



STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 3, 2025

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

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 118, Relating to the Campaign Spending Commission.**

Wednesday, February 5, 2025
9:15 a.m., Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission ("Commission") supports this bill.

This bill establishes one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent investigator position to be placed in the Commission and makes an appropriation of \$125,000 in this fiscal year and the same amount for the next fiscal year.

The Commission has not had an increase in personnel for the past 29 years despite the number of candidate committees and noncandidate committees having almost doubled in size. Currently, there are only 5 staff members who oversee 700+ committees that have anywhere from 1-3 officers who require assistance on how to comply with the various requirements of campaign finance law thereby generating hundreds of staff hours assisting committees over the phone, in-person, and by email as well as a number of enforcement actions for violations. Under HRS §11-314(7), one of the Commission's 14 duties is to investigate and hold hearings for receiving evidence of any campaign finance violations. The Commission has no investigator on staff and has had to rely on contracts for investigative services with outside agencies.¹ In comparison to other State and county good government groups with compliance and enforcement duties, the Commission has had a modest budget and nominal staff despite a tremendous growth

¹Act 10, Special Session 1995, was the single year that a sum of \$70,000 was appropriated for one investigator for the Commission for FY 1995-1996 and was then sunset.

in committees, an expansion in its duties and responsibilities, and enforcement mandates. The Commission respectfully seeks your support so that the Commission may ensure that the integrity and transparency of the campaign finance process is upheld.²

The Commission requests that this committee pass this measure.

² The Commission requested 2 full-time permanent exempt excluded positions in its FY 2025-2027 budget to which the Governor has approved – specifically, the request was for \$200,000 for FY 2026 and \$180,000 for FY 2027-2029. One of those positions would be a permanent investigator. Notably, the Commission is an administratively attached agency with the Department of Accounting and General Services.



Committee on Judiciary
Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard

February 5, 2025 9:15 am Room 016
SB118— RELATING TO THE CCAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

TESTIMONY

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

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB118, establishes and funds an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission (CSC).

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that methods of financing political campaigns should protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; and enable candidates to compete equitably for public office.

In Hawaii, the CSC has major responsibility for ensuring that election campaigns meet these standards. CSC maintains a detailed and widely useful database to enable citizens and government officials to see and understand data on campaign spending. Political candidates must abide by numerous laws, regulations and schedules. The CSC not only tracks the compliance with these requirements for every candidate, they help candidates understand these requirements. The CSC monitors hundreds of candidates statewide.

Currently CSC has only 5 staff. When an investigation into a suspected violation of law or regulation is needed, someone on that small staff has to squeeze the additional work into their already crowded schedule. An investigator would review allegations, find relevant information, and support legal actions. Enforcement would be swifter and surer.

Please pass SB118 and work to ensure adequate funding for the investigator position so it can be promptly filled.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 4:50:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is kimdonghyeon, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

kimdonghyeon

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 4:53:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials. Mahalo.

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 6:23:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Timothy, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration! Timothy ,Kapaa

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 6:36:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure.

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:18:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Jennifer Lum, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jennifer Lum, 'Ewa Beach

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:22:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:40:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Fred Hofer and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials

Mahalo for your consideration!

Fred Hofer

Hilo

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:34:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e,

Unfortunately, there are some folks who won't obey the law unless they fear getting caught, If you're serious about campaign laws then you'll fund the staff to enforce them.

- Dan Freund, Kapaa

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:04:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Kencho, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kencho, Hilo

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:09:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Jonathan Simonds and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jonathan Simonds, Hilo

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:33:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JarraeTehani Manasas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing in **STRONG** support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

JarraeTehani Manasas, Kailua Kona Hawai'i

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:55:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Palma-Glennie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

There is NOTHING more important to protecting our democracy than campaign finance reform. nothing.

that's why i'm writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

Being able to enforce and enable legislation is crucial to its success. By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, there's more chance that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials. As it now stands, staff members share investigative tasks in addition to their regular tasks. An investigator allows others to focus on financial reporting, training, and public outreach.

Support this and all other campaign finance reform bills that provide more oversight and enhance the promise of One person, One Vote.

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:13:41 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is David Leake, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

David Leake

Kaneohe

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 11:52:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is **Nanea Lo**, and I am writing in **strong support of SB118**, which would establish an investigator position within the Campaign Spending Commission.

Hawaii's elections must be **fair, transparent, and free from corruption**. Currently, the Campaign Spending Commission has only **five staff members**, all of whom already have broad responsibilities. An investigator would allow for **dedicated** review of allegations, collection of evidence, and enforcement of campaign spending laws. This would help ensure that violations are addressed quickly and thoroughly, **protecting the integrity of our elections**.

In 2022, the Commission monitored **hundreds** of candidate committees statewide. Without a dedicated investigator, complaints and allegations can **delay campaigns**, leaving voters uncertain and candidates at a disadvantage. A full-time investigator would **improve efficiency** and help resolve cases faster, which benefits **candidates, voters, and election officials** alike.

Voters expect **strong oversight** of campaign spending. Right now, investigative duties are spread across staff who are already responsible for financial reporting, training, and public outreach. A full-time investigator ensures that **violations are not overlooked** while allowing the rest of the Commission to focus on their essential work.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to **pass SB118** and strengthen Hawai'i's campaign spending oversight.

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

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 12:55:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Keala Fung, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

I feel there needs to be more consequence when campaign spending is not done correctly and increasing staffing would help this.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Keala Fung, Honolulu HI

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:51:42 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Isis Usborne, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Isis Usborne, 96815

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:10:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Rhoads, Vice Chair Senator Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Judiciary.

Please support SB 118 to establish an investigator position in the Campaign Spending Commission.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:24:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Ann V Saffery, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Ann V Saffery

Pearl City, HI

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:20:50 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am in favor of this bill provided that there is some oversight for the investigator and that there is no undue influence on this individual, because just like the commission may need oversight the investigator needs to have no outside influences either. Secrecy is the enemy of democracy for both sides of the equation in my view, and transparent public oversight is the antidote for this. This way the public money will go to exactly it's supposed to go to, the concerns of the people. Mahalo.

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:32:42 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Noelle Lindenmann, and I am writing in STRONG support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials. This allows people to have more faith in our governmental institutions and for that, I am grateful.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:11:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your support and allowing this input.

Bill and Barbara Best,

Wailuku

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:14:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brodie Lockard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The CSC has been understaffed for decades. Give them a hand!

LATE

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

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am writing in **STRONG support of SB118**, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kiana Otsuka, Moanalua

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:29:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Emelia, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Emelia Briscoe, Honolulu

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:06:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Michele Nihipali, and I am writing in **STRONG** support of SB118, which establishes an investigator position at the Campaign Spending Commission.

By increasing the staffing available for the Campaign Spending Commission, the public can be assured that all violations are being found, investigated, and addressed. A full-time investigator can move cases forward faster, which benefits candidates, voters, and election officials.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:27:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence Ford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of better funding for the Campaign Spending Commission.

Lawrence Ford

LATE

SB-118

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:02:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/5/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill