

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi  
Director

Shawn K. Nakama  
First Assistant

Research 808-587-0666  
Revisor 808-587-0670  
Fax 808-587-0681



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU  
State of Hawaii  
State Capitol, Room 446  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

## WRITTEN COMMENTS IN SUPPORT

### **HB1439, HD1**

### **MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT COST ITEMS**

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director  
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Friday, March 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Good morning, Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi, and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Thank you for this opportunity to provide written comments in **support** of H.B. No. 1439, H.D. 1, Making Appropriations For Public Employment Cost Items.

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate moneys for public employment cost items and cost adjustments for employees of the Senate, House of Representatives, and various legislative agencies who are excluded from collective bargaining for the 2025-2027 Fiscal Biennium.

The Bureau supports this measure and appreciates the Legislature's efforts to ensure that Bureau and other Legislative staff are compensated equitably with their civil service counterparts.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written comments in support of H.B. No. 1439, H.D. 1.



Robin K. Matsunaga  
Ombudsman

Yvonne M.F. Jinbo  
First Assistant

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN  
STATE OF HAWAII**

465 South King Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: 808-587-0770 Fax: 808-587-0773 TTY: 808-587-0774  
complaints@ombudsman.hawaii.gov

**TESTIMONY OF ROBIN K. MATSUNAGA, OMBUDSMAN,  
ON H.B. NO. 1439, H.D. 1, A BILL FOR AN ACT  
MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT COST ITEMS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

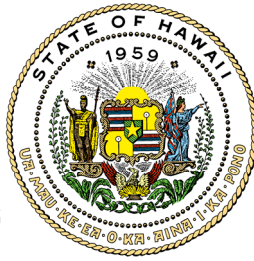
**MARCH 28, 2025**

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of H.B. No. 1439, H.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to provide appropriations for public employment cost items and cost adjustments for employees of the legislative branch.

Your support and passage of this bill will allow it to serve as a vehicle during this session in the event appropriations are provided for public employment cost items and cost adjustments for employees of the executive and judicial branches.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony and for your support.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

**H.B. NO. 1439, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT COST ITEMS**

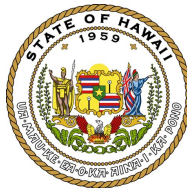
Hearing: Friday, March 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

The Office of the Auditor **supports** H.B. No. 1439, H.D. 1, which is intended to appropriate funds to certain legislative agencies, including the Office of the Auditor, to fund Hawai'i employer-union health benefits trust fund costs and other cost adjustments authorized by Chapter 89C, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, for employees of the Legislative Branch excluded from collective bargaining.

We support providing our staff, none of whom are members of collective bargaining units, the same benefits, including salary adjustments, as those employees included in collective bargaining.

We have submitted detailed budget information in our testimony in support of H.B. No. 1440, H.D. 1, the appropriations bill for the legislative branch. Testimony previously submitted to the Committee on Ways and Means on H.B. No. 1440, H.D. 1, is available here: [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB1440\\_HD1\\_TESTIMONY\\_WAM\\_02-18-25\\_.PDF](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB1440_HD1_TESTIMONY_WAM_02-18-25_.PDF) (beginning on page 21).

Thank you for considering our testimony related to H.B. No. 1439, H.D. 1.



## HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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

Committee: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Bill Number: HB 1439, HD1  
Hearing Date/Time: March 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m.  
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission in **SUPPORT** of HB 1439, HD1, Making Appropriations for Public Employment Cost Items

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission ("Commission") **supports** HB 1439 HD1, which makes appropriations for public employment cost items and cost adjustments for legislative employees (including employees of the Commission).

The Commission's mission is to preserve public confidence in government by promoting high ethical standards among public servants. The Commission administers the State Ethics Code and Lobbyist Law (Haw. Rev. Stat. chapters 84 and 97). For purposes of the ethics code, the Commission has jurisdiction over approximately 60,000 state officials and employees. Under the lobbyist law, the Commission has jurisdiction over nearly 500 lobbyists representing more than 400 organizations that lobby the state legislature or executive branch.

In 2024, the Commission's modest staff of 12 employees responded to 1,079 requests for advice from state legislators, state employees, lobbyists, members of the public, and candidates for state elected office. Commission staff successfully engaged 15,506 participants in a mandatory ethics training course, raising the total percentage of state employees who underwent ethics training to over 90%. Further, Commission staff addressed 424 complaints related to violations of the ethics code and lobbyist law, representing a 552% increase in total complaints over five years. In essence, the Commission effectively fulfills its Constitutional mandate, mainly owing to the dedication and commitment of its staff.

Consequently, the Commission strongly supports ensuring its employees are adequately compensated, particularly when compared to similarly situated employees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 1439 HD1.

Very truly yours,

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