



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

By
Michelle D. Acosta
Deputy Chief Court Administrator
First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 395, 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).



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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.

The increase 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.

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

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**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawai'i to the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

January 30, 2025

H.B. 395: RELATING TO JURY DUTY

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender **supports H.B. 395:**

The Office of the Public Defender submits that there is a need to increase the compensation to the public for jury duty service. The increase from \$30 to \$50 is an acknowledgment that participation as a juror is a valuable and honored service to our communities and to the administration of justice. Jurors are the backbone of the constitutionally protected right to a jury trial in the criminal courts. It is understood that the fee is nominal. However, this increase helps offset the time away from work and family that our dedicated jurors spend participating in the administration of justice.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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THE HONORABLE, CHAIR DAVID A. TARNAS
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawai'i

January 30, 2025

RE: H.B. 395; RELATING TO JURY DUTY.

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in support of H.B. 395.

The Department supports this bill to encourage members of the public to engage in jury duty. Increasing the amount that a member of the public receives to participate in this very important aspect of civil duty is important to ensure that jury trials move forward and are not postponed due to a lack of jurors.

For the above reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu supports the passage of S.B. 261. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



TESTIMONY

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing: Tuesday, January 30, 2025 (2:00 PM)

TO: Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

FROM: Mark M. Murakami, HSBA President

RE: HB 395 - RELATING TO JURY DUTY

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The Hawaii State Bar Association ("HSBA") appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 395, 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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