



HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawai'i · Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 · Honolulu, Hawai'i

Committee: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Bill Number: HB 411
Hearing Date/Time: January 28, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission in **SUPPORT** of HB 411, Relating to Ethics Administrative Fines

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission ("Commission") supports HB 411, establishing an expedited enforcement process to address violations of Hawai'i Revised Statutes chapters 84 and 97. Importantly, this bill minimizes time and expense while maintaining due process rights.

This bill is modeled on a similar law established for the Hawai'i Campaign Spending Commission. It allows the Commission to issue a proposed order and fine of up to \$1,000 for violations of the ethics code or lobbying law (Hawai'i Revised Statutes chapters 84 and 97). The respondent may request a hearing within twenty days. If the respondent does not request a hearing, the order becomes final.

This bill aims to expedite the enforcement process for both the Commission and the respondent. The current charge process can take 5-6 months and may require the respondent to respond to a charge multiple times. For more straightforward matters where the facts and law are not in question, expediting the process may reduce the burden on respondents and minimize unnecessary waste of state time and resources.

This is a common-sense measure. By supporting the proposed expedited enforcement process for the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission, this Legislature demonstrates its commitment to preserving the public's confidence in government institutions while minimizing the burden on respondents and minimizing a potential waste of state resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 411.

Very truly yours,

/S/ Robert D. Harris
Robert D. Harris
Executive Director and General Counsel