021

TESTIMONY OF JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 201
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

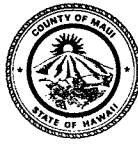
Dear Chair Nakashima and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill No. 201. This Bill as proposed, would amend and/or clarify certain statutory deadlines relating to elections by mail.

In 2020, the State of Hawaii embarked on its first all-mail election, which in many respects went well. However, it is clear that there are changes that election officials can make to improve the process. H.B. 201 will establish the changes that are needed to make elections in Hawai'i much more convenient and accessible to all voters, and it will also expand the timeline for processing mail ballots.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill No. 201.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk

February 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kathy L. Kaohu
County Clerk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy L. Kaohu", is written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2021; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
HB 201, RELATING TO ELECTIONS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to: 1) amend or clarify certain statutory deadlines relating to elections by mail; 2) authorize a county clerk to operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operation; 3) provide that voters standing in line at a voter service center at the time the voter service center closes may vote or register to vote, if eligible; and, 4) authorize a county clerk to open places for ballot deposit no earlier than the initial day that ballots are mailed to registered voters.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Prior to the 2020 elections, we announced to Maui County voters that they could expect their ballot packages to arrive approximately 18 days before the day of election. The majority of Maui County voters received their packages earlier than that, leading to confusion among some voters. Clarifying that at least 18 days before the election will help prevent confusion regarding ballot package mailings in future elections.
2. Maui County operated three voter service centers during the 2020 elections. We were interested in operating additional centers, but we lacked the resources to do so under the current law. This bill would create flexibility with the days and hours of additional voter service centers, which would allow us to consider operating additional centers with the resources available to us.
- 3.. While the vast majority of ballots for last year's elections were returned to us by mail, several thousand ballots were returned to us via our places of deposit. Opening the places of deposit simultaneously with the time the ballot packages are mailed ensures that voters who desire to return their ballots through places of deposit do not need to wait.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.



530 S KING ST RM 100
HONOLULU HI 96813
(808) 768-3800
WWW.HONOLULUELECTIONS.US

TESTIMONY OF REX QUIDILLA
ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR,
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
& HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 201
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

February 2, 2021

Chair Nakashima and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 201 that proposes to make various amendments to Hawaii's vote-by-mail law.

With the passage of Act 136 (2019), the legislature transitioned Hawaii elections to universal vote-by-mail. In just its first year of implementation, voters overwhelmingly embraced this new election scheme, shattering longstanding voter participation records in both primary and general elections. Ballot envelopes returned by postal mail or official place of deposit comprised 98.9 percent and 95.5 percent of all ballots returned in the primary and general elections, respectively.

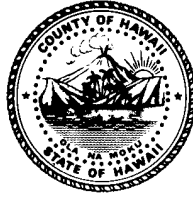
The City & County of Honolulu supports HB201 as it continues to advance voter accessibility and promotes the highest and best use of the primary voting method, which is by mail.

For more metrics regarding the 2020 vote-by-mail elections, please go to www.honoluluelections.us.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB201.



JON HENRICKS
County Clerk



LATE

AARON BROWN
Deputy County Clerk

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Elections Division
County of Hawai'i
Hawai'i County Building
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

TESTIMONY OF JON HENRICKS

COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

ON HOUSE BILL NO. 201

RELATING TO ELECTIONS

February 1, 2021

Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 201. This bill amends or clarifies certain statutory deadlines relating to election by mail, including the date to which the clerk must continue mailing ballot packages to voters who update their voter registration address and the date on which ballots may begin to be tabulated. Authorizes a county clerk to operate additional voter service centers with varying days or hours of operation. Provides that voters standing in line at a voter service center at the time the voter service center closes may vote or register to vote, if eligible. Authorizes a county clerk to open places for ballot deposit not earlier than the initial day that ballots are mailed.

The County of Hawaii, Office of the County Clerk, which is responsible for conducting Federal, State, and County Elections in coordination and collaboration with the State of Hawaii Office of Elections, offers the following comments on HB201:

We support the provisions relating to clarifying when ballots may be mailed to eligible voters, increasing the amount of time for processing of voted ballots, and clarifying when Places of Deposit may be made available for receipt of voted ballots.

The County of Hawaii, Office of the county Clerk, does not strongly oppose the amendments to provisions for the operation of Voter Service Centers. Each county has its unique challenges and opportunities when providing services to its voters. However, our office is concerned that the flexibility and leeway that the amendments in HB201 provide for the operation of Voter Service Centers will create expectations to expand opportunities for "in-person" voting, with emphasis on "in-person" voting on election days; i.e. the establishment of polling places as a preference to voting by mail.

Our Office believes that the 2020 Elections were largely successful on all fronts. Turnout was extremely high. Voter issues and complaints on Hawai'i County were nominal. We established and operated Elections by Mail programs that were effective.

We believe our office will be best suited to maintain and even improve our Elections by Mail program if we are able to focus our limited resources on voting by mail, which was the primary objective of Act 136. Transitioning back to a voting environment where polling places are established to offer services to a relatively small percentage of our voters would likely not provide for the best and highest use of our limited resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 201.

LATE



1132 Bishop Street, #1920 | Honolulu, HI 96813
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-537-2288 | TTY: 1-877-434-7598
aarp.org/hi | hiaarp@aarp.org | twitter: @AARPHawaii
facebook.com/AARPHawaii

**The Hawaii State Legislature
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
February 2, 2021, 2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Mark Nakashima, Chairperson

Re: H.B. 201- Relating to Elections

Dear Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with nearly 145,000 members in Hawai'i.

AARP Hawai'i supports H.B. 201 which clarifies or amends certain statutory deadlines relating to elections by mail including the date to which the clerk must continue mailing ballot packages to voters who update their voter registration address; the date on which ballots may begin to be tabulated; and other provisions which will standardize and improve voters' access to casting their ballots.

Hawaii's first vote-by-mail system was a success in the 2020 elections. However, there is always room for improvement especially as evident by the long lines seen on the recent General Election Day. We support these amendments' intention to ensure that all voters can exercise their right to vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keali'i Lopez".

Keali'i Lopez, State Director

AARP
Real Possibilities