



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 9:15 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

By

Michelle D. Acosta

Deputy Chief Court Administrator

First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 261, 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 Senate Bill No. 261.

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**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawai'i to the Senate Committee on Judiciary**

January 28, 2025

S.B. 261: RELATING TO JURY DUTY

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender **supports S.B. 261:**

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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January 23, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON**

**SB 261, RELATING TO JURY DUTY,
SB 262, RELATING TO PROSPECTIVE JURORS,
SB 263, RELATING TO COMPENSATION FOR COURT-APPOINTED COUNSEL,
SB 264, RELATING TO THE EXAMINATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS,
SB 265, RELATING TO COMPENSATION FOR COURT-APPOINTED
REPRESENTATION,
SB 266, RELATING TO DISTRICT COURT JUDGES, AND
SB 267, RELATING TO DISTRICT COURT JUDGES
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Tuesday, January 28, 2025
9:15 a.m.
Conference Room 016
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 261, Relating to Jury Duty, SB 262, Relating to Prospective Jurors, SB 263, Relating to Compensation For Court-Appointed Counsel, SB 264, Relating to The Examination of Criminal Defendants, SB 265, Relating to Compensation for Court-Appointed Representation, SB 266, Relating to District Court Judges, and SB 267, Relating to District Court Judges. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of SB 261, SB 262, SB 263, SB 264, SB 265, SB 266, and SB 267, which would greatly affect the Kaua'i community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 261, SB 262, SB 263, SB 264, SB 265, SB 266, and SB 267. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AAO:slr

TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Hearing: Tuesday January 28, 2025 (9:15 a.m.)

TO: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

FROM: Mark M. Murakami, HSBA President

RE: Senate Bill No. 261 - RELATING TO JURY DUTY

Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, the Hawaii State Bar Association ("HSBA") appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Senate Bill No. 261.

The Hawaii State Bar Association wholeheartedly endorses Senate Bill No. 261, 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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SB-261

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:22:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 1/28/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Serving on a jury is both an honor and a sacrifice. Being the most important part of the justice system is an honor, but the time away is a big sacrifice. People will miss out on days or weeks of work, which means they will miss opportunities to provide for themselves or their families. I support this because it will incentivize people to follow through on jury duty and not seek ways to get out of it. If I have any complaints, I think the pay should increased even further. At least 100 dollars a day, or have it equivalent to a day's work under minimum wage laws. Either way I support this bill