

**HB2003**

**HD3**

**LATE**



Hawaii  
**COMMON CAUSE**  
*Holding Power Accountable*

**LATE**

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**Senate JGO Committee**  
**Wednesday 3/24/10 at 9:30AM in Room 016**  
**HB2003 HD3**

**TESTIMONY**

Nikki Love, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Committee Members:

I would like to submit **comments regarding HB2003 HD3.**

There have been several campaign finance bills so far this session, including HB2003, HB2004, SB 2251 and SB2252. Now, the only campaign finance measure still alive is this one, HB2003 HD3.

In collaboration with other citizen groups, we have pinpointed several priority topics in this session's campaign finance bills. We urge the Committee to address these important issues in HB2003, so that we can be sure to maintain good existing laws and incorporate much-needed clarifications. Our priority topics are as follows:

- ***Limit Corporate Donations to Candidates.*** Establish a ban or low aggregate limit on money transferred from a corporation's treasury to its noncandidate committee. Although the recent Supreme Court decision allows corporations and unions to spend freely on independent expenditures (e.g., advertising), the court did NOT overturn the federal ban on corporate donations given directly to candidates. Given these details, the Hawaii legislature can and should insert a ban or low limit on corporate contributions to candidates.
  - HB2003 HD3 includes an aggregate per-election limit of \$1,000 from a person to a noncandidate committee, but we ask that additional language be inserted to ensure corporate donations are subject to the limit.
- ***Ensure Transparency for Any Corporate Donations.*** If the legislature decides to permit corporations to make contributions to candidates, it must be done through a noncandidate committee and subject to proper reporting. It is essential to have thorough, transparent reporting of these political donations from business interests.
  - In HB2003 HD3, this important provision is missing and we ask the Committee to reinsert it.
- ***Keep Our Pay-To-Play Law Intact.*** Back in 2005, in response to concerns about ties between lucrative contracts and political donations, the legislature enacted an important law that prohibited government contractors from donating to campaigns. This existing law is clear and simple, and should be maintained.
  - In HB2003 HD3, this language is included. We ask the Committee to keep this provision intact.

- ***Policy of Transparency and Integrity.*** The Campaign Spending Commission’s original bill included language for a “Declaration of Policy” that specified the purpose of the law is to ensure the integrity and transparency, and that any ambiguity in the law shall be construed in favor of transparency.
  - In HB2003 HD3, this language is included. We ask the Committee to keep this provision intact.
- ***Mainland Contributions.*** The current law includes a 20% limit on out-of-state contributions. This law encourages candidates to focus on raising funds from their own districts and our own state. Increasing this cap would encourage the influx of campaign money from special interests on the mainland.
  - In HB2003 HD3, this limit is raised to 30%. We ask that the language be reverted back to the existing law.
- ***Campaign Fund Uses/Donations to Schools & Libraries.*** Currently, candidates are allowed to donate a limited amount from their campaign funds to community groups. Limits on these donations to community groups were put in place in an attempt to level the playing field and in response to past abuses. These donations have been described as “seeding the community” with small, but highly visible, contributions. Now, proposed language would allow additional donations to schools and libraries. Funding for schools and libraries should be addressed through sound public policy or by philanthropy—not from campaign coffers.
  - HB2003 HD3 allows candidates to donate additional campaign funds to schools and libraries. We ask that the language be reverted back to the existing law.

We believe the items above are critical components to strengthen our campaign finance law, ensure transparency and disclosure for the public, and curb the mounting influence of money in politics.

Thank you for taking up this important topic, and mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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**From:** lewis@grasscommons.org  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 4:33 PM  
**Cc:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Clean Up Campaign Laws!

**LATE**

Search returned no results

Lewis Hoffman

[lewis@grasscommons.org](mailto:lewis@grasscommons.org)

445 Dover St

Lakewood, CO 80226

Tuesday, March 23, 2010 07:32 PM PDT

Search returned no results

Search returned no results

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Committee Members: I am writing to submit comments on HB2003 HD3 for the Senate JGO hearing 3/24/10 at 9:30 a.m. In the wake of the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v. FEC, I am extremely concerned about the integrity of our democratic process. I urge you to address the public's growing concern about the undue influence of money in our political system. Please take this opportunity to revitalize, not degrade, Hawaii's campaign finance laws. I urge you to include the following in HB2003: 1) Limit Corporate Donations to Candidates. Establish a ban or low aggregate limit on money transferred from a corporation's treasury to its PAC. 2) Ensure Transparency for Corporate Donations. Require corporations to make all donations through a PAC and subject to proper reporting, 3) Keep Our Pay-To-Play Law Intact. Maintain the existing prohibition on government contractors from donating to campaigns. 4) Policy of Transparency and Integrity. Keep the Campaign Spending Commission's recommended language that specifies the purpose of the law is to ensure the integrity and transparency, and that any ambiguity be construed in favor of transparency. 5) Mainland Contributions. Maintain the current 20% limit, so that candidates focus on raising funds from their own districts and in our own state. 6) Maintain Existing Restrictions on Donations from Campaign Funds. Campaign funds should not be used for seeding the community. The existing restrictions help prevent abuses and level the playing field for all candidates. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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**From:** Jennifer Milholen [milholen.jennifer@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 4:53 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB2003 HD3 - Wed 3/24/10 at 9:30AM in Room 016

**LATE**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Committee Members:

I am writing to submit comments on HB2003 HD3.

I urge you to address the public's growing concern about the undue influence of money in our political system. Please take this opportunity to revitalize, not degrade, Hawaii's campaign finance laws.

Toward this end, I urge you to include the following in HB2003:

- 1) Ensure Transparency for Corporate Donations. Require corporations to make all donations through a PAC and subject to proper reporting
- 2) Limit Corporate Donations to Candidates. Establish a ban or low aggregate limit on money transferred from a corporation's treasury to its PAC.
- 3) Keep Our Pay-To-Play Law Intact. Maintain the existing prohibition on government contractors from donating to campaigns.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Jennifer Milholen  
Kaimuki  
Sustainable UH & DBEDT

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**From:** James Koshiba [james@kanuhawaii.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 9:50 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB2003 HD3 - Hearing, 3/24/10, 9:30AM in Room 016

**LATE**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Committee Members:

Kanu Hawai'i is a movement for sustainable, compassionate, self-reliant island communities with members who start with a personal commitment to "be the change" they seek. We have nearly 10,000 members from every populated island and every zip code in Hawai'i with the exception of Ni'ihau.

Since the start of the 2010 Legislative Session, more than 400 of our members have been following a handful of bills together, including HB2003. These members come from across the islands, range in age from middle school students to senior citizens, and represent all walks of life. Members have actively discussed, and voted their opinion on HB2003 and the issues it addresses. We invite you to view the ongoing voting and discussion of 8 issues/bills at <http://www.kanuhawaii.org/campaigns/details/?id=8>.

We are writing to comment on HB2003. This testimony is based upon online and offline voting and discussion. The vast majority of votes cast by members on campaign finance issues have been in favor of the following position, however we do not claim to speak on behalf of all Kanu members

To effectively keep money out of politics, we believe the bill must include three important provisions:

1) Keep Our "Pay-To-Play" Law Intact. Back in 2005, in response to concerns about ties between contracts and political donations, the legislature passed a law prohibiting government contractors from donating to campaigns. Throughout this session, lawmakers have tried to remove or water down this part of the law. We believe the existing prohibition should be maintained.

2) Limit Corporate Donations to Candidates. A recent Supreme Court decision allows corporations and unions to spend freely on independent expenditures (e.g., political advertising). However, the court did not overturn bans on corporate donations given directly to candidates. The Legislature has attempted to increase or remove this limit throughout the session. In contrast, we believe the law should establish a ban or low limit on money transferred from a corporation's treasury to its PAC.

3) Ensure Transparency for Corporate Donations. The bill should require corporations to make all donations through a Political Action Committee, subject to proper reporting. Without this rule, corporate donations will be difficult to keep track of.

We are some of the Kanu Hawai'i members who feel strongly about this issue. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Adam Chang  
Andrea Dean  
Arlene K. Matsubara  
Barbara Mearns  
Cori Simonsen  
Duane Preble  
Erin Reyes  
Fawn Koopman

Fran Orian  
Greg Farstrup  
James Koshiba  
James Koshiba  
Jason K. Ellinwood  
John Maurer  
Julia Marrack  
Justin D'Olier  
Karen Shishido  
Kawika Liu  
Kylee Pomaika'i Omo  
Malia Preza  
Michael Kramer  
Olin Lagon  
Paul Berry  
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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 10:29 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** merway@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2003 on 3/24/2010 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

Testimony for JGO 3/24/2010 9:30:00 AM HB2003

Conference room: 016  
Testifier position: comments only  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Marjorie Erway  
Organization: Individual  
Address: PO Box 2807 Kailua Kona, HI  
Phone: 808-324-4624  
E-mail: [merway@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:merway@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 3/23/2010

**Comments:**

Legislators are lawmakers and not philanthropists. It is inappropriate to let them buy votes with political contributions.

This bill also raises the out-of-state campaign contribution limit to 30%. That's too high. It opens our lawmakers to influence by out-of-state special interests, not our needs.

Please support a really good bill -- not watered down with escapes.



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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 24, 2010 9:24 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** shannonkona@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2003 on 3/24/2010 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

Testimony for JGO 3/24/2010 9:30:00 AM HB2003

Conference room: 016  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Shannon Rudolph  
Organization: Individual  
Address: P. O. 243 Holualoa  
Phone: 808-322-6604  
E-mail: [shannonkona@gmail.com](mailto:shannonkona@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/24/2010

**Comments:**

This bill raises the out-of-state campaign contribution limit to 30%. That's too high. It opens our lawmakers to influence by out-of-state special interests, not our needs. Please kill this bill.

**From:** Tamara Paltin [tampaltin@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 24, 2010 2:55 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB2003 HD3 - Wed 3/24/10 at 9:30AM in Room 016

**LATE**

Subject: HB2003 HD3 - Wed 3/24/10 at 9:30AM in Room 016

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Committee Members:

I am writing to submit comments on HB2003 HD3.

I urge you to address the public's growing concern about the undue influence of money in our political system. Please take this opportunity to revitalize, not degrade, Hawaii's campaign finance laws.

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- 2) Limit Corporate Donations to Candidates. Establish a ban or low aggregate limit on money transferred from a corporation's treasury to its PAC.
- 3) Keep Our Pay-To-Play Law Intact. Maintain the existing prohibition on government contractors from donating to campaigns.

Political corruption hurts everyone, if people do not believe their voices, actions have been heard, if they feel that corporations and big money hold the power, they will not participate. Government is meant to be of, for and by the people, not corporation\$, if the people are taken out of the equation, the next step is anarchy or revolution, history is full of examples. Please ensure the process works for living breathing people and not corporations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.  
Tamara Paltin  
4790 L. Honoapiilani Rd  
Lahaina, HI 96761  
808-870-0052