



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 2381, RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 **TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 016 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill: (1) establishes the comprehensive public funding program, a voluntary system of public financing for eligible candidates seeking state and county public offices; (2) appropriates funds into a newly designated "sub-fund" or "subfund" within the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund to support the public funding program; and (3) appropriates funds out of the "sub-fund" or "subfund" for planning and preparation expenses, including two temporary staff for the program.

We have the following comments regarding the "sub-fund" or "subfund" to be separately designated within the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund. The term used by the Department of Accounting and General Services for a separate designation of funds within an established fund is "subaccount." We recommend the bill be revised to use the term "subaccount" when referring to the separate designation of funds within the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund for the comprehensive public funding program.

Also, the title of section 11-L, page 31, lines 12-13, refers to the deposit of money into the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund's subfund [sic] for the comprehensive public funding program, but the provision in section 11-L, on page 31, lines 14-15, refers only to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and does not refer to the subaccount. If the intent is to have the funds listed in section 11-L be deposited into the comprehensive

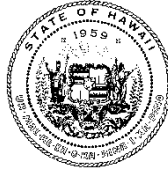
public funding program subaccount, we recommend revising lines 14-15 as follows:

"The following moneys shall be deposited into the subaccount of the Hawaii election campaign fund established under section 11-421."

Lastly, section 2 of the bill, at page 4, lines 19-21, refers to the proposed program as the "voluntary public financing program." To avoid any confusion, we recommend revising lines 19-21 as follows: "The purpose of the [~~voluntary~~] comprehensive public funding program, which is a voluntary program, is to improve the electoral process for state and local offices by:".

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

KRISTIN E. IZUMI-NITAO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 5, 2024

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director
Campaign Spending Commission

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 2381, Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office.**

Tuesday, February 6, 2024
10:00 a.m., Conference Room 16 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports the intent of this bill, and respectfully submits that a general fund appropriation to fund the program as well as two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) exempt permanent positions to be hired before the 2028 general election are necessary.¹

This bill establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices beginning with the 2028 general election year, appropriates funds to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund which are to be also used to hire two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) temporary employees.² The bill also requires the Commission to

¹ Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-314(12) and §11-317(a), the Commission’s personnel is exempt excluded from HRS Chapters 76 (Civil Service Law), 78 (Public Service), and 89 (Collective Bargaining in Public Employment) as well as HRS §26-35(a)(1), (4), and (5) (Administration supervision of boards and commissions).

² The Commission recommends that the funding of additional Commission personnel should not come from the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund which provides for public funding. Prior to

submit progress reports and, if necessary, proposed legislation to the Legislature prior to the regular sessions of 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028 regarding the implementation of the comprehensive public funding program for candidates to state and county offices.

The bill establishes the maximum amount of comprehensive public funds (“CPF Max”) for each office. The CPF Max ranges from a low of \$20,000 for candidates for county council with a county population of between 195,000 to 499,999 to a high of \$2,500,000 for candidates for Governor. In order to qualify for comprehensive public funding, the bill establishes the minimum number of qualifying contributions each candidate must receive from registered voters residing within the respective district from which the candidate seeks nomination or election to office.

The Commission suggests the following amendments to the bill:

- 1) In several parts, the bill refers to a “subfund” or “sub-fund” of the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund.³ The Commission suggest that subfund or sub-fund be replaced by “subaccount.” It is the latter term that is used in describing executive branch account.
- 2) On page 10, beginning at line 10, seed money is limited to \$5,000, or five percent of the CPF Max for the office sought, whichever is greater. The Commission recommends deletion of the five percent of the CPF Max alternative. Depending on the office sought, that alternative method of determining the limit on seed money could result in too high of an amount of seed money. This would also be consistent with S.B. No.1543, the comprehensive public funding program from last session.
- 3) In §11-F(b), beginning at the bottom of page 13 of the bill, when providing for the minimum qualifying contributions for the offices of Mayor, Prosecuting Attorney, and County Council, the Commission suggests that the different county offices be described by the name of the county rather than the population. Such an amendment would reduce any confusion when reading the bill. This suggestion also applies to §11-H(a), beginning at the bottom of page 18, which provides for the CPF Max for each office.

2017, Commission personnel’s salaries came from this fund and were nearing depletion such that the Commission came close to declaring that there would be no public funding in the 2018 election. It took many staff hours and several legislative sessions to restore the funding of Commission operations to general funds which is what will occur again if this provision stands.

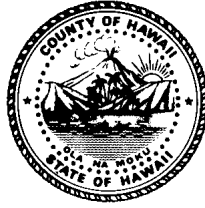
³ For example, see bill at page 4, lines 5 and 8; page 7, line 5; page 12, line 1; page 16, line 16; page 22, line 12; page 23, line 1; page 25, line 20; page 26, lines 14 and 20; page 27, line 12; page 31, line 13; page 32, line 14; page 33, line 15; and, page 34, line 12.

- 4) The Commission recommends the deletion of §11-F(b)(12) (page 15, lines 7-10) and §11-H(a)(12) (page 20, line 19, to page 21, line 2). The Commission believes that these two paragraphs provide for the minimum qualifying contributions and CPF Max, respectively, for the office of the Maui County Prosecuting Attorney. Since that county office is an appointed rather than an elected office, those two paragraphs are not necessary.
- 5) §11-H(d), on page 23, line 4, calls for the adjustment of the CPF Max every general election year to match the change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers published by the U.S. Department of Labor. The Commission suggests that the election year adjustments be done by averaging the amount the winning candidates spent in the two preceding elections. The Commission believes that this is how the CPF Max amounts were arrived at in §11-H(a).⁴
- 6) On page 25, lines 13-16, for consistency and clarity, the Commission suggests the following amendment: “In either case, {The} the candidate shall return all unexpended public funds received to the Hawaii election campaign fund’s [subfund] subaccount for the comprehensive public funding program within thirty days [after the notice is submitted] after the election in which the candidate was successful.”
- 7) The Commission notes that since candidates running for Maui County Council (138 qualifying contributions) and Kauai County Council (75 qualifying contributions) run county-wide, these candidates will have a somewhat easier path to raise the minimum qualifying contributions because these contributions can come from registered voters county-wide.⁵ Candidates running for Honolulu County Council (338 qualifying contributions) and Hawaii County Council (50 qualifying contributions) must seek such contributions only from registered voters in their respective council districts, and not county-wide.

⁴ Actually, based upon the timing of the request for information from the drafters of last year’s comprehensive public financing bill, the information about winning candidates provided by Commission staff were from the 2018 and 2020 elections.

⁵ However, each Maui County Councilmember is elected from one of “nine residency areas.”
<https://www.mauicounty.gov/Faq.aspx?QID=60>

Jennifer Kagiwada
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



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HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

DATE: February 5, 2024
TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: SB 2381

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB 2381 to establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates running for office in Hawai‘i. Publicly funded elections are one of the best reforms we can make to our current election system to level the playing field for all candidates and get special interest money out of our campaigns.

I’d like to offer the following additional comments on this bill as currently worded:

1. Please ensure there is a way to accept electronic signatures from campaign contributors.
2. Verify that the Campaign Spending Commission or Office of Elections has a method for checking those signatures for accuracy.
3. Ensure that the funding amounts reflect the actual amounts spent in the 2022 election cycle.
4. When recalculating the amounts only use those races that were truly competitive to form your averages, rather than including all races with more than one candidate. This will provide a more accurate picture of the total amount spent and better accomplish the goal of equity and fairness in public financing.
5. Lastly, if some candidates are subject to additional rules or restrictions regarding campaign funding and spending limits while other candidates are accepting large private donations with no spending limits, there will always be an imbalance that leaves the election process open to corruption and inequities. Ideally, ALL candidates should be beholden to the same spending limits, whether they choose to qualify for public funding or not.

SB 2381 is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people’s trust in elections and the legislative process. 74% of the Hawai‘i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations. Public funding for elections is an effective way to engage voters and create participation for a greater diversity of new candidates to run for office. Please pass SB 2381. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Jenn Kagiwada



Hawai'i

Committee: Judiciary
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 10:00am
Place: Conference Room 016 & Via Videoconference
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of SB2381
Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Committee Members:

The ACLU of Hawai'i supports **SB2381 Relating to Public Financing For Candidates Elected to Office**. Specifically, we ask that you fully fund this measure, make it permanent and implement no later than 2026.

In our view, the answer to concerns over the escalating cost of political campaigns is to expand, not limit, the resources available for political advocacy. **Thus, the ACLU supports a comprehensive and meaningful opt-in system of public financing that would help create a level playing field for every qualified candidate.**

A representative democracy functions best when it closely mirrors the electorate. And this is accomplished when access to public candidacy isn't limited by personal wealth or the deep pockets of private interests.

Financial means, or lack of such, can have a wide array of impacts. Access to wealth often results in better educational and health outcomes over the course of one's life. Those individuals and families impacted by our criminal justice system are predominately those who live in poverty. **So too do financial means impact our electoral system. Those with greater financial means and access to high-quality education are more likely to run for, and win, elected offices.**

Giving potential candidates the option to access a meaningful pool of public money will go a long way toward leveling the playing field against well-funded and entrenched incumbents. And a well-funded public financing system could very-well encourage individuals from these under represented demographics to run for public office.

When our legislative officials have in common shared lived experience, not just geographic proximity, with those they represent we can all be uplifted with bolder public policy that acknowledges our most vulnerable and works to uplift them.

We will continue to advocate for reform of the current system, including in support of our longstanding commitment to public financing of campaigns. In doing so, we will stress fidelity to

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i
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the principles protected by the First Amendment with the goal of expanding, not limiting, political speech.

Please pass and SB2381 on a permanent basis and starting no later than 2026. Mahalo for your service!

Sincerely,

Josh Frost

Josh Frost
Policy Assistant
ACLU of Hawai'i
jfrost@acluhawaii.org

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.

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Testimony in Support of SB2381

Submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee
by Evan Weber, Managing Director, Our Hawai'i, 2/6/2024

Committee members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to speak before you today. On behalf of Our Hawai'i's over 36,000 members and supporters across the pae 'āina, I stand in strong support for Senate Bill 2381, relating to public financing of candidates to elected office. Our members and supporters are local people — kama'āina and kānaka maoli, keiki and kūpuna, from Kaua'i to Kohala, Kailua to Kapolei and every place in between. They have joined our movement to fight for a Hawai'i that puts local people — not big money interests — first, because they are deeply worried about the direction of our islands and believe now is the time for change.

Our supporters are not alone. Our corruption and public trust in government crisis has reached a tipping point. After years of the FBI putting our officials in handcuffs, resignations, and scandals, [Hawai'i voters as a whole in this past election ranked government corruption as their number 3 top issue, only behind inflation and affordable housing, and 74% favor the adoption of a policy like SB1543 which would provide full public financing of elections and ban corporate and private donations.](#) With public trust at an all time low, now is not time for band-aids, it's time for real solutions. While last year progress was made, the fundamentals of the equation have not shifted. We need to address the overriding issue of money in our politics where it begins, in our elections.

SB2381 would go as far as is legally possible under the United States constitution, by leveling the playing field to candidates who are not wealthy or well-connected and providing a viable alternative for campaigning from the private-money driven status quo. It's a historic opportunity to get big money out of our elections, allow every day people an equal voice with the rich and powerful, and allow candidates and legislators like you all to be beholden only to their constituents and their conscience. No longer would legislators have to look over their shoulders, worried about how their donors who will fund their next campaign might react to each and every vote. They can be fully focused on delivering for their constituents, the people. That's how democracy is supposed to work!

And, we know that programs like this work: we've seen it in places like Connecticut, Maine, Hawai'i County and cities all around the US. And we know it's popular. In addition to previously mentioned strong public support, the bill has been supported by leading politicians of both the Democratic and Republican Parties, has the backing of the state Democratic Party, and support from dozens of leading organizations in Hawai'i. **And we know we have the resources: the program would cost less than 0.1% of the state budget.**

We have the policy. We have the public desire for change. We have the resources. The only question is do we have the political will? That will be up to you to make it so. As you deliberate, know the public is watching.

Mahalo nui loa for your courage and action. Laulima, we can move forward to a better future for Hawai'i.



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

FEBRUARY 6, 2024

SB 2381, RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i **supports** SB 2381, relating to public financing for candidates to elected office. Pursuant to the "Government" section of the official Democratic Party of Hawai'i platform, the party supports "government reforms that limit the influence of money on the creation or execution of policy. We support campaign finance reform that limits the amount of money organizations, corporations or individuals can donate to political campaigns. We support full public-financing of elections."

Government should work for the public interest, not special interests.

In the 2010 and 2012 election cycles, the Hawai'i Island County Council ran a pilot program for comprehensive public funding. Similarly, Connecticut and Maine have instituted statewide clean elections programs, which have proven successful at increasing electoral participation and reducing candidates' reliance on private donations. Over 70 percent of Democratic legislators use public financing to fund their campaigns in Maine.

Hawai'i continues to be embroiled in public corruption scandals, following the bribery allegations that were levied against former Senate

Majority Leader Kalani English and former State Representative Ty Cullen. Other public officials, such as employees at local permitting offices, have also recently been ensnared in bribery scandals, in some cases with connections to Milton Choy, the lobbyist who was responsible for coordinating the bribery scheme that Sen. English and Rep. Cullen became a part of. These cases show that we have a moral crisis in our public institutions and must do all we can to restore integrity to government.

When candidates for public office are forced to rely on private donations to build relationships, those transactions can cause corruption or create the perception of it. Put simply, legislators are responsive to donors because donors fund their campaigns. Money is crucial to winning. Roughly 91 percent of candidates who outspend their opponents win their elections.

Relatedly, many people choose not to run for public office because they can't afford the cost of a campaign, leaving many incumbents routinely uncontested in their reelection bids. The average winner of a State House seat in Hawai'i spends approximately \$40,000 on their campaign, compared to only \$16,000 for the losing candidate. Over half of all campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors, each of whom contributed at least \$6,000 in candidate donations during the last election cycle.

This bill will eventually create an election system that is fair for our island home. Once a clean elections program is fully effectuated in 2028—more than enough time to fund the system for the next non-gubernatorial election season—candidates will no longer need to rely on contributions from wealthy donors. Instead, they can seek support from their constituents in the form of small donations that verify their credibility and subsequently obtain public funding in an amount sufficient to run effective campaigns. Legislators will, in turn, be empowered to focus on engaging with their communities, rather than wheedling the donor class. Ultimately, this will help our government reflect the will of the people, not the wallets of the privileged.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kris Coffield

Co-Chair, Legislative Committee

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Abby Simmons

Co-Chair, Legislative Committee

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SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 11:23:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Thank you for introducing this vitally important bill and holding this hearing. This is a bill that promises to deliver benefits that go beyond what is actually proposed. Connecticut, Maine and Hawaii County have already shown us that public financing is doable and affordable. It threatens no one and encourages many to run who might otherwise not feel financially able to do so. It will help ensure that our elected representatives actually **represent** and look more like the communities they come from and less like the agents of Big Money. Citizens United opened the floodgates. Local governments can mitigate the damage done by Citizens United by providing public financing for worthy candidates truly interested in public service. Public disillusionment after the corruption scandals of recent years is no secret. Moving this bill forward will help restore faith in our government. This is a bill that is needed at this time of great threat to our democracy. Please show voters that you are serious about reform and true representation. Please move this bill forward. mahalo nui.



February 5, 2024

The Senate
State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Co-Chair

Dear Members of the Committee:

Public Citizen submits this testimony in strong support of SB 2381

Here at Public Citizen, we emphasize that all aspects of the U.S. government should be for the public and not driven by large corporations or industries. As a non-partisan organization with more than 3,200 members and supporters in Hawaii and 500,000 members and supporters nationwide, we are dedicated to discovering new ways to push democracy forward and amplify the voices of everyday Virginia in our politics.

The U.S. has more than often struggled to increase voter turnout during elections¹. Compared to other developed countries, the U.S. voter turnout is meager and continues to lag. According to available data, voter turnout from 2018-2022 was three of the highest-turnout in U.S. elections in decades². This means that while the U.S. may rank low in election participation compared to other nations, there is a momentum present within voters, resulting in more voter turnout. However, whatever the catalyst for the recent change may be, we must find ways to increase the momentum and prevent it from flatlining.

That is why SB 2381 will help establish new ways for voters to engage in the political process, which can increase voter turnout. For example, Seattle has used a similar program that resulted in a 10% increase in turnout compared to previous elections without the program³. Creating a more equitable field through SB 2381 helps create a more diverse field of candidates. It enables them to be less dependent on seeking funding from a small group of big donors, resulting in

¹ Desilver, D. (2022, November 1). Turnout in U.S. has soared in recent elections but by some measures still trails that of many other countries. Retrieved from Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/11/01/turnout-in-u-s-has-soared-in-recent-elections-but-by-some-measures-still-trails-that-of-many-other-countries/>

² Ibid.

³ 2019 election cycle evaluation - seattle.gov. Accessed February 2, 2024. https://www.seattle.gov/documents/departments/ethicselections/democracvoucher/biennial%20reports/final%20dvp%20evaluation%20report%20july23_2020.pdf.

more civic engagement from voters who are underrepresented. Additionally, participating in the political process can help show voters that their vote matters since the SB 2381 creates meaningful opportunities for ordinary constituents to be more civically engaged in the democratic process⁴.

It is also essential to recognize how the program has strengthened democracy in New York City as an example of its potential for the state. In 2021, the program played a significant role in helping elect the city's most demographically representative council. Women's representation doubled to 61%, and people of color's representation increased from 51% to 67%, with 97% of those elected recipients of public financing⁵. While this data may only reflect the city of New York, it also demonstrates the possibilities that may result in the 2024 state elections, which already have more than 200 candidates enrolled in the program.

The program helps remove barriers and creates an equitable space that widens outreach to communities that often face difficulties when engaging in the political process, such as people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, women, and low-income individuals. Whether someone is a constituent or a candidate, establishing a political process that puts people first means that those often disadvantaged can attain equality.

Typically, when candidates decide to run for office, they must often disproportionately rely on big donors or their own contributions to maintain a successful campaign throughout an election cycle. In contrast, with SB 2381, constituents will no longer feel undervalued during campaigns. Candidates, especially those from a minority background, will no longer have to depend on wealth to win races but can depend on community outreach, knowing that focusing on the people first will not inevitably put them at a disadvantage against big donors.

A further contribution to the program only ensures more of an equitable playing field for candidates who may not have ties to big donors. One of the primary goals of this program is to remove the "money" from politics and re-establish the political process as something run by the people, for the people. More often than not, a few big donors overshadow ordinary voters during an election cycle. SB 2381 will mean that diverse voices from various communities will have the opportunity to build more personable relationships with candidates, and it will help incentivize candidates to reach out to voters to build trustworthy relationships.

Therefore, Public Citizen fully supports SB 2381 to create an even playing field where every voter has a true voice..

⁴ "How Campaign Finance Reform Can Increase Voter Turnout." The Decision Lab. Accessed February 2, 2024. <https://thedecisionlab.com/insights/policy/how-campaign-finance-reform-can-increase-voter-turnout>.

⁵ 8455, 208, and 9453. "Small Donor Public Financing Plays Role in Electing Most Diverse New York City Council." Brennan Center for Justice, January 24, 2024. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/small-donor-public-financing-plays-role-electing-most-diverse-new-york>.

**Hawaii
Legislative
Council
Members**

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Wainiha Country
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Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
Hilo/Kona

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Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Tuesday, February 6, 2024
10:00 AM
Conference Room 016 or via Zoom

RE: SB2381 Cleaner Elections - Support with Amendments



Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Committee Members,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 100 small businesses across the State of Hawaii that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity – we know we can strengthen our economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment. This is why we support SB2381 with amendments.

SB2381 brings us one step closer towards a representational democracy that protects small business owners, consumers and the environment – not just large corporations who can afford to pay-to-play through lobbyists and multi-tiered campaign contributions.

Luxury developers, defense contractors, big pharma, agri-chemical corporations, and all the private attorneys and consultants they hire, can afford to give candidate the maximum allowable contributions; they can also hire lobbyists who can give maximum contributions to these same candidates, and well-funded candidates can buy max contribution tickets to fundraisers for other candidates in their faction – all of these max contributions quickly add up to a campaign war chest that is almost impossible to challenge in any impactful way.

Furthermore, the campaigns of certain legislative leaders may have already benefited from state taxpayer money being laundered through state Grant-In-Aid (GIA) recipients – that were hand-picked by those legislative leaders. After select GIA money goes through the wash and spin cycle, a portion may end up in those same legislators' campaign accounts. For example, look at how much taxpayer money went to GIA recipients Navatek and Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council and compare that to the amounts of campaign contributions from employees, consultants, lobbyists and family members of those GIA recipients. Meanwhile, the legislature has exempted these millions of dollars in GIA awards from the State Ethics Commission's oversight.

While SB2381 begins to level the playing field for candidates who are not receiving GIA-campaign "kickbacks", more must be done to realize the corrective impact this bill seeks. We urge this committee to add sections to this bill that will: 1) cap the maximum allowable contribution to a candidate campaign at \$100 per donor per election - including from candidates themselves and their immediate families, 2) prohibit candidate campaigns from making contributions to other candidate campaigns, and 3) ensure the Hawaii Ethics Commission has oversight over GIA contracts in the same way they do over all other state contracts and expenditures of state funds.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI‘I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

February 6, 2024 10:00 AM Conference Room 016

In **SUPPORT** of **SB2381**: RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i **SUPPORTS SB2381**, which will help to relieve candidates of the need to fundraise from private entities, and thereby foster more rigorous discussion and refinement of candidates’ policy platforms for the betterment of our islands and communities.

Our democratic system of governance is premised on the concept of an informed electorate choosing candidates whose policy priorities align with what their constituents care about the most. Unfortunately, the modern day costs of running a “viable” campaign often require candidates to expend considerable time and energy raising funds from private sources, rather than developing, debating, and refining campaign platforms, and engaging voters in this critical process.

Moreover, candidates must often solicit donations from private, corporate entities whose interests may be inherently narrower than those of the public at large. As a result, conflicts or perceived conflicts too often arise between policymaking that may be of particular benefit to certain classes of private entities, and the more comprehensive concerns of the broader community – including with regards to the environmental and cultural integrity, and the long-term livability, of our islands.

By providing for public financing of campaigns for elected office, this measure would help us take a transformative step towards enabling our candidates and elected representatives more time to engage with their grassroots constituents during the campaign season; research, debate, and refine their campaign policy platforms; and thereby come into or return to office with a stronger and more comprehensive vision for policies that will ultimately benefit the public interest, as well as the public trust in our democratic system of governance.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** SB2381. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



Inspiring Hope, Changing Lives

Visit us on the web: www.hopeserviceshawaii.org

Connect via email: info@hopeserviceshawaii.org

HOPE Help Line: 808-935-3050

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2381: RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

TO: Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Members
FROM: Brandee Menino, CEO, Hope Services Hawai'i, Inc.
Hearing: JDC on 02-06-24

Aloha,

My name is Brandee Menino and I am the CEO of Hope Services Hawai'i, which is Hawai'i Island's largest nonprofit homeless services provider. We are pleased to support SB2381, which would establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai'i.

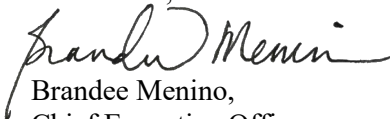
Our team uses evidence-based practices to help our neighbors avoid and overcome homelessness, and we achieve above-average results in helping people get housed and stay housed. However, as a non-governmental organization, we cannot change the laws that have led to the status quo. While federal, state, and local governments all bear some level of responsibility, today this committee has an opportunity to address the root of the problem, in a real and meaningful way. **When donors who profit by displacing local people are no longer needed to win an election, we can expect to see a shift toward compassionate, equitable, and cost-effective housing policy.**

We reached out to Representative Ambureen Rana, who was elected to the Maine State Legislature in 2022, to ask about her experience with public financing. This is what she had to say:

"I was publicly financed and it's the only way it was possible for me to run, as a working class person. It goes a long way in removing barriers to allow young people to run for office, and people of color. As a 28 year old, first generation American, this made it possible for me."

Please pass SB2381, so that people like Representative Rana have a chance to serve as policymakers in Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui,


Brandee Menino,
Chief Executive Office

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Brandee Menino



Testimony of **Lahaina Strong**
Before the Senate Committee on
Judiciary

In Consideration of Senate Bill No. 2381

RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

We are writing on behalf of Lahaina Strong, an organization that was initially formed in 2018 following the Hurricane Lane fire in Lahaina and re-energized last year after the devastating Lahaina fires on August 8. Our organization is the largest grassroots, Lahaina-based community organization, with over 20,000 supporters, engaged in providing support and assistance to the victims of these disasters.

Lahaina Strong stands in support of SB2381, which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai'i.

Lahaina Strong has been at the forefront of relief and advocacy efforts, including the initiation of the "Fishing for Housing" camp, which has been in operation for over eleven weeks along Kaanapali Beach, championing dignified housing for Lahaina fire victims. We commend the legislature for considering measures that address the pressing issues faced by our community, and we believe that the proposed bill encompasses crucial provisions that align with our organization's goals and demands.

Senate Bill 2381 addresses critical issues related to campaign finance and the influence of money in politics. As concerned citizens deeply affected by the recent wildfires on Maui, we believe that this bill is a crucial step towards fostering a more equitable political landscape.

Hawaii has witnessed the detrimental impacts of pay-to-play politics, and it has become increasingly evident how decades of failing to hold utility companies and large private landowners accountable have contributed to the environmental mismanagement that fueled the devastating fires. In light of these challenges, we must take proactive measures to address the root causes of these issues and create a political environment that prioritizes the needs of the community over corporate and special interests.

SB2381 aims to provide an alternative to reliance on private contributions. By doing so, the bill seeks to level the playing field, ensuring that public service is accessible to a diverse range of candidates who can genuinely represent the interests of our communities.

SB2381 does not cast negative aspersions on the integrity of our elected officials, rather, it recognizes the systemic issues that arise from the existing campaign finance structure and proposes a solution that can foster a more transparent, inclusive, and accountable political process.

In the aftermath of the wildfires, the importance of community-driven solutions and representation cannot be overstated. SB2381 aligns with the principles of fairness and equity, ensuring that our elected officials are accountable to the people they serve, rather than being disproportionately influenced by financial contributions from select interests.

We respectfully urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits that SB2381 can bring to our state, creating a political environment that is more resilient, responsive, and representative of the diverse voices that make up our community.

Mahalo for dedicating your time and attention to this vital issue. We value your commitment to the welfare of Hawaii and the community-driven principles we cherish.

Sincerely,

Pa'ele Kiakona, Jordan Ruidas & Courtney Lazo

Lahaina Strong



February 5, 2024

The Honorable Karl Rhoads
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hawaii State Legislature

The Honorable Mike Gabbard
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hawaii State Legislature

Re: Statement in support of S.B. 2381

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

Campaign Legal Center (CLC) respectfully submits this statement supporting and recommending amendments to S.B. 2381, a bill to establish comprehensive public financing for state and county candidates in Hawaii. CLC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and strengthening democracy across all levels of government. Since the organization's founding in 2002, CLC has participated in every major campaign finance case before the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as in numerous other federal and state court cases. Our work promotes every American's right to participate in the democratic process.

CLC is a longtime proponent of public financing for campaigns, and we commend the Committee for pursuing an updated program for Hawaii. Adopting a strengthened public financing program could broaden public engagement in democracy and amplify the voices of regular Hawaii residents in the electoral process.

To strengthen S.B. 2381, CLC recommends the following amendments:

- **Permit certified candidates to qualify for supplemental funds.** Under the bill, a certified candidate receives a primary election grant and, if the candidate advances, a general election grant. To ensure competitive funding for participating candidates, the Committee should consider providing supplemental funds to candidates who collect additional qualifying contributions, similar to the Maine Clean Elections Act.¹
- **Allow certified candidates to pay campaign debts after the day of the election.** Under the bill, certified candidates are prohibited from spending their grant funds "outside the applicable campaign period" and must return their leftover public funds

¹ See Me. Stat. tit. 21-A, § 1125(8-B)-(8-E). Participation in the Maine Clean Election Act program rebounded after the program was amended in 2015 to include supplemental grants, which ensure candidates can access additional funds in particularly competitive races. MAINE CITIZENS FOR CLEAN ELECTIONS, CLEAN ELECTION PARTICIPATION RATES AND OUTCOMES: 2016 ELECTIONS, <https://perma.cc/A62B-RSDW> (Feb. 6, 2017).

within specified periods after their campaign ends. The Committee should consider amending these commonsense requirements to explicitly allow candidates to pay their legitimate campaign debts with public funds before having to return the leftover amounts, which is standard in other public financing programs.²

- **Allow seed money to be used for legitimate campaign costs.** The bill requires that a candidate’s seed money be used only for determining the candidate’s viability for public financing, and then reduces the amount of the candidate’s public grant by their seed money total. Because the seed money total reduces the public campaign funds a candidate may access, the Committee should consider allowing seed money to be used for legitimate campaign costs, similar to seed money provisions in other programs.³
- **Provide reduced general election grants for unopposed candidates.** Under the bill, an unopposed candidate in a general election receives no public funds. Although providing significantly reduced funds to an unopposed candidate—as the bill does for primary elections—is important, providing no funds may make it difficult for certified candidates to finish their campaign. The Committee should consider providing a significantly reduced grant to unopposed candidates in the general election.⁴
- **Provide Campaign Spending Commission (CSC) discretion to assess penalties.** The bill requires a candidate who violates contribution restrictions to be fined an amount equal to three times the amount of public funds received. Similar to Hawaii law under H.R.S. § 11-410(a), the Committee should consider giving CSC the discretion to determine an appropriate penalty amount—such as *up to* three times the amount of public funds received—based on mitigating or aggravating factors.
- **Provide alternatives for insufficient funding.** Instead of making the program inoperable when public funds are insufficient for full funding for all covered elections, the Committee should consider alternatives, like additional appropriation requests by CSC, reduced grants as determined by CSC, or other options to sustain the program.⁵
- **Remove restrictions on candidates after the election.** Because candidates who participate in the program must comply with program requirements regardless of their prior participation in the program, the post-election restrictions on elected candidates—seemingly for contributions that would apply to a subsequent election—appear to be unnecessary. The Committee should consider removing them.

CLC respectfully urges the Committee to adopt our recommendations and support S.B. 2381. We would be happy to assist the Committee in crafting our suggested amendments. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Aaron McKean
Legal Counsel

² See, e.g., Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 16-953 (requiring return of public monies “above an amount sufficient to pay any unpaid bills”).

³ See, e.g., Me. Stat. tit. 21-A, § 1125(2-A); see also Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 16-945.

⁴ See, e.g., Me. Stat. tit. 21-A, § 1125(8-B)-(8-D); see also Conn. Gen. Stat. § 9-705(i)(3).

⁵ See, e.g., Me Stat. tit. 21-A, § 1124(4); see also Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 16-954.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 6:01:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Dean	Testifying for Recycle Hawaii, Clean The Pacific	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

SB2381

There's not much to say here, everyone knows that money has completely corrupted our democracy at every level, state, local and federal. Both Republicans and Democrats agree the system is broken. Of course, the media never suggests that the system has been totally corrupted, they make a lot of money off of political advertising and the more money candidates spend, the happier they are. The last thing the media wants is publicly funded campaigns, but what's more important, the network's bottom line, or the continuation of our democracy?

If you think that's hyperbolic, consider that the last president is facing a trial for obstruction, which really should be sedition. It's really incredible that there are thousands of hours of video showing President Trump committing sedition which lead to the death and serious injury of law enforcement officials. To tell you the truth, I don't hold out much hope for justice in this case, more likely he'll be reelected.

There's nothing Hawaii can do about that, but we can be leaders once again. Let's show America how Hawaii was proactive in taking measures to prevent this kind of thing from happening again in the future. Passing SB2381 is a first step in making that happen.

I guess I did have a lot to say.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 6:56:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maki Morinoue	Testifying for HULI PAC	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

HULI PAC is in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2381 - Clean Elections!

We advocated for Clean Elections in 2022 to see it quietly disappear behind closed doors after overwhelming support all the way to the end. It is a mark of big money dominating Hawaii's political system, leading our community to witness bad policies being passed and good ones being killed.

SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. We are not here to support a two-party system, and we want to support better leadership and open up the options for the right leader to win against corporate funding. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government prioritizing constituents' needs. Connecticut, Maine, and *Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective*. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seats, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Thank you for your time. We humbly await your votes in support of Clean Elections.

Aloha
HULI PAC
Maki Morinoue, member
Holualoa, HI
96725

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 8:05:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Culbertson	Testifying for HULI PAC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators!

Let's finish the job we almost got done last year with SB1543.

This new bill (SB2381) can help break the link between big donor money buying our elections.

This demonstration of confidence and goodwill by legislators will actually be a freeing up from the pestering need to continually fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests; and so, inevitably it will lead to a more representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents...a truly virtuous cycle!

Connecticut, Maine, and our own Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year.

This is also an effective way to push back on the misguided and ultimately corruptive decision by the Supreme Court of the United States to equate 'free speech' with legalized bribery.

If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo nui loa!

R A Culbertson,

for HULI PAC, Hawaii Island

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:39:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa H. Gibson	Testifying for Indivisible Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Indivisible Hawaii STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB2381 to create a fairer, less corrupt election system.



Committee on Judiciary
Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard

Tuesday February 6, 2024 10 am Room 016
SB2381 — RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE.

TESTIMONY

Bepie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB2381, which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawaii, beginning in 2028; requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature, and makes an appropriation.

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that methods of financing political campaigns should enhance political equality for all citizens; protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; enable candidates to compete equitably for public office; ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

Delegates and voters in the 1978 Constitutional Convention in Hawaii realized the importance of this concept, resulting in the creation of the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and Hawaii's partial public funding option. Below is a quote from the Convention during the discussion of the HECF:

“ . . . if we think these tremendous sums being spent [on elections], these tremendous sums being contributed, are not sums for which we are going to ultimately pay because of poor government . . . and because of undue influence . . . we are fooling ourselves.” -Delegate Naomi Campbell during the 1978 Constitutional Convention.

Who funds privately funded elections? Wealthy businesses and individuals. Over half of all Hawaii campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors who each gave at least \$6,000. (The sources of campaign contributions changed markedly in Connecticut legislative races after implementation of full public funding. In 2018, 99% of campaign funds used by legislative candidates came from individuals, in sharp contrast to preprogram practices when less than half of the contributions made to political candidates came from individuals.¹)

Why could this be a problem? **The affluent have different priorities:** 68 percent of the general public believes politicians ought to see to it that everyone who wants to work can find a job, while only 19 percent of the wealthy believe the same; the general public is twice as likely to support raising the minimum wage high enough to keep families out of poverty as affluent respondents; a majority of

Americans think that wealth should be taxed at the same rate as work, but the wealthiest 20% of Americans, who are most likely to make substantial contributions to political campaigns, are those most likely to profit from low taxes on capital gains.²

The broader public is short-changed by policies which may be influenced by wealthy business interests. Publicly funded elections let the voting public have more influence on political decisions, **as is widely appreciated by voters.** A survey of Hawaii voters in 2022 showed that 74% of the Hawai'i voting public would be more likely to support a candidate who refused campaign donations from out-of-state developers, major landowners, hotel conglomerates, and energy companies and 70 percent of voters were more likely to support a candidate who refused donations from lobbyists and corporate PACs.⁴ When large contributions are made by business interests, it's likely that the **customers of those businesses indirectly pay, in higher prices, for these contributions.** Again, the **public pays for the costs of privately funded election campaigns.** When candidates are funded by the public, politicians are free to make decisions based on the merit of ideas, not biased, consciously or not, by consideration of who gave or will give money to their election campaigns.

Connecticut's Citizen's Elections program (CEP) shows how **full public funding can repay its cost:** "For many years, environmentalists tried to expand the bottle bill recycling program..., but the powerful beverage industry and its paid lobbyists were able to stop every effort at reform because they gave thousands of dollars to legislators. This year (2016), the legislature—with three-quarters of members having participated in the CEP—voted to expand the bottle bill. We also voted to reclaim millions of dollars' worth of unclaimed bottle deposits, which takes approximately \$25 million a year out of the pockets of the beverage industry and puts that money into the general fund where it belongs. This alone recoups more money than the CEP costs".³

Instead of fundraising, candidates can spend more time talking to their constituents or analyzing and discussing solutions to Hawaii's problems as quoted by CT state legislators.⁴

SB2381 will support a more diverse field of candidates. Currently people without wealth or wealthy families and friends, who may be politically akamai and interested in running for office, often feel (probably rightly) that they will not be able to conduct winning campaigns, since 90% of races nationally and in Hawaii are won by the candidate who spends most in an election contest.

These campaign finance objectives, which I believe are widely shared, lead directly to recommending full and realistic public financing of election campaigns and supporting SB2381.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Citations

1 Analysis of CSC database on contributions to 2022 elections

2 Rotman, B.A. & Nightingale, L. Amplifying Small-dollar Donors in the *Citizens United* Era: Connecticut's Citizen's Elections Program Shifted the Balance of Power to the People. Common Cause Education Fund, 2017

3 Callahan, D. & Mijin Cha, J. Stacked Deck: How the Dominance of Politics by the Affluent & Business Undermines Economic Mobility in America. Demos, Feb. 2013:

4 Hawaii Voter Candidate Preference Memo. Data for Progress, 2023

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 9:13:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Testifying for Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha members of Senate Committee on Judiciary,

The Green Party of Hawai'i would like to add our support for SB2381, Clean Elections of Hawai'i.

Democracy comes from the Greek words, (demos) people and (kratos) rule. SB2381 is a step towards realizing a democratic form of government when its representatives govern by the consent of the governed, the people.

Currently, 90% of our elections are won by the candidate who spends the most money. The major political parties and candidates understand this phenomenon and focus on fundraising instead of listening to the people. Large donors receive undue representation circumventing the ideals of democracy and promoting the merging of private and public sectors that was defined as a form of fascism during WWII Italy.

The Green Party of Hawai'i supports democracy, which means, people rule.

Yes on SB 2381 !

Mahalo nui loa,

Susan RobertsEmery

Co chair GPH

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 8:58:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John & Rita Shockley	Testifying for Free Access Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition supports SB2381. Hawaii needs free access for candidates that will represent the public interest rather than the special moneyed interests who strongly influence candidates they have showered with political contributions.

Mahalo for your time. We hope you will support free access to financing political candidates.



HAWAII

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS

John Bickel, President
Alan Burdick, Vice President
Doug Pyle, Secretary
Robert Kinslow

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Bill South
P.O. Box 23404
Honolulu HI
968233

February 2, 2024

TO: Chair Rhoads and Members of the Judiciary Committee

RE: SB 2381 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Support for hearing on February 6

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support this bill as it would establish a comprehensive system of public financing for campaign elections. This is a reform to make many other reforms possible. Campaign fundraising skews public policy to those with financial resources to contribute to campaigns. Eliminate the money and the process will be cleaner.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel, President

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:06:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Kohn MD	Testifying for We Are One, Inc. - www.WeAreOne.cc - WAO	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly Support this critical legislation SB2381

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

We will see for whom you are really working. People Before Profit!

www.WeAreOne.cc

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 3:35:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Moran	Testifying for KIHEI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (KCA)	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The time is NOW You know we came very close in 2023. Let's take it all the way to the Governor's desk in 2024 Mahalo

Mike Moran for KCA



To: The Senate Committee on Judiciary (JDC)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 10:00 am

In strong support of SB2381

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the JDC Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SB2381** that establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2028 general election year.

SB2381 will help restore the people's trust in government. Considering the convictions of Senator J. Kalani English and Representative Ty Cullen for cash bribes, it is clear that the legislature must do everything in its power to remove the influence that money has on our politics, including reforms like public financing. Public financing of elections is one of the most important ways to free our state political system from undue influence from corporations, businesses, and special interest groups. Three quarters of Hawaii voters support a system of fully publicly financed elections.

Public financing will make campaigning easier. No one likes asking individuals for large sums of money. Public financing will free candidates from fundraisers and countless phone calls. Reducing or even eliminating candidates' reliance on wealthy donors and the need to perpetually fundraise frees candidates and officials to spend more time with their constituents and to focus on the most pressing issues of their community, such as the impacts from the growing climate crisis. It also promotes public trust in officials and in government.

SB2381 would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawaii County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

Please take this opportunity to get money out of politics. Pass SB2381.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 11:25:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
j Williams	Testifying for Hapa	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Sirs,

Big Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and others have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

J Williams -Kauai

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:31:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Shimei	Testifying for Indivisible Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Indivisible Hawai'i supports SB2381. The public perceives, rightly or wrongly, that government is corrupt and elections are rigged by big money. It is in everyone's interest, including politicians who are unfairly under this cloud, to fix this perception. This bill has the support of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct and will go a long way towards rehabilitating public perception of our elections and restoring faith in government, both of which are essential for our democracy. Publicly financed elections have strong voter support, a proven track record, and the benefits far outweigh the relatively minor costs. Please pass this bill.



Senate Committee on Judiciary

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB2381

Tuesday, February 6th, 2024 10 a.m. Conference Room 16

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

We support SB2381 which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State.

It's crucially important that the legislature does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on politics. Candidates work for donations that create relationships that can cause corruption or the perception of it. Money is crucial to winning, for example 91% of candidates who outspend their opponent go on to win. Many elections are uncontested because potential candidates can't afford the high price tag. Furthermore the average house winner spends \$40,000 compared to only \$16,000 for the loser. Over half of all campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors who each gave at least \$6,000.

Clean Elections will create a fairer system. Publicly financed elections will allow candidates to get support from their constituents rather than wealthy donors. As a result, elections will become more competitive with a more diverse set of candidates. Legislators will be free to act on behalf of voters without being concerned about what their donors think. Candidates will also be able to spend more time with constituents rather than fundraising. Furthermore, a system of fully publicly financed elections is supported by 74% of Hawai'i voters.

In addition to being good for our local democracy, the cost of this program is very small. At less than \$25 million, the program will cost less than 0.2% of the state budget. In fact, the state's current general funds balance of \$2.6 billion could pay for over 100 years of clean elections.

Publicly funded elections are already being successfully implemented locally and in other jurisdictions. Hawai'i Island County Council races had this program in 2010 and 2012. Connecticut and Maine have clean elections statewide which are both very popular and successful. Over 70% of Democratic legislators use this program in Maine. Connecticut's program was established to get money out of politics following large corruption scandals.



SB2381 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections, a.k.a. clean elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all.

Winning publicly financed elections is the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts Hawai'i's land and people first — not big money interests.

Please support SB2381! Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Judiciary Committee Members:

I am writing in support of SB 2381.

I had the privilege of serving on the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) in 2022, which was convened by Speaker Saiki in the wake of the federal indictment of two veteran lawmakers. Advocates are enthused about Speaker Saiki's recent vocal support for far reaching campaign finance reform.

The Hawai'i Election Campaign Fund remains underutilized, with a [policy brief from the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i](#) (UHERO) observing that partial funding programs are generally "ineffective."

[The CISC Final Report](#) states that, should additional resources become available, the Legislature should "be bold [and] seek additional permanent funding sources for future elections." This could include an increase in the amount that that can be "checked off" on state income tax forms under HRS Section 235-102.5(a).

The UHERO report also finds that "most scholarship shows that generous public financing programs increase electoral competition, contribute to greater diversity among candidates and donors, and encourage more contact between office-seekers and voters."

Recent experiences with Hawai'i County Council elections in 2010 and 2012 indicate that implementation of a fully financed program can be successful with adequate funding. Moving toward a full public financing of electoral contests in Hawai'i will not eliminate the influence of money so long as *Citizens United* remains in force. However, public financing can give those candidates with community support the opportunity to be competitive.

Former Gov. George Ariyoshi put it very well in his most recent volume, *Hawai'i's Future* (2020):

I hope that we do not give up on campaign reform.... Most people are sick of the campaign finance system. That includes business people. While the average voter may look at large campaign contributions as a means of achieving undue advantage, many a businessperson resents the inherent pressure exerted by political campaigns. [We] have a regulatory Campaign Spending Commission [CSC] with all the right elements, and its role is widely accepted. We now need an enlightened discussion and a purposeful movement for more far-reaching reforms. This is a leadership challenge waiting for a group of emerging legislators to take action.

As noted by Kristin Izumi-Nitao, CSC Executive Director and a fellow CISC member, [in her recent interview with Honolulu Civil Beat](#), her department operates with the same number of staff as in 1973. Whatever the fate of this bill, this state should make a broader and deeper commitment to voter access, transparency, disclosure, and accountability in its electoral processes, including closer regulation of broadcast advertisements.

I outlined some prospective areas of reform in my May 2023 opinion editorial in Honolulu Civil Beat, “[Make Government Reform a Long-Term Commitment](#)”:

The CSC is well-positioned to implement future reforms with additional staff resources. In addition to an expansion of public financing, future legislation could include additional restrictions on fundraising and limits on contributions by government contractors and grantees. If any campaign funds are raised in a given month, that information should be publicly disclosed through monthly reports. PAC communications through broadcast media and the internet should be required to have a verbal disclosure noting the name of the PAC and its top funder.

The Legislature should also revisit the [permissible uses of campaign funds](#). Child care expenses are recognized in [24 states](#) as bona fide campaign expenses.

To reduce the appearance of impropriety, campaign funds should not be used for charitable donations or scholarships. Donors can contribute to worthy causes directly. A provision that allows for [\\$50,000 campaign loans](#) from immediate family members also deserves additional scrutiny.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Nikos A. Leverenz
Aliamanu

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 2:46:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David McCluskey	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Good Morning, my name is David McCluskey, a former 6 term Connecticut State Representative and one of the members of then-Governor Rell’s Campaign Finance Reform Working Group.

I am honored to testify in support of Senate Bill 2381 concerning Public Financing For Candidates To Elected Office. I urge the Judiciary Committee to give it your strongest consideration.

In 2005, Connecticut became the first state in the nation where legislative incumbents passed a full public financing law that applies to their own political campaigns. Every state has unique legislative and political environments and I am not here to tell you to simply adopt Connecticut’s Public Financing law which has been modified, for both good and for bad, since its inception. However, I am testifying that our system works. It has significantly reduced the influence of large moneyed interests in our legislative deliberations and it has made our elections more democratic by having more competition in our primaries and elections. Last year, CT’s State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC)’s Executive Director Michael J. Brandi submitted testimony in our Government Administration and Elections Committee that candidates have strongly embraced public financing with: “participation rates nearing 90 or 100% for many offices.”

Since the 1800s, Connecticut has been called the land of steady habits. Change continues to be very hard in my state and asking legislators who know how to get reelected under the existing rules to adopt new campaign financing rules was particularly tough. But we were successful after a lot of struggle both inside and outside our State Capitol. Hawai’i can and should enact public financing of elections to improve the credibility of the legislative process for your state residents and to free legislators from the increasingly chaotic and escalating rush to raise funds.

In Connecticut, candidates must raise small to moderate amounts from residents in the towns they represent. Once they reach the necessary number of in-district contributions and the necessary dollar amount, the state provides them with a reasonable amount to campaign. This process is heavily regulated by SEEC to prevent fraud and abuse. Asking your family, friends and neighbors for reasonable contributions is actually very liberating. I am not burdening them multiple times in a campaign for more and more money. Instead of spending an enormous amount of time raising dollars, I can spend it talking to voters.

Since Public Financing has been adopted, there has not been wholesale ouster of incumbents as was feared. Yes, some incumbents do lose in primaries and general elections, but mostly because

they are no longer in touch with their voters, a policy issue or an economic situation, NOT because their opponent was publically funded. Yes, our system can punish incumbent complacency, but their opponent is equally funded, no more, no less. Incumbents still have the advantage in elections if they are doing their job and are talking to their constituents.

In terms of legislative deliberations, incumbents can now vote their convictions and without having to worry as much about being punished in re-election campaigns by well-healed lobbyists and interest groups who used to provide the lion's share of campaign dollars. Again, this is very liberating to most incumbents and has, in my opinion, significantly improved policy outcomes for Connecticut residents.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the House to adopt public financing for Hawai'i's state legislative races. I would be happy to answer your questions.

David McCluskey, former Deputy Speaker/State Representative 20th District

251 Westpoint Terrace, West Hartford, CT 06107

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 8:35:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Shizuma	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I stand in support of this bill and mahalo the authors and introducers of this bill.

While I have never run for any public office and thus do not know if the amount of funding provided to qualifying candidates in §11-H “Comprehensive public funds to be distributed to certified candidates” is sufficient, I support the intent of this bill. I do question if the amount provided to qualifying candidates is sufficient with the cost of media spotlights and promotions these days.

I also request that a stronger bill be created in the future, one that barred all candidates from receiving any funding from special interests, regardless of if they received any funds from a publicly-funded campaign program such as this one. A bill that required all candidates to be publicly funded and prevented receiving donations from special interests would be even more beneficial, and would help the public reestablish trust in the election process and democracy once again. I hope to see a bill like that in the future, where accessibility to money is removed from the process, allowing the truly best qualified candidate to have an equal chance at winning an election.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 1:37:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I have supported Clean Elections in Hawai‘i since 2005 and give my strong support for SB2381. It’s crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai‘i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more. Although more than that now, we can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now. Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:46:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Nishimura	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

The people of Hawai'i are sick and tired of wealthy, well-connected people controlling Hawaii's political system. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. This is a small price to pay for a more democratic system. To ensure our system works for ALL of Hawaii's people, and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:17:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonja Corrigan	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 4:57:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine A Wood	Testifying for Public Citizen	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Christine Wood, On Behalf of Public Citizen

Submitted to the Hawaii State Legislature

For February 6th, 2024

To make progress on the key issues impacting communities, including health care, housing costs, racial justice, the environment, and more, our electoral system must serve the people, rather than the interests of the rich and powerful. Right now, the current pay-to-play system gives unchecked power to the wealthy few at the expense of Hawaii residents.

SB2381 however would curb the influence of corporate special interests by making it possible for candidates to seek elected office without relying on ultra-wealthy campaign contributors. Rather, it would incentivize candidates to engage directly with their constituents by requiring them to meet a minimum qualifying threshold of small-dollar donations.

Public financing programs like the one detailed in SB238 give political power to everyday people –boosting their influence and voice in our elections–and ensure that wealthy donors do not have an outsized influence in our elections and the priorities of lawmakers.

Poll after poll shows that voters are concerned about the role money plays in our elections. A [Pew Research Poll in 2023](#) found that a large majority of voters across party lines feel that campaign donors, lobbyists, and special interest groups have too much influence in our elections. The poll also found that 85% of respondents felt that the cost of political campaigns makes it hard for good people to run for office.

Across the country, municipalities and states are moving towards passing and implementing various forms of public financing. Altogether, over 14 states and more than 20 localities provide an option for candidates to participate in systems that make it possible for people of average means to run for office without relying on wealthy donors. Many of these programs have been in place for decades, including in Maine and Connecticut, which resemble what is proposed in SB2381. With this program, Hawaii has an opportunity to lead the nation by setting an example of what a truly inclusive and representative democracy looks like.

SB2381 would restore trust in government while providing a path for candidates to seek elected office through support from constituents, rather than wealthy donors and special interests. On behalf of Public Citizen and our Hawaii members, I urge you to support SB2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:24:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judie Hoepner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:21:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dina Edmisson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawai'i. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

This measure is extraordinary and it says a lot about our legislation that's it's even on the table. I commend you all for that. This is so exciting, unprecedented and an awesome example of integrity in politics. Please do pass this measure and be a shining light for so many forward thinking, independent communities committed to retaining the power to decide what's in their own best interest vs. special interest.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Dina Edmisson

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:06:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senate Members,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. In saying this, I'm not singling out Hawaii but this is where I live and change starts locally. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Thank you for your consideration

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 8:38:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

this will level the playing field. i commend all the senators who signed on.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:31:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cardenas Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cardenas Pintor

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 4:34:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Definitely oppose. Candidates should find their own resources, cannot see the use of our public funds when many more pressing issues face us today.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 7:39:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Foley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I submit this testimony in support of SB2381 that would establish a comprehensive public financing scheme for state and county elections.

As you know, I chaired the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct which recommended an increase in the public funding of elections, and full public funding as tthis bill would do if fiscal resources are available. Commission's December 1, 2022 Final Report at page 37. The Commission found "that publicly funded elections help counter the repercussions of Citizens United because public funding expands the reach of many small donors and can relieve candidates of the need to rely on the support of special interest groups or large donors." Id.

Respectfully submitted,

Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 8:09:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ralph Hasegawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I oppose SB2381.

It's intentions are well meaning, but I don't believe it will change or improve the existing process by allowing more candidates to compete without reliance on private funds or change the number of elected officials making decisions without the influence, or appearance thereof, of private individuals, lobbyists, political parties, political action committees, unions, corporations, and other entities.

This money can be better spent elsewhere. Mahalo, Scubie

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:06:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaiko Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:06:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Douglas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Big money has stolen and dilluted the common citizen's voice for far too long.

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:06:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vinayak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seats, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:09:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bruce Mirken	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In our political process -- both here in Hawaii and nationwide -- money talks, usually louder than ordinary people. It's long past time for that to change. SB2381 can free candidates from the need to fundraise from -- and cater to -- wealthy donors and special interests. Given the multiple crises facing our state, from Lahaina recovery to the general shortage of affordable housing to the struggles of local farmers and Native Hawaiian communities, we simply cannot have a state government run by special interests. Connecticut, Maine, and the Hawaii County Council have proven that fully publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. There is no time to waste. Pass SB2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:16:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilihea Inaba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Mahalo for your work and aloha going into this legislative session.

This testimony is in support of SB2381. We know that Hawai'i's political system has been corrupted on multiple levels due to special interests that benefit the wealthy few. We can end this corruption by passing SB2381 which seeks to provide equal and fair grounds for governmental officials to receive funding. This will only help to create a more efficient and ethical system, making sure that the people of Hawai'i are represented by individuals who have their true best interest in mind.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kilihea Inaba

Kaloko, Kona

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:28:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Douglas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The time has come!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:31:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Senators,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,

Gregory Crawford

kele010@gmail.com

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:36:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamra Hayden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to get big money lobbyist out of our political system. I have seen Hawai'i politics become more driven by money from lobbyist over the past 34 years. There was an article published this year stating that Hawai'i is the most corrupt state. I have seen countless individuals conduct illegal behavior and be prosecuted and found guilty for taking advantage of the people of Hawai'i. That is not a title we can be proud of. Countless Kanaka Maoli tell me they do not vote because the system is rigged or corrupt. We have a large segment of our population that are absent from utilizing their most powerful tool, voting. That needs to change. If this bill is implemented I truly believe we can show we are trying to better the politics in Hawai'i. This is not the fix, but I believe we owe the voters an attempt to begin changing the system that they believe is unfair. Please consider the people in this state, not the donors and lobbyist who have the most money. There are constant complaints that you give yourselves raises and that people in regular employment never get that privilege. Show us that you will honor your oath and vote for change that will benefit the people who put you in your job. Prove to the people who are distraught with system, that you do care about their input and want to be fair. Vote yes on SB2381. Mahalo Nui Loa.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:28:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Mick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests.

This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective.

These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo, Marilyn Mick, Honolulu

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:29:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Maitino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:34:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Hedgecock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:39:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleopono (Stephen S.) Norris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Campaigning is so expensive that fund raising consumes excessive candidate time that should better be spent on issue research and position development. Also, the sums required are so great that incumbents who kow tow to special interests with axes to grind gain vastly superior campaigning capacity over democratic challengers. It is in the public interest for all candidates for a given political office to run their campaigns on the same level and equal playing field. This will potentially strengthen the true democratic will of Hawaii voters.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:43:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ezgi Green	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government prioritizing constituents' needs.

Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seats, but they have resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million annually. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Ezgi Green, Waialua

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 8:18:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Nooney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For Heavens sake, Let's have clean elections & get private \$ out of elections.

I support this bill for clean elections.

Thomas Nooney

Maui,Hi.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 8:24:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this measure, not watered down, and follow it up with strict limits on campaign contributions. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 8:38:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
De Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respected legislators,

How does this bill not make sense? It makes perfect sense!

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

With respect,

D. Austin

Parent, voter, lineal descendant of Hawaii

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 8:42:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Troy Schacht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'd like to see no money in politics, but this is a step forward. Candidates don't need money for wasteful mailers, yard signs, tv ad sound bites, etc. I think a publicly organized debate should be enough.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 8:56:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Epstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money in our politics is the most serious issue harming our democracy. It is currently essential that our elected officials have to spend so much time raising money. Moreover, since the next election is always just around the corner, it's necessary to follow the wishes of large contributors, even when it's against the public's wishes. Eliminating the money will also permit many people to run for office who wouldn't otherwise, thus opening up the field to many qualified candidates. The time has come to put hawaii in the same position as other states that have taken the power of money out of their communities. Mahalo and Aloha, Roger Epstein

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 9:46:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anita Trubitt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

So very delighted for the support of this vital and very important bill by our legislature!!!!

I am hoping that it will pass this time!

Mahalo,

Anita Trubitt, 520 Papalani Street, Kailua HI 96734

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:45:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

I strongly support this bill. After the damning headlines about corruption charges, why would you not support it?

mahalo, Cory Harden

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 2:08:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danelle Guion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB2381 because it is long overdue that we take the money out of politics, freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests.

Our entire system has been corrupted by this anomolie and it is now in your hands to do the right thing for aeveryone. Do yourself, and all of us a favor by supoorting this bill as well.

Thank you for your support!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:52:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette P Hereniko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2381

I believe that SB2381 and its counter bill in the House are the most important Bills to pass during this Legislative session.

That is because we must be serious about ending corruption in Hawai'i. It's embarrassing and inexcusable that Hawai'i is at the bottom of the list of most corrupt States in the United States.

We need to create a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few.

The first step is to initiate public financing for candidates running for State offices. You can do this by passing SB2381 now.

Thank you for your consideration and more importantly, for taking action to support SB2381.

Jeannette Hereniko

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 5:42:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have GOT to clean up our elections so the populace will have faith in them again. Public financing of them will go a long way towards this objective.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 6:59:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Pizzitola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 10:32:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **oppose** this Bill.

Douglas Meller
2615 Aaliamanu Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
douglasmeller@gmail.com

**Testimony Supporting SB 2381
Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office**

Submitted to Senate Committee on Judiciary
Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 10 am, State Capitol Room 016 & Videoconference Hearing

There are two reasons I strongly support this bill:

1. SB 2381 will make it much more difficult for direct political campaign contributions to determine which candidates are elected, what legislation is enacted, or agency decisions.
2. SB 2381 will reduce incentives for anyone to request (or coerce) campaign contributions from political appointees, persons who want negotiated government consulting contracts, and persons who have non-bid leases or permits to use public property.

SB 2381 will not affect expenditures by special-interest PACs to support or oppose specific candidates, legislation, or agency decisions. In plain English, this bill cannot totally prevent special-interest PACs from “buying” political decisions. I believe that’s an acceptable risk for a democracy which allows free speech.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 11:30:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mele Andrade	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 11:47:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB2381. Thank you.

Jane E Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

Honolulu HI 96816

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 11:53:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Marsh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 12:04:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am happy to hear that we are finally bringing a bill like this so that we can equalize the playing field in politics with public financing for potential candidates.

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests.

This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced.

We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Personally, I would prefer that this bill be enacted this upcoming 2024 election, but if we have it in place by 2028 this is a great harbinger for our future as a state and for the republic. Mahalo for your time.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 12:10:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Ward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly support this bill. Hawaii's political system has led to a form of persuasion so enhanced by donations that the voter seems to be irrelevant. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Legislators influenced by the NEED for donations may feel pressured to vote in a way that will enhance donations. Instead, we can reduce the influence of money in politics, create a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now. Thank you!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 1:08:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis O'Shea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this legislation to clean up Hawaii elections.

It is time to have representatives who truly represent the interests of those they claim to; and not to be paid lackeys of their major donors.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 1:30:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Milena Kari	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We don't want whoever has the most money to be influencing what happens on our islands. Money should not be the deciding factor what policies are being passed. This bill is critical to ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few. Strong support!!!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 1:34:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlene	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please ban assault weapons! 🙏 Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 2:34:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Grandinetti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 2:54:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jotis Russell-Christian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 3:12:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Reynolds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 4:31:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vickie Wangberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated our country's political system for too long, affecting who gets elected more than it should. SB2381 can free candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to better government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 4:47:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg and Pat Farstrup	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote and supported this bill.

Please vote and supported this bill.

Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 4:51:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Dinner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is nothing more fundamental to our democracy on this year's agenda than this bill. Please vote in favor. Let's get the influence of money out of our elections. Respect and Aloha.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 4:53:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 4:56:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi, I'm currently on vacation in Vietnam, but am writing briefly to convey my VERY STRONG SUPPORT for the clean elections bill! I was extremely disappointed that it passed so many subcommittees last session but failed to get adopted. This legislation would be so good for both citizens and for legislators! Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 6:20:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated America's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. Here in Hawaii, we can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seats, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 7:44:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Neal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Gabbard,

I'm testifying in strong support of SB2381 because publicly financing of elections is the best way put democracy back into running for public office.

Thank you for your consideration,

Keith Neal

Waimea

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 8:06:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angie Hofmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 11:15:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brett Kulbis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't want my tax dollars going to candidate I don't support.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 12:17:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Keala and I am a resident of Honolulu. Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo for your time!

Sincerely,

Keala Fung

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 12:37:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pete Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 12:38:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bo Breda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Mike Gabbard

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Tuesday, February 6, 2024
10:00 AM

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2381 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR
CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a service worker as well as a labor and social justice activist, testifying as an individual in **SUPPORT** of **SB2381**, Relating to Public Financing for Candidates To Elected Office. This measure is very important in rebuilding trust and public engagement with our government.

It's exciting to think of the possibilities that a full public financing program opens up for our community and our politics. Even for incumbents who might be interested in switching to public financing, it can potentially take the stress and costs that come with fundraising, allowing more time to connect with the community and to do the day to day work of the people! This also means that working people, including many who don't come from well-to-do and well-connected backgrounds, or "professional" jobs (with all due respect) will also have the opportunity to step up and have the funding to seriously run for office in order to serve their communities. People in service jobs like myself for example.

It is good for a democracy when more of our elected officials look and share the experiences (hopes, dreams, interests, struggles) of the broader community. It is also good for democracy when we have more competitive elections where the winners aren't already decided, either by default or other factors like funding and institutional support. It gets more people interested and active. For people who are cynical, who have given up on the idea that government or politics can make any positive difference in their lives, maybe we can build a sense of personal stake once again.

Please **PASS Senate Bill 2381** out of your committee and continue the work of expanding democracy in our society.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,
State House District 23 | State Senate District 12
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 6:02:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 6:18:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Rhoads and Committee Members,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Sincerely,

Diane Ware Ka'u Moku 96785-0698

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 7:30:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the JDC Committee

I strongly support a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates.

I ask for your full support of SB2381.

Mahalo

Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy

Resident of Kalaoa North Kona on Hawaii Island

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:01:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Mills-Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Public financing of elections can lead a more ethical and representative government when candidates are not beholden to special interest donors.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:04:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John NAYLOR	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

We the People wish money was not an influence in our elections & legislative process ! The highest bidder should NOT be allowed to influence in Hawaii .

Mahalo, JN Makawao

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:18:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Legislators,

I am writing to respectfully ask that you support SB2381 which could break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from needing to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. We need to end corruption and create a system that works for all residents of Hawaii.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:26:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha :

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:34:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rodger Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha//

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rodger Hansen/ Hakalau HI 96710

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:40:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlies Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hurray for fair elections!
i support this!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:55:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Hartsel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 9:36:50 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONGLY SUPPORT!!!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 9:53:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committee,

My name is Carolyn Eaton and I support this bill wholeheartedly. Eliminating the importance of large private donors for election campaigns of our state and county officials will work a healthy change in governance. There is no connection between a swollen campaign chest and the quality of any candidate. There is no reason to conclude a high-profile individual with lots of media exposure will run an administration which brings broad benefits to Hawaii's people. Please pass this bill to level the playing field in terms of financial cost to stand for election.

Mahalo for your consideration of my support for SB2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:01:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary True	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo for your attention, Mary True Pepekeo, 96783

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:10:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maddalynn Seseapasara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for letting me sub, it my written testimony.

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,

Maddalynn Seseapasara

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:29:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Stone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for receiving my testimony, in strong support of SB 2381.

As a resident and mom I would love to see a future political landscape free from, "you scratch my back and ill scratch yours" agreements and corporate backed special interest groups. Time for real change and to empower ourselves as citizens to be represented by community members who can meet our needs.

Mahalo for passing this bill.

With aloha,

Monica Rott Stone, 96740

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 11:08:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Yamashita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 11:18:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 11:21:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 12:06:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Creaing a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few would be ideal. We need for ethical and representative government which this bill will provide.

Mahalo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 12:23:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT this bill SB 2381 which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai'i, to begin with the 2028 general election year. Requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature. Makes an appropriation.

This is a bill long time coming and I believe it will help us begin to provide opportunities for more people to be able to participate in the legislature. It will also hopefully eliminate (somewhat) the current state of large donors influencing a legislator.

Again, I SUPPORT this bill.

Strong Support for SB2381 - RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Senate Bill 2381, recognizing the urgent need to address the pervasive influence of money in Hawaii's political landscape. I want to thank you for your support of public financing as a tool. For far too long, our state has grappled with the detrimental consequences of private funding, resulting in the passage of ill-conceived policies and the suppression of initiatives that truly serve the interests of our constituents.

SB2381 presents a pivotal opportunity to sever the connection between private money and electoral success, liberating candidates from the burdensome task of fundraising from affluent donors and special interest groups. By embracing full public financing of elections, we can foster a political environment that is both ethical and representative, one that prioritizes the genuine needs of our residents over the interests of a privileged few.

Drawing inspiration from the successful models implemented in Connecticut, Maine, and the Hawaii County Council, we can see that publicly financed elections are not only feasible but also cost-effective. Importantly, these examples demonstrate that such reforms do not lead to an increase in incumbent turnover or a loss of majority party seats. Instead, they empower legislators to act independently, free from the undue influence of well-funded entities.

The modest cost of less than \$10 million per year for this program is an investment in the integrity of our democracy. It is a small price to pay for the profound impact it can have on our political system, paving the way for a government that truly serves all residents.

In the pursuit of ending corruption and creating a political system that works for the benefit of every citizen, we must act now on the opportunity presented by SB2381. I implore you and the Senate Judiciary Committee to stand on the right side of history by championing this crucial legislation. Let us work together to build a Hawaii that prioritizes the voices of its people over the influence of private wealth.

Thank you for reading my testimony,
Laura Acasio, D1 Hilo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 1:17:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mackenzie Feldman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 1:56:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
deborah ozaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,

Deborah C Ozaki

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 2:43:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phil Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Faith in the integrity of our system of elections is at an all time low. One of the reasons that many folks have stopped voting is that they feel that our elections are stolen by contributions from wealthy special interest. The simplest way to remedy this situation is by changing our system to publically funded elections. Please help to restore confidence in our government by passing this essential piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 3:19:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Perez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are tired of private, special interest run the trajectory of Hawai'i nei. The time is now to elect official that listen to the people's concern and put Hawai'i over their own pockets.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 4:20:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
noriko donna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 4:24:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neil Frazer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha JDC Chair and Committee Members,

Of all the bills before the Senate and House this season, I consider this the most important. I am now 75 years old, and for the last three decades, I have been convinced that without publicly funded elections our law making process in Hawaii will continue to be for sale.

Please do your very best to pass this bill!

Mahalo,

Neil Frazer, PhD (Professor Emeritus of UH Mānoa)

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 5:07:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isaac Harp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the JDC Committee,

As written, HB2381 indicates that candidates may choose to use public funding for campaigning or not. Public funding should be mandatory for all candidates to keep it fair. Allowing some candidates to continue receiving large special interest contributions while others use public funding does NOT fix anything!

End the trend of special interest donors having unfair influence over elected officials decision making by amending SB2381 by making it mandatory that all candidates MUST use public funding ONLY!

Mahalo for your time and consideration of my mana'o.

Sincerely, Isaac "Paka" Harp

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 5:15:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mamiko Carroll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committee,

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB2381, Related to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office. Please pass this bill and free candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of this bill.

Mamiko Carroll

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 5:48:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2381.

To: Judiciary Chair Rhoads and Committee Members
From: Brodie Lockard, Common Cause Hawaii Board Member
Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2024

In strong support of SB2381

From *Civil Beat's* Randy Roth, December 24, 2023:

Public Corruption In The Land Of Aloha

"The Hawaii Legislature created a Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct in 2022, shortly after federal agents caught two legislators taking bribes. In its report to the 2023 Legislature, the commission described corruption in Hawaii as glaring, embarrassing, deep-rooted and systemic, and public trust as lost. Former officials in prison or awaiting trial included not just legislators, but prosecutors, police officers, planning-and-permitting workers, a chief building inspector, environmental-management director, affordable-housing official, wastewater-maintenance supervisor, police chief, councilman, county managing director, county corporation counsel, and police commission chairperson.

"All these crimes were investigated and prosecuted by federal agencies, with virtually no help from local law enforcement, local watchdog agencies, or whistleblowers from within the directly affected government offices. This suggests the added presence of a non-criminal form of corruption, often described as willful blindness or intentional ignorance. Rather than get personally involved and perhaps step on the wrong toes, people deliberately chose to go along to get along."

Surely our elected officials, at least, can do better than this.

A reform like public financing has been due in Hawaii for many years. With 2022's convictions of Senator J. Kalani English and Representative Ty Cullen for cash bribes, ethics in our state government has leapt to the front of the public's collective mind.

Some incumbents dislike public financing because they see it as a threat to their reelection. This is not necessarily the case. The 2012 Maine Policy Review found that "challengers are only more likely to win if they participate in MCEA [the 1996 Maine Clean Elections Act] and the incumbent does not. When incumbents accept public funding, they are actually more likely to win reelection" [1].

SB2381 is a fair bill. It includes every major state and county office, not singling out any one group for a trial, as some previous bills have done. After qualifying, candidates are "barred from soliciting, accepting, or using contributions from" anyone but voters in their districts. Violating the rules brings appropriate penalties, and thorough, regular reporting requirements should prevent abuse.

Publicly-funded elections will make you and future elected officials better at your jobs. You can spend your time meeting with many constituents, not just a few large donors. Owning only your voters lets you take a principled stand on every issue. You can work on the needs of all voters, not just a few moneyed interests. And you can spend more time doing your real job.

To qualify for public financing, candidates must show a broad base of support in their community (something incumbents already have). That makes any lawmaker more effective and more respected.

Public financing will make your campaign easier. No one likes asking individuals for large sums of money. Public financing will free you from fundraisers and countless phone calls. And the steps required to qualify will help you get to know your constituents better, so you can better speak to their concerns.

It will improve the state legislature overall. Public financing has been shown to increase the diversity of candidates, including women and people of color, and to encourage interaction between candidates and low- and moderate-income communities. Our elected officials will no longer be just career politicians or people who know the right people, but regular folks from all walks of life—nurses, veterans, small business owners, teachers. Candidates can spend more time on ideas and less time raising money that tends to commit them to special interests.

SB2381 will serve the people who elected you far better than the current system. One of the primary reasons for public funding is to avoid situations like Oahu's rail boondoggle, and the myriad more subtle ways voters' money is wasted. The role of special interests in government decision making will be greatly reduced; the voices of regular people amplified. This is one reason that rates of participation in Clean Election systems are high. They decrease real or apparent conflicts of interest for elected officials.

Public financing will restore faith in our elections and political system. After seven years of questions about the integrity of our elections, Americans' confidence in voting needs a boost. Fraud in elections has always been extremely rare, but the corrupting influence of money in politics—real and perceived—continues to erode our confidence in the system.

It will improve Hawaii's political reputation. Thirteen states use some form of publicly-funded elections, as do 20 local governments [2]. Hawaii's partial public funding program is woefully out of date and underused. With Supreme Court decisions like *Citizens United* deforming our campaigns, a robust public funding system is long overdue. Following our recent passage of reforms like Vote by Mail and Automatic Voter Registration, passing public funding will arguably make Hawaii the most forward-looking state in the union in terms of elections.

Finally, SB2381 is fiscally responsible. Even after the Maui fires, the state has plenty of money to fund the 2028 general election cycle. In the future, if funds are insufficient, the program will not be run for that cycle. Amounts will be adjusted with any change in the consumer price index.

SB2381 is a thorough, well-conceived bill with an array of benefits. I strongly urge the Judiciary Committee to pass it. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brodie Lockard
Common Cause Hawaii Board Member

[1] <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=mpr>

[2] <https://www.commoncause.org/resource/the-for-the-people-act-in-the-states/>

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 8:28:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Franny Kinslow Brewer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a critical need for our state to have clean, fair elections. Please pass this bill!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:33:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Abellanida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 10:48:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamakaawahilani Hoshino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo, for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Kamakaawahilani Hoshino

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 11:55:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lenley Lewis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has influenced Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to corruption and to special interest policies being passed and fair ones being passed over or killed. SB2381 can help to free candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests so that they can prioritize the needs of constituents over special interest groups. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have already proven that full publicly financed elections are successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or majority parties losing seats, but instead in shifts in how sitting legislators are influenced. Hawaii can easily afford this program's low cost: under \$10 million per year. Let's curb corruption and create a system that works for all, not just the wealthy. Pass SB2381.

sincerely,

Lenley Lewis

Laupahoehoe

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 5:32:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Camp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support [SB2381](#), the “Clean Elections” bill for full public financing of elections, that establishes a system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai‘i, to begin with the 2028 general election year.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 7:31:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keila Paahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Keila Paahana

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 8:26:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Marvin Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I support SB2381, the Clean Elections Bill. It is well designed and has worked well for us on the Island of Hawai'i, giving us good candidates, and good elected officials. Please support SB2381.

Mahalo,

Mary Marvin Porter

Island Eyes Video

15-1622 Tenth Ave.

Keaau, Hawaii 96749

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 9:20:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justice Villaren	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Justice Villaren

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 9:22:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please approve

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 10:14:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debbie Hecht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money should not be a factor in our elections. PACs need to be outlawed. Publicly funded elections would increase the candidates who are able to run, increase the younger people in the races and allow more people to run without having to fundraise from wealthy people or businesses.

Since Citizens' United was overturned, politics has gotten more and more corrupt. Publicly funded elections would "level the playing field" in Hawaii politics.

I think it is very important that this program remain in effect for at least 10 years to measure the effectiveness over time.

Mahalo for your service to the people of Hawaii.

With warm aloha-

Deborah Hecht

Kailua- Kona, Hawaii

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 10:57:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 11:15:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely, Elizabeth DeLyon

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 11:18:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ROBERT DUERR	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Clean Elections begin with limits on big money and the influence that it promotes.

Testimony to the Thirty-Second Legislature, 2024 Regular Session
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Colin D. Moore, Ph.D.

Senate Bill No. 2381: Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office
Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Committee Members:

I am Colin Moore, a political scientist and professor at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am also the author of a UHERO report on public campaign financing available for download here: <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Public-Campaign-Financing.pdf>

I strongly support SB 2381. It follows the successful model of public campaign financing currently used in the states of Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut.

There are three principal reasons why I support this bill:

1. Research shows that block grant programs can increase electoral competition and lead to more candidates running for public office. More competitive elections often lead to stronger voter mobilization and communication efforts. Arizona’s public financing program has been shown to reduce ballot “roll off,” which is the tendency of voters to leave ballots blank for less-visible legislative and municipal races.
2. These programs have been shown to contribute to greater diversity among candidates for public office. The advent of Connecticut’s full funding program led to the election of more Latinos and women to the legislature. In Arizona, far more Native American and Latino candidates ran for office than before.
3. Perhaps most important, public financing eliminates the need to raise private funds. This may make candidates less beholden to donors, but it also allows them to spend more time connecting with voters and discussing public policy. For example, when candidates in Maine were freed from the pressures of fund-raising, they spent more extra time canvassing and attending community events. In one survey of office-seekers, respondents frequently mentioned this benefit as a primary reason they decided to accept public funds. This bill is good for candidates and good for citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to support SB 1543, SD2, HD1. It’s a good investment in the health of our local democracy and one we can afford.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 11:33:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fred hofer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need less corruption,

More accountability,

Stop monetary influence on elections and thereby

On then "sitting" politicians and administrators

Fully publicly funded elections

Is one step in the right direction

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 11:47:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Metzler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is important to help get special interest money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from the special interests and wealthy donors.

Money from special interests dominates Hawaii's political system and is corrosive to our democracy.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 2:12:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TOM DIGRAZIA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Very strong support!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 2:26:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isis Usborne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Isis Usborne

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:09:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Winternitz

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:09:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Goff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Amber Goff

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:28:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Vukelich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Maria Vukelich

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:40:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorena Martinez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Lorena Martinez
Resident of West Maui

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:45:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2381 can get money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors.

- Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

- Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced.

- If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 3:46:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
LISA ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2381 can get money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors.

- Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

- Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced.

- If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,
Lisa Isoda
Lahaina, Maui

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 4:04:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette Gurung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are strongly in support of SB2381 to get money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors.

- Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

- Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced.

- If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 4:10:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Medeiros-Criste	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I write to express my robust support for SB2381, a pivotal measure aimed at addressing significant campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a dedicated member of the Maui community, I believe that the establishment of public financing for all candidates, as outlined in this bill, is fundamental to fostering transparency and ensuring equitable representation in our state.

Especially in the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach takes on heightened importance. By championing a political environment that is both responsive and representative, this bill stands as a crucial step towards rebuilding and fortifying our democratic processes. I respectfully urge the committee to consider the enduring advantages of SB2381 in cultivating fairness and accountability within Hawaii's political landscape.

Mahalo for your steadfast commitment to addressing this critical issue. I appreciate your time and attention to the matters at hand.

Mahalo,

Mahealani Medeiros Criste

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 5:06:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Velasquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Catherine Velasquez

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 8:31:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly D. Lepold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

DO THE RIGHT THING!

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Lepold

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 8:33:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Gillette-Wenner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is time for Hawaii to create a fairer, less corrupt election system that has full public financing.

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/3/2024 9:16:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvonne Alvarado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Yvonne Alvarado Supports Bill SB2381

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 1:08:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandra Mapuana Snedicor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process. Thank you for your attention towards this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Snedicor

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:38:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Hunt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For far too long, Hawaii's political system has been overly-influenced, and often corrupted by MONEY and wealthy special interest.

SO many constituents are so disgusted by the wheeling and dealing of our legislature, that they (we) no longer trust many decision-makers and the positions and policies made.

Civil Beat has published many factual, well researched and investigated articles on this exact problem. (Example: CB's articles on SB2510 and actions by Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, and Hu Honua's history of illegal lobbying, and financial connections with this same Senator and a few others.)

The current status quo often leads to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. We constituents, who are still involved, are constantly frustrated (and angered) at having to fight against those who are supposed to represent us - but do the bidding of monied special interests (campaign donors) instead.

SB2381 & HB2321 will break the link between private money and winning elections, leading to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

The cost of this policy - less than \$10 million per year IS an affordable investment in ending corruption and creating a system that works for ALL - not just the wealthy few.

Please support, vote for, and pass SB2381 & HB2321 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:17:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kazuo Flores	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha I'm a born and raised napilihau kanaka in support of SB2381

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:47:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Lee Nava	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Cathy Nava

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:17:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Devon Steck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Devon Steck

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:19:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dee Green	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:42:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support the intent, but it is unclear how this is different from the existing system whereby candidates receive public financing.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:53:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Barbeau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 11:14:47 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Support for SB2381 - Testimony from Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

Aloha Chair Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Senator Mike Gabbard, and Esteemed Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

I extend my sincere greetings to you. My name is Benton Kealii Pang, and I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Senate Bill 2381 (SB2381), a critical initiative aimed at addressing and reforming the challenges within Hawai'i's political system.

I am deeply invested in the well-being of our state and believe that SB2381 is an essential step towards creating a more transparent and equitable political landscape.

SB2381 has the potential to break the detrimental link between private money and electoral success by liberating candidates from the constant need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors. This shift can contribute to fostering a government that is more responsive to the needs and concerns of its constituents, ensuring that the voices of the people are prioritized over the influence of powerful interest groups.

I would like to emphasize that the implementation of SB2381, as seen in successful models in states like Connecticut and Maine, does not result in higher incumbent turnover or a significant shift in the partisan makeup. Instead, it promises a recalibration of influence, contributing to a more accountable and representative government.

Furthermore, the estimated annual cost of less than \$10 million per year, which amounts to less than 0.05% of our state budget, is a reasonable investment for the potential positive impact it can have on our political system. The affordability of this program is highlighted by the fact that it translates to less than \$7 per resident or less than \$1 per tourist.

I kindly request the Committee on Judiciary to consider the significance of SB2381 and its potential to bring about positive change in our political landscape. By supporting this bill, we can contribute to the creation of a government that truly serves the diverse interests of our Hawai'i community.

Mahalo nui for your dedicated service, and I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.
3204 Carlos Long Street,
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816
Email: launahele@yahoo.com
Phone: 808-349-3636

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 11:55:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandy Takiguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process. Let's put our local community first, and ensure their safety and well-being before any other visitors or foreign entities.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Brandy Takiguchi

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 11:59:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Paltin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I think this bill is critically needed. In watching the csc reports, I have seen instance of politicians drafting bills for developers and then receiving hundreds of dollars in campaign donationsn and there is nothing that can be done about it because it is within the "legal limits". Hoping that this legislation will curtail that type of activity, politicians are paid to do the job they have and campaign donations or other forms of compensation should not be a part of the equation

Mahalo

Tamara

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 12:08:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tadia Rice	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2381 because this Bill can get money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors.

- Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

- Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced.

- If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 12:21:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stefania Xytakis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Stefania Xytakis

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 1:50:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Patton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 1:53:42 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

submitting testimony in support of SB2381 - hoping this bill will encourage more people to run for office that don't have access to the big money donors...

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 2:04:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
louise drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support this bill...more people need to have access to funding to run for office

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii.

I wholeheartedly support the initiative to level the political playing field by allowing candidates to compete without relying on money from special interests. It's crucial for elected officials to make decisions free from the influence, or even the appearance, of being swayed by donations from special interests. This approach not only restores public confidence in the electoral and legislative process but also fosters meaningful citizen participation. It's a positive step toward a more transparent and accountable democratic system that priorities the voice of the people over financial interests.

As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Katie Austiin

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 2:26:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
C.Yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawai‘i’s political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawai‘i County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven’t resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program’s low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Respectfully,

Cydnee Yamamoto

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 5:12:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 5:18:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiley Adolpho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

To: Senator Karl Rhodes and members of the Judiciary Committee

Fr: Robert M. Armstrong, Downtown-Chinatown resident

Re: SB 2381

February 4, 2024

Dear Senator Rhodes and members of the JDC,

I would like to add my strong **support** for the proposed legislation to establish public financing for candidates running for office in Hawai`i.

Eleven years ago when I permanently moved to Honolulu, I immediately became involved with the political infrastructure of our beautiful State. I first started volunteering with my Party, have been elected three times to my Neighborhood Board, and last year, decided to run an aggressive and positive campaign against the incumbent in my House District.

I was buoyed by the 70-plus donors to my campaign within thirty days of its launch, more than seventy percent of whom were from the Aloha State. I also was the first candidate in the State to qualify for public funding and received the endorsements from three labor unions. Despite these successes for a first-time candidate, my \$9200 was a drop in the bucket compared to the current office holder who spent more than \$57,000 against me and two other candidates. In the end, I received only 22% of the vote as the “runner-up.”

Even though I know how to raise money as a professional non-profit administrator, I could not compete with that financial outlay in the primary, let alone what would be needed to win the general election, if successful. As a result, only 8% of the legislature changed hands last year and most were due to unusual and significant issues like corruption or other criminal activities.

Today, I am still convinced I would have represented the center core of our City in the House better than the current incumbent, who has not physically appeared at any community event I am aware of in the last twelve months. He knows by keeping his head down, his mouth closed, and his pockets open, he stands to make a career out of being a part time desk dweller in the Capitol.

This is not democracy but a sham and unfortunately the public has little knowledge how the “system” works or how difficult it is to get the word out for an active but first-time candidate. SB2381 gives every citizen a chance to know who is running and why on a level playing field. It’s been tried in a few places and like those innovative, forward thinking states; it is time to try it in Hawai`i.

In the meantime, I appreciate your willingness to innovate and make our home more democratic and in consideration of my testimony today.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:02:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan Fujii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:27:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Publicly funded elections would keep campaigns cleaner and free of corruption. Transparency in funding would be a positive way to avoid bias and illegal practices in the voting process.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:30:41 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Hudson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381. I am a Lahaina, Maui community member, and I believe this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is crucial to promoting transparency and fair representation.

I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill. It will foster fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo

Sincerely, Jacqueline Hudson

6 Kiohuohu Lane Unit 8

Lahaina, HI 96761

Mahalo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:41:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 7:57:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads and members of the Judiciary Committee,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:01:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eden Peart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB 2381

Hawai'i's people deserve democracy

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:06:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Seikai Darcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

SB2381 is exciting! Please support. It can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests to best represent all constituents. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:08:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaikona Kuhaulua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:12:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keyra Candelario	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keyra.

Sending this quick email to make sure you saw. It's the last chance to submit testimony ahead of Tuesday's hearing on Clean Elections! This Tuesday 2/6 is the first hearing for the Clean Elections legislation this legislative session, and with some members of House leadership already making their opposition to this popular and common sense legislation known, we need a strong showing to demonstrate the support of the public.

Please take a few minutes with the easy-to-follow directions below and submit testimony now if you haven't already. The deadline for "early" testimony is by 10am Monday morning February 5th. Please try to get your testimony in by then if you can, but if not, any time before the hearing at 10am February 6th is great.

And if you can join us to testify live via zoom or in person at the Capitol, all the better! Again, see instructions below.

Mahalo,

Evan, Our Hawai'i

Aloha e Keyra,

We've got momentum. Coming off of the big news of Speaker Saiki endorsing the legislation for public financing of elections, which would create a "Clean Elections system" enabling candidates to run without big money, and today's endorsement by the Star Advertiser Editorial Board, we now have a hearing scheduled and we need YOUR VOICE to keep up the momentum. The "Clean Elections" bill has been scheduled for its first hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, February 6th at 10am in Capitol Conference Room 016 (or via Zoom).

Here are some simple instructions for how to submit testimony in SUPPORT of SB2381 to show the overwhelming public support for creating a fairer, less corrupt election system.

Please submit written testimony now in advance! Then if you can, join to testify via Zoom at 10am on the 6th or if you're on O'ahu, in person at the Capitol in room 016.

Here's how:

Click [this link](#)

Log in if you have an account already. If you don't, click the link to register for an account.

Click the "Submit Testimony" Button in the top left corner.

Enter "SB2381" in the Search bar on the Left.

Follow the on-screen instructions and select the "SUPPORT" option

Hit the “Submit” Button, and if you can join via the Zoom link provided at the time of the hearing, or come to State Capitol Conference Room 016 if can! If no can, written testimony is awesome, too.

Here is a sample testimony you can use as a template, or submit as is:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:25:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:43:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
michelle Herrin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2381

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:44:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:46:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly in support. This bill is greatly needed!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:02:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Alapai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:13:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Valkenaar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:27:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo for shining light on transparency in our elections.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:36:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shawna Ganley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need fairer elections. In the current system wealthy donors and special interests wielding too much influence over elected officials.

SB2381 can get money out of politics by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from special interests and wealthy donors.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:37:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiana Keopuhiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I support this bill in order to give the votes back to the people instead giving the votes to the doner with the highest donation by investors. I believe this will give the people a fare chace to elect people they believe in! Your job is to listen to the people, so LISTEN! Do not take money from these big companies that only look out for their wellbeing here in Hawaii, let the people decide!

Mahalo,

Tiana Keopuhiwa

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 9:41:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kailani Amine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Kailani Amine

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:01:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gretchen Losano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this bill, it should have been passed decades ago. This bill aims to level the playing fields and make sure we have a wide range of candidates that can focus on the most important things, which are representing the needs of their constituents, and not have those with the most donors have the upper hand in elections, with obligations to their donors. That has very clear implications, and it's 2024, we really need to be done with government corruption.

Mahalo,

Gretchen Losano

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:08:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nameaaea Hoshino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou

My name is Nameaaea Hoshino. I support of SB 2381

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:10:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapulei Flores	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I am writing in support of SB2381 that would establish a system of public financing for all candidates seeking election. Ensuring that public service is accessible to a diverse group of candidates.

Mahalo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 10:52:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this Clean Elections bill. We must keep elections as open and transparent as possible.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify on this measure.

Barbara J. Service. MSW

Child Welfare Supervisor (ret.)

have to keep fund-raising lectures and

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 5:56:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Carsten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is imperative that this bill passes. Keeping corporate and other concerns out of elections would mean that a candidate had the actual support of the people.

Those not in favor of this bill obviously fear its passage would affect their chances for reelection.

I fully support passage of this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 5:56:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Tia Lee Klug-Wessell

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 6:32:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:28:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Bidleman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I thought we were all trying to get money out of politics. The bill should sail through the legislator,

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:30:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tarsis Rich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:41:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure.

- U'ilani Naipo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:42:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ekini Lindsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

IN SUPPORT FOR SB2381!!

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:44:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danette Trujillo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQ0NSVPwCUWqKNyXoJiRqVwJbh64rbnF4z1oG2hK1eqv5avnXwy6UVvtHt3gLjZdfPVECfoyvGJtKy/pub?link_id=5&can_id=71bdf3063a07dd89eadee0dbf2e9bc1a&source=email-alert-submit-testimony-w-lahaina-strong-3&email_referrer=email_2193363&email_subject=-alert-submit-testimony-w-lahaina-strong

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:54:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Reynolds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 7:55:28 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tanya Aynessazian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The people of Hawaii need an ethical and representative government to prioritize the needs of all constituents in order to set a foundation for sustainable living and improved holistic health outcomes. The influence of money in elections leads to corruption and collusion at best, and silence by fearful legislators at best. We must create a representative political system that engages, supports and works for policies that are community directed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests, which too easily sway good people to do things they otherwise would not. With a low cost of less than \$10M per year, we can implement this clean election program and create a fairer, less corrupt election system. Without fair elections, the people's choices will always be pitted against those with legislative power who choose money, control and personal status over what is pono.

Thank you.

Tanya Aynessazian

Pahoa, HI

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:34:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nani Dapitan-Haake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Rhoads, Chair and Senator Gabbard, Vice Chair:

I endorse SB2381 because it establishes a public financing system for all candidates running for public offices in Hawai'i. This will help ensure that public services are accessible to a wide range of candidates who can represent our communities' interests.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:38:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Riley Bond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the esteemed members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong endorsement of SB2381, a pivotal measure addressing significant campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As an active member of the Maui community, I believe that the establishment of public financing for all candidates, as proposed by this bill, is indispensable for enhancing transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is particularly crucial for fostering a political environment that is both responsive and representative of the diverse voices within our state. I urge the committee to carefully consider the enduring benefits that this bill brings to the forefront, emphasizing the importance of fairness and accountability in Hawaii's political process.

Mahalo for your dedication and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Riley Bond

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:37:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inga Gibson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Rhoads and JDC Members,

Thank you for introducing SB2381 to publicly finance elections to level the playing field for potential candidates for elected office.

I support this measure.

Inga Gibson

Honolulu

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:43:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bruce Ellinwood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:51:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Parker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo,

Lisa Parker

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:08:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Matson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

I am in strong support of publicly funded elections. As a concerned citizen I worked to pass the public funding pilot program for Hawai'i County over a decade ago. As a community candidate I ran on partial public funding in both 2020 and 2022. We need to update this program, we need to make it more competitive to encourage all candidates to run on public funding rather than on private interest corporate donations. Ideally this will someday be a requirement to run for public office and there will be a cap on all campaign spending so candidates can truly focus on connecting with constituents and not on fundraising. Please pass this comprehensive legislation this session.

Mahalo,

Shannon Matson

Hawai'i Island Resident

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:08:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arianna Feinberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill to get money out of politics.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:11:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support fair and honest elections.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:13:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rochelle Sombelon-McEwen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhodes, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our states political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Sombelon-McEwen

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:24:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nalani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Nalani

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:33:10 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daphne Barbee-Wooten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and ask that it be passed. We need more fair elections. The State vs. private funding of elections, make elections more inclusive and level the playing field for candidates. Please pass this bill.

Thank you.

Daphne Barbee-Wooten.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:22:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Misakian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381.

Fairness and ethical behavior in elections and government has a long way to go, but this will allow for a more level playing field.

Greg Misakian

Kokua Council, 2nd Vice President

Waikiki Neighborhood Board, Sub-District 2 Vice Chair

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:36:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:37:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kahi Pacarro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a community member deeply interested in fair elections that increase the opportunity for candidates to be elected void of heavy corporate influence, I support SB 2381 and encourage you to do so.

Our community has lost trust in our election process and elected leaders because year after year we see corporate interests taking priority over the good of our people. This is not a Democracy but rather a [Corporatocracy](#).

Please take the necessary steps to bring the power back to the people.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:37:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:38:47 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Dedely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hearing on Feb. 6, 2024 at 10:00 am

SUPPORTING SB 2381

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support SB 2381.

This bill makes our democracy more effective because it reduces the influence of private interests in the development of public policy. Private interests are willing to make large political contributions to further their goals and objectives, but they do so at the expense of the public interest.

Politicians use the money to get elected. Once in office, many feel obligated to do what their large contributors want. If they don't comply, they risk losing future contributions.

In reducing the influence of private interests, this bill advances the public interest. For the sake of our democracy, I urge you to pass SB 2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:46:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Pillen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for far too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents.

Connecticut, Maine, and the Hawai'i County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing their seats, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year.

If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:46:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Weis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good Morning,

I am fully in support of this bill. We need to level the playing field in our elections and provide a fair system which can give anyone a chance to be elected and serve the people of Hawaii.

Thank you

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:47:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander K.D. McNicoll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:47:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is essential for good governance and wil make Hawai‘i proud and among the leading states in the country in this regard. Please enact this year. It was very disappointing to see it not acted upon last year!

Mahalo,

John Webster

Fromer National Head of Goovernment Affairs for KPMG

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:49:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sierra Dew	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As someone born and raised on Maui, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sierra Dew

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 9:58:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marisa King	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1 Sample Testimony

Updated automatically every 5 minutes

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue

Marisa King

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:07:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nate Hix	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money should not be a barrier to political power. Candidates should be elected on their merits regardless of their ability to fundraise. Unfortunately, that's currently not the case as those who raise the most money win at over a 90% rate. Breaking the link between donors and election results is crucial to a fair and honest democracy.

Hawai'i County Council elections in 2010 and 2012 have proven that full publicly financed elections works here in our state, while Maine and Connecticut currently run this program statewide to much success.

At only an estimated cost of \$10 million per year, Hawai'i can easily take the necessary steps to remove the undue influence that money has on our political system. Please pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Nate Hix

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:32:09 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as I did last session and want to associate with the position of Common Cause.

Thank you. Martha Nakajima, Honolulu

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:42:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Hallett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and JDC committee:

I am in strong support of this bill. Please advance this bill with your vote of support!

Mahalo nui loa!

Lisa Hallett

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:45:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith A Mick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha- It is vital that our elections not be decided by what candidate has the most money. Please level the playing field and make everyone's ideas be heard equally. Mahalo, Judy Mick

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:56:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
brandi corpuz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I fulling support SB2381 for public funding elections. We have seen the damage that is caused when politicians are bought and paid for through their campaign supporters. Our community voices are not heard because we dont have enough money to get people elected. That is not how it should be.

People should not be elected and make decisions based on who gave them the most money. In fact, money should not have anything to do with our elections process. If everyone is publically funded then our voices will be heard and new candidates will have just as much of a chance to win as some of the old timers who are bought and paid for through private funding.

Please vote yes to this bill so that we can have equal opportunity elections that support a persons worth not how much money they can raise or how many rich people they know.

Sincerely, Brandi Corpuz

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:45:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Williams	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly Oppose this bill

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:19:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381. This measure is vital to the health of our democracy. Elected officials must be accountable to the people, not wealthy donors and corporations. Please pass this bill!
Mahalo.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:06:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alika Valdez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2381. In supporting of SB2381 means in supporting a clean healthy Hawaii.

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary

01 February 2024

Bronsten Kalei Kossow
brons10kalei@gmail.com

RE: Senate Bill 2381

Description: Establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai'i, to begin with the 2028 general election year. Requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature. Makes an appropriation.

Aloha Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair Mike Gabbard, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in SUPPORT of S.B. 2381.

Our modern collective vision of society is a continuum of need for reform for our campaign process. There are serious implications that the impurities of corporate interests have subjected to our current electoral process. There are implications for elected officials to maintain a balance between representing people and representing corporate interests. Although this bill does not burden corporate-led political action committees, which nationally constitute almost \$500 million in campaign funding just between the 2021 - 2022 Election Cycle (figures are higher in a Presidential cycle) – public campaign funding does imply a stronger foothold in expanding community-led elections. It remains evident that the necessary changes are needed to ensure the preservation of a people-led democracy, especially thinking of future implications. As stated within the intention of the bill “*Restoring public confidence in the electoral and legislative processes.*”

To ensure that public financing can work the models of our State, Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, and New Mexico are great examples of programs already established. It should be noted that a legal review of *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* (2010), *McComish v. Bennett* (2011), and possibly *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010) needs to be evaluated to navigate through the current Supreme Court view that hindrance on an independent expenditure could violate court precedence, which I do not believe is expressed within the intention of S.B. 2381.

Additionally, perhaps for transparency purposes, instead of a candidate reporting to the Campaign Spending Commission for publicly-funded candidates, maybe the submission of bank statements as well as reporting should be an appropriate tool in maintaining trust between candidates' usage of public campaign funds and the right of information for the voters.

Mahalo Nui Loa for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT,

Bronsten Kalei Kossow

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:17:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:32:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joan Heartfield PhD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:33:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank DeGiacomo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Frank DeGiacomo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 12:39:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslee Cook	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

2/4/24

Aloha Chair and members of the SB2381 Committee,

I am strongly in favor of the concept of SB 2381 which in my mind has long been overdo. It is such a travesty that money has dominated Hawaii's politics. This current money-controlled election process has lead to politicians who are obliged to those who contributed to their campaign to pass policies that were not good for the general populace and the ones steered towards helping the populace never pass. SB2381 can break the link between private money influencing who wins elections, by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and Special Interest Groups. If some of you have felt obliged to turn away from the populace to fulfill a debt to your wealthy donors or Special Interest Groups. Yet maybe felt guilty about your past choices, you can now ease that guilt by doing the right thing and voting to pass SB 2381. This will lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of us, the constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seats, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. We talk about ending corruption in politics and bringing back a government that shows the populace that their needs are being attended to. If we are serious about ending corruption in politics and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB 2381 now.

Mahalo for listening to my words, I represent 50 friends here on The Big Island.

Leslee Cook- the Big Island

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 1:22:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelei Tancayo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381. Publicly Funded elections that is accessible to a diverse range of candidates who can genuinely represent the interest of our communities.

Mahalo,

Michelei Tancayo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 2:01:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carlos Lamas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Carlos Lamas, a resident of Lahaina, I wholeheartedly support SB2381 because it represents a crucial step towards ensuring a fair and equitable electoral process in our state. By advocating for public financing of campaigns, this bill aims to reduce the outsized influence of private and special interest money in politics. In my view, this change is essential for creating a more accessible and representative democracy, where candidates can focus on the needs and interests of their constituents rather than on fundraising. I believe SB2381 will empower more diverse voices to participate in our political system and enhance the integrity of our elections, making democracy work better for everyone in Hawaii.

Mahalo for reading my testimony in support of SB2381.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 2:57:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
glenn oshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support. Adds too much for cost of products or services.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 4:00:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zane Kekoa Schweitzer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting this testimony in support of public funded elections.

mahalo,

Zane

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 5:43:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariko Whitenack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 6:46:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Micha'el Leventhal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 6:49:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Leventhal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Thank you,

April Leventhal

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 6:51:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey A Drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. This bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Support for SB2381

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Pahia

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:32:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald "Ron" Reilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard and members of the Committee On Judiciary,

Thank you for hearing SB2381 relating To Public Financing For Candidates To Elected Office.

Many thanks also to the introducers of this measure which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to Hawaii state and county public offices.

Hawaii County Council has proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. We need to end corruption and create a statewide system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few.

I respectfully urge your support of this measure.

Sincerely, Ron Reilly
Volcano Village, Hawaii

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 8:35:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rita Wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I absolutely OPPOSE Bill SB2381

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:05:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Paine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Consider the process over self enrichment .

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:18:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Pitcaithley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. I am a long time resident of Maui . In the last election, for the first time in history, the Carpenters Union's " Be Change Now" diverted its resources to council candidates and spent at least \$708,000 on advertising for a slate of county council candidates . This essentially eliminated any competition. Establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation. Elections should not be about money, it should be about giving candidates the opportunity to be fairly and equally represented. This pay to play practice must end. It is long overdue . Please pass this critical bill.

Sincerely,

Ann Pitcaithley, Wailuku

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 10:28:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamea Drayer-Hoopii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Kamea Drayer-Hoopii

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:13:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey Fritz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Election financing is the cornerstone of our elected government. And we see clearly how those elected govern and vote in favor of views that align with those who support them.

Government elected positions are essentially "jobs" with the government. Their salaries are paid for by the government (taxpayer money) and there should be no reason why any private citizen (including businesses) should contribute financially to any campaign. Government jobs should be entirely government funded.

Elected officials govern in alliance with the ideals of their largest donors. Regardless of your political priorities and values, nothing can really be accomplished for the people until we get money out of politics and large donors are removed from the equation. I firmly believe this is the first step towards resolving every other issue we all care about. Mahalo

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/5/2024 11:44:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
susan walczak-pol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly support SB2381, a measure addressing crucial campaign finance issues in Hawaii. As a Maui community member, this bill's establishment of public financing for all candidates is essential for promoting transparency and ensuring equitable representation.

In the aftermath of recent wildfires, SB2381's community-driven approach is vital for creating a political environment that is responsive and representative. I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits of this bill in fostering fairness and accountability in our state's political process.

Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 12:12:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JoAnn A. Yukimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwake, and Members of the Judiciary and Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Passing SB2981 is the most significant action you could take to advance good governance in Hawai'i.

Taking the "big money" out of elections and ensuring a level playing field will give the voters of Hawai'i a better chance of choosing candidates based on their merit rather than the money they amass.

This will increase the quality of public decisions; save taxpayer monies often lost today due to waste, graft and poor decision-making; and ensure a better future for Hawai'i.

Please pass SB2381 out of committees.

Thank you.

JoAnn A. Yukimura

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:45:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaia Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is the most pono path forward for our government after 130 plus years or corporate corruption and politicians being bought out.

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:50:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing to you as a 35 year resident of this state. Money has dominated Hawaii's political system for too long, leading to bad policies being passed and good ones being killed. SB2381 can break the link between private money and winning elections by freeing candidates from the need to fundraise from wealthy donors and special interests. This can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. These examples haven't resulted in incumbents losing at higher rates or the majority parties losing seat, but it has resulted in shifts in how the sitting legislators are influenced. We can easily afford this program's low cost of less than \$10 million per year. If we are serious about ending corruption and creating a system that works for all residents and not just the wealthy few, we need to pass SB2381 now.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Susan Stayton, Lawai, Kauai, Hi

SB-2381

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:13:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/6/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james d hughes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill certainly should have happened last session. Past time to spend a small amount of tax money to have government accountable to citizens ahead of special interest donors. Enough with the shibai tactics of letting bills dies in committee, advance it to the floor for a vote. Think about the public Donovan Dela Cruz, not the benefits to your position while maintaining the status quo. Thanks for your time and Mahalo, James D. Hughes