

SB-627

Submitted on: 2/14/2023 10:32:50 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/15/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louisa Duggan	Testifying for Vote Mama Foundation	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Louisa Duggan - I'm the Political Associate at Vote Mama Foundation and I am here to speak on behalf of the organization in strong support of SB627. I was raised in Kailua-Kona on the Big Island, and I am very grateful to have the opportunity to submit testimony in support of a bill that I feel would better our community by expressly showing support for our caregivers throughout the state.

Childcare obligations are one of the major factors families consider when weighing their decision to run for office. In many states, it costs more to send an infant to childcare than a mortgage payment. This is not an expense working families can take on - especially when campaigning.

In 2018, the Federal Election Commission approved federal candidates' option to spend campaign funds on childcare through a unanimous, bipartisan vote.

However, this ruling does not apply to state and local candidates. Vote Mama Foundation is working to approve the use of Campaign Funds for Dependent Care by state and local candidates in all 50 states.

As of today, 28 states, both Democratic and Republican, have brought their state statutes in line with federal regulations. States like Arkansas, Montana, West Virginia, Washington, and California all allow for candidates to use their campaign dollars on caregiver expenses.

This legislation is a bipartisan initiative for moms and dads alike. As with any other campaign finance allowance, this bill creates an option for use and is not a mandate - candidates don't have to use campaign funds on caregiving expenses if they don't want to.

Every political candidate in the state of Hawaii should be able to use the campaign funds that they raise to pay for caregiving services that they need to run for office. This common sense solution is at no cost to taxpayers or state governments.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge the Senate Health and Human Services Committee to support SB627 and vote it out of committee. I am happy to answer any questions.



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senator San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Aquino, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: SB627, relating to campaign finance
1:00 p.m., Feb. 15, 2023

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to **testify in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 627, relating to campaign finance.**

In May 2021, the Vote Mama Foundation noted that by the time American women are 44 years old, most of them—86%—are mothers. Yet, only 6% of those in Congress at the time were mothers with school-aged children. Further, the Foundation noted in their October 2022 Politics of Parenthood report that **6.58% of Hawai'i's Legislature was comprised of mothers with minor children**, ranking 18th of all states.

Hawai'i has shown promise with its representation of mothers of young children in office, but we can do better. Running for office takes time outside of full-time work hours. This becomes an even greater challenge for parents of young children who cannot always come to campaign activities but whose care costs money. SB627 will make our campaign expenditures law clear that candidates may use their campaign funds for child and dependent care.

Parents who take on primary caregiving roles offer important insights into policymaking and the ways laws are executed in real life. They offer unique perspectives not just of what it's like as a caregiver but also as voices for our youngest residents who cannot vote. Our State Legislature will only be further enhanced by fuller participation by parents and caregivers alike.

SB627 is one way in which we can reduce barriers for parents seeking to run for office. Please advance this measure.

Mahalo,

Ke'ōpū Reelitz
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

SB-627

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 2:25:41 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/15/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB627.