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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that removing barriers  
2 for persons with voting accessibility needs ensures that all  
3 individuals have equal access to the voting process. Existing  
4 law requires the state office of elections and each county  
5 election office to remove barriers, promoting greater  
6 participation in voting by individuals with access needs who may  
7 be otherwise excluded. However, understanding the unique needs  
8 of each community statewide can provide valuable insight on  
9 current and future accessibility issues for voters.

10           Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 11           (1) Require the office of elections to annually request  
12                 funding for the statewide elections accessibility  
13                 needs advisory committee; and
- 14           (2) Appropriate funds to the office of elections for the  
15                 statewide elections accessibility needs advisory  
16                 committee to carry out its mandate.



1 SECTION 2. Section 11-10.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "**§11-10.5 Statewide elections accessibility needs advisory**  
4 **committee[-]; annual budget request.** (a) There is established  
5 a statewide elections accessibility needs advisory committee  
6 within the office of elections for administrative purposes. The  
7 purpose of the advisory committee is to ensure equal and  
8 independent access to voter registration, casting of ballots,  
9 and all other office of elections services.

10 (b) The advisory committee shall consist of five members  
11 appointed by the governor based on recommendations from  
12 organizations within the State that are comprised of a majority  
13 of officers and members who are persons with disabilities  
14 including visual impairment. Each member shall identify as a  
15 voter with accessibility needs arising from disabilities  
16 including visual and hearing impairments that require an  
17 accommodation to vote. The terms of advisory committee members  
18 shall be four years; provided that initial terms shall be one,  
19 two, three, or four years to ensure staggered rotation of  
20 members.



1 (c) The advisory committee shall meet at least annually to  
2 review election procedures, services, and technology and access  
3 to information, and shall make recommendations to the office of  
4 elections on at least an annual basis. The advisory committee  
5 may meet and subsequently make recommendations at additional  
6 times as determined by a majority of the members.

7 (d) Beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026 and each fiscal  
8 year thereafter, the office of elections shall include in its  
9 annual budget request line-item funding for the advisory  
10 committee. To ensure the continuation of outreach and voter  
11 education, the amount of funding requested shall scale  
12 proportionally with fulfilled needs and funding requests  
13 received by the advisory committee."

14 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
15 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,  
16 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the  
17 appropriations contained in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023,  
18 and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure  
19 ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by  
20 \$ or per cent. This current declaration takes  
21 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal



1 year 2024-2025 in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023, and this Act  
2 only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund expenditure  
3 ceiling are that:

- 4 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to  
5 serve the public interest; and
- 6 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs  
7 addressed by this Act.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for  
11 the statewide elections accessibility needs advisory committee  
12 for information gathering, outreach, and voter education  
13 expenses approved by the advisory committee; provided that any  
14 funds appropriated pursuant to this Act shall be in addition to  
15 and shall not supplant any portion of the base budget of the  
16 office of elections.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of  
18 elections for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Deaf and Blind Task Force; Office of Elections; Statewide  
Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee; Voter  
Education; Expenditure Ceiling; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Office of Elections to annually request funding for  
the Statewide Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee.  
Appropriates funds to the Office of Elections Statewide  
Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee to gather  
information and provide outreach and voter education services  
for individuals with accessibility needs. Effective 7/1/3000.  
(HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is  
not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

