

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
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SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

**TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 64**

**URGING THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS AND CLERKS OF THE COUNTIES TO
PROVIDE INFORMATION FACTSHEETS ABOUT PROPOSED COUNTY
CHARTER AMENDMENTS, STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, AND
BALLOT INITIATIVES THAT APPEAR ON THE BALLOT IN STATEWIDE AND
COUNTY ELECTIONS**

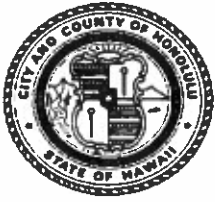
March 23, 2017

Chair Nishimoto and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Concurrent Resolution No. 64. The purpose of this resolution is to urge election officials to provide information factsheets about various questions that appear on the ballot.

The Office of Elections too believes an informed electorate is essential to a healthy democracy. However, if the intent is to produce educational materials to voters, it is not within the scope or mission of the Office of Elections to interpret constitutional amendments proposed by the legislature. We believe that educational materials would be better produced by subject matter experts.

Prior to the amendment of HRS § 11-2 in 2003, the Office of Elections was statutorily responsible for distributing educational materials produced by the Legislative Reference Bureau based on its interpretation of proposed constitutional amendments, including valid arguments for and against ratification.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Concurrent Resolution No. 64.



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3077 TELEPHONE (808) 768-3810

GLEN I. TAKAHASHI
City Clerk

KIMBERLY L. RIBELLIA
Deputy City Clerk

**TESTIMONY OF GLEN TAKAHASHI CITY CLERK
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 64
March 23, 2017**

Chair Scott Nishimoto and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 64. The Office of the City Clerk providing information to voters to aid in making informed decisions.

We support the intent of this resolution. We note that the 2015-2016 Honolulu Charter Commission produced and mailed to voters, "2016 Charter Amendments," a 20-page booklet that provided plain-language summaries for each of the 25 proposed amendments, and a worksheet that can be used to help in the voting process. The booklet was also made available on the Commission and City Clerk's website. It was also translated to Chinese, Japanese and Filipino.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 64.



House Judiciary Committee
Chair Scott Nishimoto and Vice Chair Joy San Buenaventura

03/23/2017 at 2:15 PM in Room 325
HCR64 Urging the Office of Elections and Clerks of the Counties to Provide Information Factsheets about Proposed County Charter Amendments, State Constitutional Amendments, and Ballot Initiatives that Appear on the Ballot in Statewide and County Elections

TESTIMONY / SUPPORT
Corie Tanida, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Dear Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and committee members:

Common Cause Hawaii supports HCR64 which would urge the Office of Elections and County Clerks to provide factsheets about proposed county charter amendments, state constitutional amendments, and ballot initiatives to the public.

We believe that an educated, engaged citizenry is crucial to a thriving democracy. By making information more accessible to the public, in a factual, objective, and more easily digestible manner, can voters make more informed decisions on pressing issues that affect Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HCR64**.



League of Women Voters of Hawaii

49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813

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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair and Rep. Joy San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair, Chair
Thursday, Marc 23, 2017, 2:15 pm, Room 325

HCR 64, URGING THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS AND COUNTY CLERKS OF THE COUNTIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION FACTSHEETS ABOUT PROPOSED COUNTY CHARTER AMENDMENTS, STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, AND BALLOT INITIATIVES THAT APPEAR ON BALLOTS IN STATEWIDE AND COUNTY ELECTIONS

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee Member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Nishimoto, Vice-Chair San Buenaventura, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HCR 64 that requires the publication of information on the proposed constitutional or proposed charter amendments that appear on an election ballot. Despite efforts by the media and organizations like the League to raise awareness and provide nonpartisan information about ballot questions, many voters are surprised when proposed constitutional amendments or proposed charter amendments appear on their ballot.

We recognize that express legal language may be required for the proposals, but this often means the proposal is difficult to understand. The ballot and charter education should explain what each proposed change means in simple, everyday language. Additionally, “pros and cons” for each change should be presented in a factual, nonpartisan fashion.

For years, the League has advocated voter information, especially on issues, and has provided this information ourselves, when possible. But it would be better if this was a routine aspect of voter service provided to all Hawaii residents by the State Office of Elections and County Clerks in both electronic and paper formats. Previously we have heard there was never “enough money” to do this. But what can be more important than an informed electorate? We strongly support this resolution and urge you to pass the measure.

We respectfully request that the language of the resolution be modified so that it accommodates voting by mail statewide. This is straightforward. References to polling place should also include “or each voter service center.” Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.