

Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Thursday, February 3, 2022

9:30 AM

Via Video Conference

in consideration of
SB 2486**PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE III, SECTIONS 10, 11, 12, 15, AND 16 OF THE HAWAII STATE
CONSTITUTION TO ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS LEGISLATIVE SESSION.**

Chairs RHOADS, Vice Chair KEOHOKALOOLE, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports the intent of SB 2486 to (1) establish a continuous legislature, (2) require the legislature to convene at least once a month, (3) removes language regarding special sessions, adjournment, and recesses, (4) creates two-year deadline for a bill to be submitted for gubernatorial consideration, (5) standardize the number of days that the governor must approve or veto a bill submitted for consideration, (6) require bills returned by the governor to be heard by the legislature within an unspecified number of days for the bill for the bill to be further amended, and (7) require the passage of the legislative budget in an unspecified number of days before the end of each fiscal year.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy -- one that works for everyone equally and not just the wealthy special few.

The idea behind SB 2486 is very promising. The current 60 day legislative session where approximately 3,000 bills are introduced and roughly 10% are passed is not conducive to a transparent process or thorough, measured, reasoned decision-making.

To have a continuous session may allow for more public participation and engagement. To have the process compressed and rushed into 60 session days may prohibit people from participating and advocating at the legislature. Given the fast pace of the legislative session, people, who are not full-time employed in advocacy, may have a difficult time learning the process.

However, more thought and consideration should be given as to the implications of a continuous legislative session and the revised deadlines considered by this proposed constitutional amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of SB 2486. If you have questions for me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii