



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Friday, January 28, 2022, 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Via Videoconference

by
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Deputy Chief Court Administrator
First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 1346, Relating to Juror Compensation.

Purpose: Increases compensation for a juror or a prospective juror from \$30 to \$50 for each day of attendance at court after serving five consecutive days.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary offers the following comments on Senate Bill No. 1346:

The payment for jury service under Hawai‘i Revised Statutes Chapter 612 represents (1) the Legislature’s acknowledgment of the sacrifice our citizenry makes to serve and (2) an expression of its appreciation for such service. A juror’s per diem compensation is not meant to be a wage but rather an honorarium that defrays some of the sacrifice necessitated by jury service. Jury service remains just that: a service and civic duty necessary for our democracy.

Out of the nearly 300 jury trials conducted in FY 2019, fewer than 40 trials involved jurors who served more than five consecutive days. Of the nearly 14,000 jurors who served that year, fewer than 500 would receive increased compensation under this measure, at an approximate additional cost of \$52,000 per fiscal year. Thus, it is anticipated that this measure would have a limited effect of increasing compensation for fewer than 4% of jurors serving in the state.



Senate Bill No. 1346, Relating to Juror Compensation
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Friday, January 28, 2022
Page 2

One alternative to the contemplated variable per-day rate would be a flat-rate increase of juror's per diem from \$30 to \$50. This flat-rate increase would correspond to the last increase in juror fees in 1986 when the rate was raised from \$20 per day to the current \$30 per day.

Should Senate Bill No. 1346 be enacted as a flat-rate increase, it is estimated that the increase in funding required would be approximately \$582,553 per fiscal year at a 66 percent rate (\$30 to \$50) increase, which by and large would be apportioned to jurors' per diem payments. Although the Judiciary acknowledges the benefit of increased juror compensation, it would as a practical matter be unable to support, much less implement, such legislation without commensurate funding by the Legislature.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 1346.

SB-1346

Submitted on: 1/22/2022 7:51:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 1/28/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I definitely support SB1346.