

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

73

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 07 2023

RE: S.B. No. 181
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 181 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR COUNTY ETHICS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to provide one-time grants-in-aid to the respective ethics boards of the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, and to the Ethics Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Hawai'i State Ethics Commission, Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct, League of Women Voters of Hawaii, Holomua Collective, and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Honolulu Ethics Commission.

Your Committee finds that many of the county ethics boards or commissions lack the necessary resources to adequately meet their constitutionally mandated obligations. Limited or no staffing prevents these entities from sufficiently investigating complaints, providing advice to current county employees, or offering training on how to follow the pertinent code of ethics. Your Committee further finds that providing a one-time grant-in-aid would allow the county entities to develop the infrastructure and capacity to better meet the constitutional mandate of holding



public officers and employees to "the highest standards of ethical conduct". It would also allow the counties to appropriately establish greater and more reliable funding over time. This measure will incentivize and encourage the counties to provide greater capacity to county ethics boards or commissions.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding language to the findings stating that the grant-in-aid would allow the county ethics boards of Maui, Kauai, Hawaii, and Oahu to hire paid staff who will be responsible for securing, from the respective counties, future ethics board funding; and
- (2) Inserting an effective date of January 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion.

Your Committee notes that the Senate Draft 1 of this measure contains unspecified appropriation amounts and respectfully requests that your Committee on Ways and Means considers inserting an appropriation amount of \$200,000 for each ethics board of the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, and to the Ethics Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 181, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 181, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



