



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 10:01 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

By

Michelle D. Acosta

Deputy Chief Court Administrator

First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 395, HD1, SD1, Relating to Jury Duty.

Purpose: Increases the amount each juror or prospective juror is paid for each day of actual attendance at court. Appropriates moneys.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary strongly supports this bill, which is part of the Judiciary's 2025 legislative package. This bill proposes to increase juror compensation from a fixed flat rate of \$30 to \$50 per day.

Juror compensation was last increased in 1989 from \$20 to \$30 per day. Since that time, the cost of living in the State of Hawai‘i has drastically increased. While juror compensation is not meant to serve as a substitute for wages, raising the daily rate would provide some relief for those who serve this important civic duty.

By comparison, jurors who serve in the United States District Court, receive \$50 per day. The National Center for State Courts recommends that at the very least, state courts should review compensation rates in relation to the prevailing federal rate.¹

¹ Center for Jury Studies, National Center for State Courts, Juror Compensation in the United States, (April 2022).



House Bill No. 395, HD1, SD1, Relating to Jury Duty
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Page 2

An increase in juror compensation helps ensure a diverse jury pool by allowing people from varying socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in the judicial system. It further acknowledges the sacrifice our citizenry makes to serve on a jury and shows the state's appreciation for such service.

Any increase to the juror pay rate would require commensurate annual funding by the Legislature. We therefore also ask that the requested appropriation be supported by the Legislature and that any additional funding not supplant the Judiciary's other existing funding and budget requests.

The Judiciary respectfully requests an effective date of July 1, 2025.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 395, HD1, SD1.



Committee on Waya and Means
Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki

April 2, 2025, 10:01 am, CR 211 via Videoconference
HB 395 HD1 - Relating to Jury Duty

TESTIMONY

Stephen Munkelt, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

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

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports BILL NUMBER HB 395 HD1

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii **SUPPORTS HB 395 HD1** which will raise the fees for citizens serving jury duty from \$30/day to \$50/day. This bill is part of the Judiciary package and is also supported by the Public Defender, the Honolulu Prosecutor, and the Hawaii State Bar Association. These pillars of the justice system all recognize the value of juries and the need for increased financial support to make it possible for a cross-section of the community to serve.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii advocates for a justice system that is equitable, effective, just, and that fosters public trust in the courts and the law. Our founding fathers placed the right to jury trial in the Constitution as a check on government power and secrecy in criminal cases, and to add the voice of the community to the resolution of civil cases. Experience over more than 200 years has shown the wisdom of their plan.

Very few people who receive a summons to jury duty are excited to serve. Most may wonder how much it will cost them in lost wages or opportunities, or how many days it will disrupt their normal routine. Paying a daily fee for their service is an acknowledgement of the important role they are playing and defrays the costs they incur. The fee was set at \$30 in 1989. Inflation since that year has been 115% making the proposed adjustment to \$50/day quite reasonable. It will undoubtedly serve to improve the response to jury summonses, with more people from more diverse backgrounds able and willing to serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 395.

Stephen Munkelt
Legislative Committee

TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Ways & Means
Hearing: Wednesday, April 2, 2025

TO: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

FROM: Mark M. Murakami, HSBA President

RE: HB 395, SD1 - RELATING TO JURY DUTY

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide **STRONG SUPPORT** for HB 395, SD1 which would increase the amount each juror or prospective juror is paid for each day of actual attendance at court for that juror's service. Currently, jurors only receive \$30 per actual day in service, which is not extremely low as appreciation for a jurors' service. We strongly urge the court to raise this fee to \$50 per day to provide some additional compensation for jurors.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony in support.

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HB-395-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 1:54:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-395-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 7:58:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure, jury duty is necessary for a functioning democracy and the current compensation rate means people lose money by sitting on juries.

Kevin Faccenda, Honolulu