

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 13 2025RE: S.B. No. 1031
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred S.B. No. 1031 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ADVISORY REFERENDUMS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the Legislature to adopt any Concurrent Resolution to propose a non-binding advisory referendum question to the people, who may vote on the question during any general election; and
- (2) Impose notice, certification, and reporting requirements on the Chief Election Officer.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the League of Women Voters of Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from numerous individuals.

Your Committee finds that the function of the state government is to provide for, express, and safeguard the will of the people. Advisory referendums allow large numbers of people to voice their opinions explicitly and efficiently. By allowing non-binding advisory referendums, this measure opens another



important avenue of communication between the government and residents to facilitate effective policymaking that more accurately reflects the values of the State's population.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language specifying that the subject of the non-binding advisory referendum question shall be limited to the issuance of general obligation bonds;
- (2) Requiring the Legislature to consider the general election results of relevant advisory referendum questions when authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds;
- (3) Allowing the Legislature to act in contradiction to the results; provided that a written explanation of the legislative act that is contrary to the reported majority vote on the advisory referendum question is reflected in the legislative record;
- (4) Inserting an effective date of January 1, 2491, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee notes the concerns expressed in opposing testimony that this measure may be significantly costly and confuse the electorate. Your Committee finds that these issues raise concerns that merit further consideration and respectfully requests that subsequent Committees to which this measure is referred examine the potential fiscal, administrative, and legal implications of implementing this measure, as amended.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Government Operations that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1031, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1031, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Government
Operations,



ANGUS L.K. MCKELVEY, Chair



