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### **HOUSE MINORITY CAUCUS CALLS FOR TRANSPARENCY AT THE CAPITOL**

HONOLULU – The Republicans of the State House of Representatives think it is unfair for Legislators to be above the law and have introduced resolutions this week that would end practices that allow lawmakers to personally benefit from bills they support.

Representative Pine stated, "Hawaii's residents have lost faith in government because they believe that government is silencing their voice and has closed its doors for backroom deals. These resolutions acknowledge that the way we do things here is wrong and must be changed. If we set this example for ourselves the public will see that we are a changed government – willing to be fair, willing to hold ourselves accountable and, most importantly, willing to listen to the people.

Under the State Constitution and the State Ethics Code, members of the Legislature are above the laws governing conflict of interest and technically, can personally gain from their positions. As it is currently structured, the Speaker of the House rules on conflicts of interest. HR176 asks the State Ethics Commission to conduct a study to address possible conflicts of interest by members of the House of Representatives.

The House Minority also supports HB1749 which establishes an Ethics Committee in each Chamber of the Legislature, as long as the membership of this committee is balanced and equal. No one party should be allowed to sit in judgment of members of the opposition party.

The second resolution the Minority Caucus introduced is HR277 which calls for amending House rules to disallow the current practice that permits billions of dollars to be allocated without Finance Committee knowledge or vote. It also clarifies and strengthens the 48-hour notice to no longer permit waiving public notice, as well as requiring notice to be given two working days before the hearing.

"Giving people 48-hours notice about legislation that can affect their families should be the standard, not merely a guideline," stated Representative Kymberly Pine.

Today marks the end of "Sunshine Week" at the State Capitol and the Minority Caucus supports opening up many of the current legislative practices to public scrutiny.