

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

2:00 PM

Conference Room 312 and Videoconference

in consideration of
HR 171 / HCR 171**COMMITTING TO PROVIDE GREATER PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS BY ADOPTING RULES TO ALLOW FOR VIRTUAL TESTIMONY, HEARING RECORDINGS, AND INTERNET BROADCASTS OF HEARINGS BEYOND PERIODS OF CATASTROPHIC EVENTS.**

Chair KOBAYASHI, Vice Chair MIZUNO, and Members of the House Legislative Management Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports HR 171 / HCR 171, committing to provide greater public access to the legislative process by adopting rules to allow for virtual testimony, hearing recordings, and internet broadcasts of hearings beyond periods of catastrophic events.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening our representative democracy through efforts that increase civic engagement and public participation in our democratic processes.

During the pandemic, virtual legislative testimony, recorded legislative hearings, and internet broadcasts of legislative hearing permitted legislators to continue safely and remotely The People's business and the public to participate. It was discovered during these trying times that it was eminently doable to have remote legislative hearings and sessions with remote public testimony. Further, the public appreciated being able to review recorded hearings, sessions, and informational briefings when not able to watch the proceedings live. Archiving the hearings, sessions, and informational briefings is critical to legislative transparency and accountability.

Common Cause Hawaii supports each house of the Legislature continuing to provide greater public access to the legislative process for the people of Hawaii "by adopting rules allowing virtual testimony, recorded hearings, and hearings broadcasted via the Internet, consistent with those that were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, be continued as a regular practice." See HR 171 at page 2, line 42 and page 3, lines 1-3; HCR 171 at page 3, lines 3-7. Common Cause Hawaii also suggests that the recorded hearings, sessions, and informational briefings be archived for later and/or repeat viewing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HR 171 / HCR 171. If you have any questions, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 23, 2022

H.C.R. 171/H.R. 171 – COMMITTING TO PROVIDING GREATER PUBLIC
ACCESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.C.R. 171 and H.R. 171 which expresses the Legislature's commitment to providing greater public access to the legislative process by adopting rules to allow for virtual testimony and recorded and broadcasted hearings.

The COVID-19 worldwide pandemic has fundamentally changed how we can and should operate. We have long supported measures and resolutions that increase the public's access to the legislative process and are pleased that the Legislature was able to pivot quickly to allow for virtual testifying and broadcasted hearings. Due to the fast-paced legislative timetable, it is often a severe financial hardship for neighbor island residents to actively participate in our democratic process. For example, when the Legislature was considering the privatization of the Maui Region of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, employees had to take time off work, purchase airline tickets – often with only 48-hours' notice – and arrange ground transportation to attend and testify in committee hearings. Many of our members chose to expend their valuable time and money to share their expertise and ensure their voices were heard, but we firmly believe many more would have taken advantage of remote testimony technology. We are confident that this same situation is all too familiar for too many neighbor island residents, regardless of the issue at hand. The continuation of virtual testifying and broadcasting hearings will ensure equal access to committee hearings no matter where a Hawaii resident resides.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

HCR-171

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 12:24:33 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/23/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Kent	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this HCR. I hope that we may continue to virtually participate in legislative hearings. The provision provides much more access for citizens.

Thank you for supporting virtual participation.

Elizabeth Kent