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## Written Comments

### **SB2567**

### **RELATING TO GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

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Presented to the Senate Committee on Government Operations

Tuesday, January 28, 2020, 2:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 225

Chair Thielen and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon Chair Thielen and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on S.B. No. 2567, Relating to Government Accountability.

The purpose of this measure is to require the following:

- (1) That the appropriate receiving elective officer of each chamber of the Legislature promptly notify the Legislative Reference Bureau of the receipt of any report required by law to be submitted to the Legislature or requested by legislative concurrent resolution;
- (2) That the Legislative Reference Bureau develop a spreadsheet informing members of the Legislature on the status and subject of all reports to be submitted to the Legislature as required by law or requested by legislative concurrent resolution;
- (3) That the Legislative Reference Bureau inform the Legislature of all annual and other reports required by law to be submitted to the Legislature or requested by legislative concurrent resolution that were not timely submitted; and

- (4) That governmental agencies that submit reports include certain information in their reports to facilitate the Legislative Reference Bureau's timely reporting of the submission of those reports.

The measure also requires the Bureau to make the spreadsheet available to all members of the Legislature after the 45-day veto override period has elapsed and to update and resubmit the spreadsheet to the Legislature by the first day of each Regular Session. The measure then requires the Bureau to notify the Legislature, no later than 10 days after the convening of each session, of all required reports that were not timely submitted.

The Bureau takes no position on this measure, but submits the following comments for your consideration.

The Bureau has done an approximate compilation of existing reporting requirements that are required pursuant to the Hawaii Revised Statutes or the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, on a permanent, ongoing basis, and has found that state agencies are statutorily required to provide approximately 361 reports to the Legislature each year, not including any reports required or requested for a finite period of time that may be contained in a session law or resolution.

The Bureau would like to note that, since 1997, within approximately two weeks after each Regular Session concludes, the Bureau's Systems Office (LRBSO) has been providing the Legislature with a report that identifies and describes all legislation that was either passed or adopted during the immediately preceding Regular Session and that requires or requests a report back to the Legislature. This report already includes much of the information required in the measure, except that the measure would also require other information such as:

- (1) The Act number of the bill requiring the report. (We note that the LRBSO report has generally referred to bill numbers, as it has historically been published *prior to the elapsing of the 45 day time period* that the Governor has to veto a bill that was passed by the Legislature less than 10 days prior to the end of a Regular Session);
- (2) The amount of money appropriated for the compilation of the report or for the study that was the basis for the report; and
- (3) The date upon which the Legislature received the required report.

This report, as well as previous years' reports back to 1998, are available year-round as a spreadsheet on the Bureau's website at <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/publications/session-reports>.

The Bureau sees no obstacle in editing and reissuing this report again *after the 45-day veto override time period has elapsed* so that act numbers can be included. However, as Bureau staff are extremely busy prior to and during session with bill drafting and preparing other legislative documents, we would ask the Committee to consider consolidating the

reporting requirements due on the first day and the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each regular session, so that the Bureau is only required to provide one updated report, no later than the 10 days after session convenes, that *includes* the information identifying reports not timely filed.

With this amendment, the Bureau believes that the services requested under this measure are manageable and that the Bureau will be able to provide the services in the time allotted; provided that all submitting agencies timely provide the information identified in sections 2, 3, and 4 of the measure.

The Bureau notes that another option for keeping the members informed of the status of legislative reports would be the creation of a database of legislative reports on the Legislative Reference Bureau website. Over the interim, the Bureau launched a new, redesigned website to house its studies and other publications. This new website would offer an excellent platform for accessing an organized and updated database of agency reports. A trackable database of agency reports would improve accountability by offering a quick reference of reports that have been submitted and those that remain due. However, if the Legislature wishes to proceed in this manner, the Bureau would require a separate appropriation to contract for the design and programming of the database and the integration of the database into the existing Bureau website.

Thank you again for your consideration.