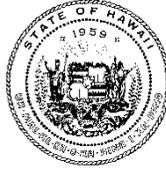


**KRISTIN E. IZUMI-NITAO**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PHONE: (808) 586-0285  
FAX: (808) 586-0288  
WWW.HAWAII.GOV/CAMPAIGN

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 31, 2025

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

ME

SUBJECT: **Testimony on H.B. No. 371, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, Relating to Campaign Contributions.**

Tuesday, April 1, 2025  
10:01 a.m., Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

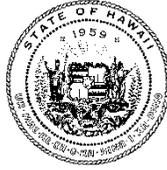
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports this bill (with one amendment) which we believe will prevent the corruption, or at least the appearance of corruption, of elected officials as well as represents a crucial step towards transparency and accountability in government spending. In this respect, this bill will help improve public confidence in government and the electoral process.

This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-355 by extending the ban on contributions from state and county contractors to the officers of the contractor and their immediate family. The Commission believes that it is common for contractors to get around the ban by having those persons connected to the contractor make political contributions. A few of these situations also involved false name contributions where the contributors were reimbursed for their contributions. The bill also extends the ban to HRS Chapter 42F grantees of the state and grantees of the counties via county charter or code, and the officers of the grantee and their immediate family. Grantees, similar to contractors, receive state and local funds and thus should be treated similarly in the context of political contributions.

Lastly, at the time of the execution of the contract, this bill requires the state or county contractor or grantee to provide to the state or county office executing the contract a list of the names of any officers and immediate adult family members of the state or county contractor or grantee (see page 5, line 1 in Section 2 of the bill). The Commission notes that “adult” is a new qualifier and is inconsistent with the proposed (and current) definition of “immediate family member” in this bill and under HRS §11-302 which includes a child, and thus, the Commission would recommend that it be deleted. Further, the bill provides that the state or county office shall make the reported information available electronically to the Commission which shall then make the information available to candidate and noncandidate committees on a password-protected section on the Commission’s website. Commission staff is in discussion with the State Officer of Enterprise Technology Services to develop and implement this requirement which would only apply to certain types of contracts given the concerns stated by the State Procurement Office.

With respect to any constitutional concerns regarding the scope of this bill, the Commission defers to the Department of the Attorney General, but believes that there are other jurisdictions including Connecticut that have extended the campaign contributions ban to state contractors’ principals and family members and withstood challenge on First Amendment grounds.

The Commission requests that this committee pass this measure with one amendment concerning eliminating the word “adult” from “immediate adult family member” on page 5, line 1 in Section 2 of this bill.



**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I**  
**STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

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TESTIMONY  
OF  
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ADMINISTRATOR  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON  
WAYS AND MEANS  
April 1, 2025, 10:01 AM

HOUSE BILL 371, SD1  
RELATING TO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 371, SD1. The State Procurement Office (SPO) appreciates the intent and provides the following comments on this bill, which specifies when it is unlawful for officers and any immediate family member of any state or county contractor to make any contribution to any candidate committee or noncandidate committee or to any candidate or to any person for any political purpose or use. It also specifies when it shall be unlawful to receive funds on a contract through legislation and requires the Campaign Spending Commission to publish the names of the state and county contractors and grantees, and their officers and adult immediate family members, on its website, as reported by the state and county agencies.

SPO comments on Section 2, pages 4-5, section (g) which requires each state and county agency to report to the commission the names of any state or county contractor or grantee and the names of the contractor's and grantee's officers and adult immediate family members. The SPO appreciates limiting the report to apply to only contracts over \$100,000 for goods and services and over \$250,000 for construction regardless of the method of procurement--professional services, HRS 103D-304; competitive sealed bids, HRS 103D-302; competitive sealed proposals, HRS 103D-303.

The SPO recommends that Section 2, page 5, lines 8-11, be amended for clarity and read as follows:

provided that the state or county office shall not be required to make the reported information available for procurements of less than \$100,000 for goods or services or less than \$250,000 for construction

However, the SPO cautions that requiring agencies to collect, record, and submit a report for every contract, regardless of threshold or method of procurement, will be an administrative burden. Also, compliance with this statutory requirement would likely necessitate additional resources, such as an online database, which would enhance efficiency, accuracy, data integrity, and compliance, and funds to establish, implement, and annually maintain the online database. Additionally, there is no clear guidance on how or when the data will be electronically transmitted to the Campaign Spending Commission.

The SPO references the Procurement Code under Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) 103D-101-Requirements of ethical public procurement. In addition to public employees conducting themselves in ethical procurement practice, HRS 103D-101(b) mandates any actual or prospective bidder, offeror, or business to also act in good faith and practice purchasing ethics, and when applicable, display business integrity as a responsible offeror through public procurement processes.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



**Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
April 1, 2025 at 10:01 AM  
Room 211, Decision making only**

**Testimony providing COMMENTS on HB 371 HD1 SD1**

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Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committees:

The Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) submits these comments regarding HB371, which seeks to prohibit campaign contributions from state or county contractors, grantees, and their officers. While we appreciate the intent of this legislation to ensure transparency and fairness in campaign financing, **we respectfully request an exemption for nonprofit board members who serve in a volunteer capacity.**

HANO is a statewide, sector-wide professional association of nonprofits that works to strengthen and unite the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve the quality of life in Hawai'i. Since 2006, HANO has been a leading voice for the nonprofit sector, leveraging resources, educating and advocating for policies and practices that promote the professionalism, sustainability, and effectiveness of nonprofits and the communities they serve.

The vast majority of nonprofit board members serve without compensation, donating their time, expertise, and leadership to further the mission of their respective organizations. These individuals receive no financial benefit from any contracts or grants that their organizations may receive from state or county governments. However, as currently written, HB371 would categorize nonprofit board officers—such as chairs, vice chairs, treasurers, and secretaries—as “officers” of a grantee organization, thereby restricting their ability to engage in political contributions despite their unpaid status.

We are concerned that the inclusion of volunteer board members in this prohibition may discourage civic-minded individuals from serving on nonprofit boards, ultimately impacting the effectiveness and governance of nonprofit organizations. **We respectfully urge the Legislature to amend HB371 to explicitly exempt nonprofit board members serving in a volunteer capacity from the campaign contribution prohibition.** Such an exemption would align with the intent of the bill while ensuring that nonprofit governance remains robust and continues to attract dedicated and qualified individuals who are committed to public service.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:34:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coaliton supports HB371. If Hawaii is to have tansparent and equal elections, the loop-holes that lobbyists use to tilt the political playing field towards private rather than public good.

Pleass approve HB371.

Mahalo for your time and hopefully your support!

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 10:09:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maki Morinoue	Testifying for HULI PAC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

Hawai‘i cannot afford another corruption scandal. With yet another bribery case in the news and no action taken since last year’s shocking *New York Times* exposé, it’s time for the legislature to stand up and act.

I strongly support **HB 371**, which closes the “pay-to-play” loophole by **prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions**. When contractors can donate to campaigns, it breeds favoritism, fuels public distrust, and weakens the integrity of our government. Contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit—not political influence.

This bill is about **fairness, transparency, and accountability**. It ensures that taxpayer-funded contracts serve the people, not the highest bidders in political fundraising. Closing this loophole is a necessary step toward ethical governance and restoring public confidence in our democracy.

I urge you to **pass HB 371** and take a stand against corruption in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to integrity in government.

Maki Morinoue

HULI PAC

Holualoa, Hawai‘i



Committee on Ways and Means  
Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki]

April 1, 2025, 10:01 am Room 211  
HB371 HD1 SD1 — RELATING TO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

### TESTIMONY

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

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB371 HD1 SD1, which would**

1)extend the prohibition on campaign contributions by contractors to apply to state or county grantees; 2)extend the prohibition on campaign contributions by contractors/grantees to the officers and immediate family members of the contractor/grantee; 3)prohibit state or county grantees from soliciting contributions; 4)require the return of illegal contributions to the contributor;5)escheat any illegal contribution not returned within 30 days, to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund (HECF); and 6)require grantees/contractors to disclose the names of owners, officers and immediate family members.

To save time for readers already familiar with the analysis of Campaign Spending Commission (CSC) data published in the New York Times (NYT) in 2024\*, I give a brief statement of the basis for LWV-HI support of each of the 6 items. I refer readers to the NYT article (link on p.2 below) for more detailed data.

- 1)The same considerations of pay-to-play apply to grantees as to contractors.
- 2) Since 2006 - the year the pay-to-play law (HRS 11-355) was implemented - people tied to government contractors have given state and local Hawaii politicians more than \$24 million: **about one-fifth of all donations** made. Most often, these donations were given to politicians with the most power to determine contract awards. HRS 11-355 is undermined by contributions from officers, employees, and their families. HB371 HD1 SD1 would restore the intent of HRS 11-355.
- 3)When grantees solicit contributions to politicians, those contributions may be bundled by the grantee or otherwise identified as tied to the grantee, such as by thanking the politician for the grant award or expressing the benefit of the award.

4)and 5) Returning illegal contributions to the contributor within 30 days, or, failing that, escheating the money to the appropriate state agency, is standard practice across campaign finance regulations. The money added to HECF funds will help offset the expenses of monitoring contributions by contractor officers and their immediate families.

6) One weakness in implementation of HRS 11-355 is that CSC staff often don't know the identities of a contractor's officers and their immediate families. HB371 HD1 SD1 cures this problem. We support the amendment in SD1 by JDC which removes the requirement to make public these names. Family members, especially, deserve this increased privacy.

\*Blaze Lovell, Eric Sagara & Irene Casado Sanchez. *Inside the Late-Night Parties Where Hawaii Politicians Raked In Money*. New York Times; January 17, 2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/17/us/hawaii-contractors-campaign-donations.html?searchResultPosition=7>

**Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.**

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 10:58:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
laurel brier	Testifying for Kauai Women's Caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let's keep it clean and close the loophole. Remove the conflict of interest by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions while their contracts are alive.



## HOUSE BILL 371, HD1, SD1, RELATING TO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

APRIL 1, 2025 · WAM HEARING

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports HB 371, HD1, SD1, relating to campaign contributions, which prohibits state or county grantees and officers and immediate family members of state or county contractors or grantees from contributing to candidate or noncandidate committees, candidates, or any person for any political purpose for the duration of the contract; requires any unlawful contribution to be returned to the contributor or it will escheat to the Hawai'i Election Campaign Fund; and requires disclosures of the names of any officers and immediate adult family members of a state or county contractor or grantee for contracts exceeding a certain amount.

Our democracy belongs to we, the people. At a time when our nation is experiencing extreme political turmoil and basic civil liberties are under assault, we must take steps in Hawai'i to safeguard democratic participation. In the 2024 primary election, for example, our state experienced its lowest turnout in 65 years, with only 32.1 percent of registered voters filling out a ballot. This is, in part, a reflection of the public's deep cynicism with our electoral processes.

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 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 act to restore integrity to government. **In March, Civil Beat reported that an unnamed lobbyist gave \$35,000 to an unnamed legislator just before the 2022 legislative session, a case that remains under federal investigation.**

Last year, a Civil Beat/New York Times investigation unveiled just how deeply pay-to-play culture is ingrained in local politics. After reviewing hundreds of thousands of campaign contributions and more than 70,000 government contracts, reporters found that nearly \$1 out of every \$5 donated to politicians came from people tied to companies doing business with state and local governments. As Civil Beat reported at the time, when some companies were on the cusp of winning major government contracts, people connected to them donated large amounts of campaign funds to influential public officials who were in positions to sway the awards.

Perhaps the most telling part of the report is encapsulated in the following excerpt from the special investigation: *Even though those contributors generally didn't acknowledge their connections to the companies, they were not violating Hawai'i law, which only prohibits donations directly from the firms. "Everyone gets very upset with pay-to-play, but it's legal," said Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Campaign Spending Commission.*

It might be legal today, but it shouldn't be any longer if we care about our future. Government should work for the public interest, not special interests. It is in that spirit that we support this and other reforms to restore integrity to our state's electoral and governmental processes.

**Contact: [educationcaucusdph@gmail.com](mailto:educationcaucusdph@gmail.com)**



**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports: HB370**  
**Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 10:00 am; Conference Room 211**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

HAPA is submitting testimony in STRONG Support of HB 371, which aims to close the “pay-to-play” loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents rather than to donors with vested interests. By mandating the reporting of contractors and prospective contractors, as outlined in the bill, we enhance transparency in the procurement process.

We urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring public trust.

Thank you for your support and consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is positioned above the typed name.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 12:39:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371 HD1 SD1, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active.

Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions.

By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 8:35:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is an excellent good government bill and closes a loophole which contributes to corruption. Please moved this bill forward.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 12:23:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elisa W Johnston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB371.

Closing loopholes by which companies and individuals can donate to legislators EVEN WHILE profiting from state contracts and grants is ESSENTIAL.

"Pay to play" as a way of life is a tragic betrayal of the people of Hawai'i.

You can change that.

Mahalo,

Elisa W. Johnston

Makiki

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 1:53:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Legrande	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is long past time to bring public trust back to our legislative process. Please hear and pass this Bill as it contributes to that effort.

Thank you, Linda Legrande

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 3:59:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chris Mentzel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:03:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support [HB371 HD1 SD1](#) and hope you will too. Mahalo.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:13:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is critically important to set impeccable standards for Hawaii elections: it is disgraceful that the existing regulations promote donations to influential lawmakers, wherein the donors expect (and get!) support for their projects and business interests in return!

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:19:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:21:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert H. Pahia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB371 . Do what's best for our local people. Mahalo

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:54:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 5:03:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:13:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB371.I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the “pay-to-play” loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral and procurement systems.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:16:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371. which aims to by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral and procurement systems by closing a “pay-to-play” loophole

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions. I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for your attention,

Dr. Lorna Holmes

Honolulu 96817

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:25:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christopher Egbo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

It's time to wake up and take real action to end government corruption. Just this week, yet another story about bribery and corruption made headlines, reinforcing what we already know—money in politics is eroding public trust. This is one of your last chances this session to address this urgent issue, yet we've seen no meaningful action since last year's New York Times exposé laid bare the systemic flaws in Hawai'i's political system.

I write in strong support of HB 371, which seeks to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward restoring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement processes.

Currently, allowing contractors to fund political campaigns creates a clear perception of favoritism and undermines public confidence in government decisions. By closing this loophole, HB 371 ensures that government contracts are awarded based on merit and public benefit—not on political donations and backroom deals.

Additionally, this bill aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance, eliminating conflicts of interest and ensuring that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, not wealthy donors with vested interests.

The people of Hawai'i deserve a government that works for them—not one influenced by campaign contributions from those seeking contracts.

I urge the committee to support HB 371 and take a stand for democracy, integrity, and fairness. This is your opportunity to prove to your constituents that you are committed to building an equitable and trustworthy system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Christopher Egbo



**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:44:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Jennifer Lum, 'Ewa Beach

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 7:16:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel R Freund	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Senate Ways and Means Committee,

You have the power to make our democracy stronger and counter the efforts of the current administration in Washington to destroy it. **Please support HB371.**

Mahalo -

Dan Freund, Kapaa

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 7:39:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
robert Petty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Avoid big money interference

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 7:43:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kelcy Durbin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Kelcy Durbin

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:12:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Poi G.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:18:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is kimdonghyeon, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

kimdonghyeon

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:30:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

With yet another news story highlighting bribery and corruption, it is clear that **Hawai‘i must act now to address the influence of money in politics**. Since last year’s bombshell *New York Times* exposé on this issue, no significant action has been taken—this is one of the legislature’s last opportunities this session to enact meaningful reform.

I strongly support **HB371**, which would prohibit state and county contractors from making political contributions, effectively closing the "**pay-to-play**" **loophole** that undermines public trust in government. When contractors are allowed to donate to campaigns, it creates **at least the appearance—if not the reality—of favoritism in contract awards**. Public contracts should be based on merit and the best interests of the people, **not on political connections or campaign contributions**.

By eliminating this loophole, HB371 strengthens **fairness, transparency, and accountability** in our procurement and electoral processes. It aligns with broader efforts to promote **ethical governance**, ensuring that public officials serve their constituents rather than special interests.

I urge the committee to **pass HB371** to restore integrity in Hawai‘i’s government and reaffirm the public’s trust in our democratic institutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**Ezgi Green**

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:33:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Samantha Preis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am in support of this bill to help keep public funds from being misused and to keep corruption down.

Mahalo,

Samantha Preis

Kahalu'u

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:37:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Susa Stayton, and I am writing in STRONG support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:44:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as co chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i , I am writing with the Green Party of Hawai'is' STRONG SUPPORT of House Bill 371, which aims to close the “pay-to-play” loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a no brainer for ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral system.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

The Green Party of Hawai'i urges the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for doing the right thing,

Susan RobertsEmery  
Green Party of Hawai'i  
Paauilo

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 8:56:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 9:06:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Jane E Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

Honolulu, HI. 96816

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 9:19:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Star S Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to **close the “pay-to-play” loophole** by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that **contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit**, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to **promote ethical governance**. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for **restoring trust in our democratic institutions** and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

-Star Brown

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 9:56:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in STRONG support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Shay Chan Hodges

Haiku, Maui

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 10:21:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Nanea Lo, and **I am testifying in strong support of HB370 HD2 SD1.**

With yet another news story this week about bribery and corruption, it is clear that urgent action is needed to address the role of money in politics. This is one of the last opportunities this session to enact real change. HB370 HD2 SD1 strengthens Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising expenditure limits, ensuring that candidates can run competitive, winning campaigns while relying on public financing. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB345 creates a fairer electoral system—one that allows candidates without personal wealth or large donor networks to compete on a level playing field.

Currently, the expenditure limit for candidates who opt into partial public financing in a typical State House race is around \$23,000. However, the median and average expenditures for State House primaries are approximately \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. Instead of serving as a support system, the current partial public financing model acts as a disadvantage, discouraging candidates from using it.

Fixing this system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the undue influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of everyday people. Public financing should prioritize voter engagement over large-scale donations. **By passing HB370 HD2 SD1, you can help strengthen our democracy and ensure that all Hawai‘i residents have a voice in the decisions that shape our future.**

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Executive Committee Member

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

Kanaka Maoli/Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 10:41:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Androes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

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Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Jen Androes

Kihei, Maui

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 11:14:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Pizzitola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Linda Pizzitola, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. **By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent.** It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 12:19:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Priscilla Stuckey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Priscilla Stuckey, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Priscilla Stuckey, Kihei

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 12:30:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pamela Elders	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Pamela Elders, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Pamela Elders, Laupahoehoe, HI 96764

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 2:21:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

submitting testimony in support of HB371 - i

it's time there is attention paid to the to contributions from those who benefit from politicians decisions. it may not deter them entirely, but creating a 'you're being watched' environment will help.

mahalo

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 2:28:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Judith White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill, which will decrease the possibility of money as influence in our elections.

Judith C. White

Kapaa

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 3:46:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Thank you

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 5:13:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.  
Diane Ware

Volcano

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 7:01:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert Culbertson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

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This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony,

R A Culbertson

Honokaa

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 9:07:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laura Gerwitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laura Gerwitz, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Laura Gerwitz, Honolulu

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 12:19:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gregory Misakian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB371 HD1 SD1.

Gregory Misakian

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 5:51:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mariana Monasi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mariana, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Mariana, Kurtistown

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 7:04:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Danelle Guion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Danielle Guion, and I am writing in STRONG support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Danielle Guion, Makakilo, O'ahu, Hawai'i

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 7:29:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in favor of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole makes our elections more transparent and fair for all. Mahalo.

Testimony in opposition to HB371 HD1 SD1, Relating to Campaign Contributions.

Hearing before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. April 1, 2025.

Submitted by Ian Lind.

My advice is simple: Remember the First Amendment.

There is a direct conflict between this bill and the First Amendment right to freedom of speech and freedom of association. This is not unusual with laws dealing with campaign contributions. What is unusual is that the First Amendment has not been mentioned in any testimony or committee deliberations to date.

And your committee would be making a grave error by continuing to ignore the First Amendment implications of HB371 HD1 SD1.

In a nutshell: A long string of legal opinions require that to pass constitutional muster, there must be a compelling government interest behind the bill, and it must be implemented in the least restrictive manner, or at least in a narrowly targeted manner.

While combatting corruption can be a compelling government interest, this bill utterly fails the second test. It's impact on First Amendment rights is sweeping, and it is far from the least restrictive means available.

If passed into law, HB371 would not simply “chill” free speech of corporations, it would eliminate the First Amendment rights of a large but as-yet-undetermined number of individuals associated with government contractors or grantees, as well as their extended families, and would trample on long-accepted legal precedents.

These issues are so glaring that the bill appears written to invite a successful First Amendment legal challenge.

## Back to Basics

What happens when there’s a direct conflict between the First Amendment right to free speech during an election campaign, and the public’s interest in combatting corruption?

Political speech and expression are at the heart of the First Amendment. After all, the First Amendment’s primary purpose was to protect open discourse about government affairs. Thus, political speech usually receives the strongest protection.

This means that courts tend to apply strict scrutiny to test the constitutionality of restrictions on political speech or expression. Strict scrutiny is the most difficult standard to meet. It requires a restriction to serve a compelling government interest in the least restrictive manner.

So let’s take a look at HB371.

It would prohibit contributions by state or county contractors, as well as state or county grantees, along with their officers and immediate family members, whether or not they have any role in the contracts or grants, or even any contact with the family member directly involved.

And immediate family members, according to the bill, includes any child, parent, grandparent, brother, or sister, and the spouses or reciprocal beneficiaries of those officers.

I haven't seen any discussion of the loss of rights for officers of state grantees, along with their family members.

Check this [list of organizations that received state grants in aid](#) during the 2024 legislative session.

Below is Page 1 of the 4-page list of grant-in-aid recipients from last year, just to provide a sense of the bill's broad impact.

[BLANK-see next page]

HB 1800 CD1 Operating and Capital Grant-In-Aid

Organization	CIP/OPERATING	FINAL AMT
442ND LEGACY CENTER	CIP	300,000
ALCOHOLIC REHABILITATION SERVICES OF HAWAII, INC., THE	CIP	500,000
BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS HAWAII, INC.	CIP	700,000
BIG ISLAND RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	CIP	300,000
BIG ISLAND RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	CIP	100,000
BIG ISLAND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNCIL	CIP	200,000
BLOOD BANK OF HAWAII	CIP	300,000
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, ALOHA COUNCIL	CIP	400,000
CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY CENTER	CIP	175,000
DIGS	CIP	380,000
EAST HAWAII CULTURAL COUNCIL	CIP	200,000
EASTERSEALS HAWAII	CIP	300,000
ELEPAIO SOCIAL SERVICES	CIP	800,000
FAMILY PROMISE OF HAWAII	CIP	200,000
FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.	CIP	250,000
FIVE MOUNTAINS HAWAII, INC.	CIP	500,000
GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF HAWAII, INC.	CIP	500,000
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTL - HAWAII ISLAND	CIP	400,000
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, INTL - KAUAI	CIP	500,000
HALE HALAWAI OHANA O HANAIEI	CIP	150,000
HALE MAKUA HEALTH SERVICES	CIP	800,000
HALE PUNA	CIP	40,000
HAMAKUA HEALTH CENTER, INC.	CIP	700,000
HAWAII FOODBANK, INC.	CIP	700,000
HAWAII PACIFIC UNIVERSITY	CIP	650,000
HAWAII SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM	CIP	50,000
HAWAII SOFTBALL FOUNDATION	CIP	100,000
HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION	CIP	400,000
HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY	CIP	400,000
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LAND TRUST	CIP	100,000
HI GOOD SAMARITAN FOUNDATION	CIP	500,000
HONOLULU COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM	CIP	200,000
HOPE SERVICES HAWAII INC.	CIP	100,000
HUI MAKAAINANA O MAKANA	CIP	50,000
INNOVATIONS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL FOUNDATION	CIP	55,000
JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII	CIP	350,000
JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF KONA	CIP	160,000
KA AHAHUI O KA NAHELEHELE	CIP	50,000
KALIHI PALAMA HEALTH CENTER (HALE HOOLA HOU)	CIP	230,000
KAPAA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, INC.	CIP	400,000
KAUAI ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, INC.	CIP	75,000
KAUAI FOOD BANK, INC.	CIP	230,000
KAUAI HUMANE SOCIETY	CIP	100,000
KLINE-WELSH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FOUNDATION	CIP	200,000
KOOLAU FOUNDATION	CIP	100,000

The full list includes somewhere about 150 community nonprofit organizations. And HB371 would impact the officers of each and

every organization, who would lose their right to contribute to the candidates or political committees of their choice.

Those rights would also be stripped from their parents, even grandparents, siblings, as well as their spouses or partners, who would not only be prohibited from contributing to the candidates of their choice, but from contributing to “any political committee,” or to “any person for any political purpose,” or to solicit any contribution “for any purpose.”

One glaring omission is the lack of any nexus between these sweeping prohibitions, the contracts or grants that trigger them, and any actual potential for corruption stemming from those contracts or grants. No bit of evidence has been submitted in an attempt to justify such a sweeping loss of rights.

Why should someone donating their time to serve as an officer of the Kauai Humane Society be barred from making campaign contributions to the candidates of their choice, along with their parents, grandparents, children, siblings, and their spouses?

It can possibly be argued that a corporate contractor or grantee, and its officers, should be prohibited from making campaign contributions to the level of government that originates the contract or grant. So you get a state contract, and you shouldn't then contribute to the governor.

But why should that state contract limit your ability to contribute to the mayor's race, or a county council race, when those elected officials in those positions play no role whatsoever in awarding state contracts or grants?

It seems to me that this is classic overreach, and far from the targeted restrictions that First Amendment analysis requires.

There are already plenty of laws prohibiting pay-to-play corruption. It's illegal to enter into explicit or implicit quid-pro-quo understandings linking campaign contributions to discretionary action by an elected official. It's illegal to structure campaign contributions in order to evade contribution limits, by giving money to others (employees, relatives, friends, customers, etc) that they would then contribute in their own names.

Obviously, a narrowly-targeted approach to clamping down on pay-to-play would be to substantially increase the budget for investigation and prosecution of these crimes, and they are crimes, or perhaps to prohibit all contributions by corporations to state and local candidates, as is done at the federal level.

Those are approaches which do not get into the thorny area of restricting constitutionally protected rights.

In any case, this is a discussion that hasn't happened during the consideration of HB371.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to defer action on HB371 HD1 SD1.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 9:56:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keala Fung, and I am writing in STRONG support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Keala Fung, Honolulu

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 10:29:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Mitsumori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

With another story in the the news about bribery and corruption, the urgency to take meaningful action on money in politics is clear.

I am writing in strong support of HB371 HD1 SD1, which aims to close the “pay-to-play” loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Michele Mitsumori

Hilo

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

Strong support for HB371 HD1 SD1 — Closes the Pay-to-Play Loophole

Strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the “pay-to-play” loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai‘i’s electoral and procurement systems.

This bill aligns with the broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

I urge the committee to support HB371. This measure is essential for our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Respectively submitted,

Keith Neal  
Waimea

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 12:03:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Leake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Leake, and I am writing in STRONG support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

David Leake (Kanoeha)

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 12:18:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Everette	Testifying for Malia Everette, AltruVistas	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings! Aloha! Our Nation is in crisis because of Citizen's United and sadly an erosion of the Rule of Law and Constitution due to the fact "we the people" have allowed corporations personhood and now an Oligarchy or New Robber Baron Class have taken over our political, economic and social systems! In Hawaii, we still malama each other, and know the protection of our culture, aina, water and wellbeing depend on Transparency, being Pono and accountability!

I am thus in **STRONG** support of HB371!!! This prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interests!!!!

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 1:58:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow, and I am writing in **STRONG support** of **HB371**, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Mountain View

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 2:49:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathy Shimata, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of HB371, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu. 96822

Aloha WAM Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and committee members

I have specific comments about amendments to HB371 and its unintended consequences, but I would like to step back and express some concerns about the way this law tries to address the problem of pay to play.

Citizens of this state and country have the right to support political, social, charitable, or religious causes that reflect their personal beliefs. It is an extension of a citizen's right to freedom of speech and their participation in the democratic process. I agree with the intent of the bill to eliminate pay to play, but this bill puts limitations on ordinary donors, when the real problem lies with people who accept money for behaving unethically or illegally. Voter frustration continues as small donors are prevented from political participation while billionaires continue to spend millions to affect the results of a single election.

Specifically, my comment is HB371 does not define who is an "officer" of a grantee organization and treats for-profit and non-profit the same. Who is an "officer?" 1) Some believe that the board of directors hires the "officers" of a company or non-profit and they are the paid officers such as a CEO, CFO, COO or executive director; 2) Some non-profit directors believe themselves to also be officers; 3) Some believe that only the organization's paid executive officers AND the unpaid officers of a non-profit are officers.

The definition of who is an "officer" in HB371 will significantly affect non-profit boards throughout the state that receive state and county grants. These boards attract volunteers who are active concerned citizens, often community leaders, leading business people, professionals who serve as unpaid directors. Consider the thousands of people who serve on boards of all the museums, concert and theater groups, environmental and health care non-profits, senior and community centers, youth groups, even the zoo and aquarium have boards of directors. None of these volunteers stand to gain financially from the grants.

Often, these community leaders are also donors to candidate committees and non-candidate committees, moreover, they may be members of those committees. Volunteer directors who step up to improve their communities by serving on boards should not have their right to participate in the political process taken away. I'm certain that the amendments to the bill did not intent to discourage the participation of these community leaders in the political process, nor discourage political donors from volunteering to lead Hawaii non-profit boards.

Please clarify who is an "officer" in the bill, and please exclude all unpaid officers and directors of non-profit boards.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 10:44:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am an O‘ahu resident writing in **STRONG support of HB371 HD1 SD1**, which prevents state and county contractors, grantees, and their families from making political contributions while their contracts or grants are active. Closing this loophole is important because it ensures public funds are used for their intended purposes, not to sway political campaigns or decisions. By removing a conflict of interest, this bill makes our elections more fair and transparent. It also builds trust by making sure contractors and grantees stay focused on their work without any perception of political strings attached.

Mahalo,

Kiana Otsuka

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 8:16:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dennis O'Shea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please keep bribed criminals out of Hawaii government.

Mahalo

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 11:08:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Kahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair(s) and Committee Members,

My name is Greg Kahn and I strongly support HB371 HD1 SD1 on the contract contributions ban. This measure ensures that public funds are used for their intended purposes rather than to sway political campaigns and decisions

Mahalo,

Greg Kahn

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 11:13:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony,

Ann V Saffery

Honolulu, HI

To: Ways and Means Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members  
From: Brodie Lockard, Common Cause Hawaii Board Member  
Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 10:01 am

**In strong support of HB371**

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 HB371 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.

This bill closes a major loophole allowing for pay-to-play campaign contributions from government contractors.

HB371 prohibits contractors and their close contacts from contributing to candidates while a contract is in effect. It's simple and stops the kind of quid pro quo that Hawaii's government is infamous for. The need for it is obvious to anyone who reads Hawaii news. It's been obvious for years.

Please pass this much-needed bill.

Sincerely,

Brodie Lockard  
Common Cause Hawaii Board Member

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 1:09:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheri Matsumura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 371, which aims to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 1:31:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair & Members of the Committee,

With another story in the news this week about bribery and corruption, it's time for the legislature to act on money in politics. This is one of your last chances to do something on this issue this session, and there is still no action since last year's bombshell New York Times exposé on this very issue.

I am writing in **strong support** of House Bill 371. It is time to close the "pay-to-play" loophole by prohibiting state and county contractors from making political contributions. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in Hawai'i's electoral and procurement systems.

Allowing contractors to contribute to political campaigns creates a perception of favoritism and undermines public trust in government processes. By closing this loophole, HB 371 reinforces the principle that contracts should be awarded based on merit and public benefit, not on political connections or financial contributions.

This bill also aligns with broader efforts to promote ethical governance. It helps to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensures that elected officials remain accountable to their constituents, rather than to donors with vested interests.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support HB 371. This measure is essential for restoring trust in our democratic institutions and ensuring an equitable system of governance for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Carla Allison

Honolulu

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 2:26:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita,

My name is Emily Gambino from Makawao. Mahalo for passing HB370 out of the Finance Committee. I am also reaching out to request that you schedule and support the senate version, SB345 along with SB311 and SB1032. This is our last chance to take a meaningful step in campaign finance reform Please consider scheduling this bill.

Mahalo!

Emily Gambino

**HB-371-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 7:49:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure to reduce pay to play politics!

Kevin Faccenda, Honolulu