



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
www.hawaii.gov/elections

SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2113
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

January 26, 2016

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2113. This bill allows absentee ballots to be processed and counted prior to election day, to address the significant increase in absentee voting.

In recent years, the number of ballots cast by mail or at an absentee walk location has increased to over half of the total ballots cast. Currently, all of the processing and counting of mail ballots occur on election day. This bill emulates processes and procedures of election by mail jurisdictions to address the continuing increase in the number of absentee mail ballots.

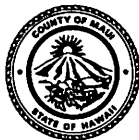
Each voter requesting an absentee mail ballot is provided 1) a ballot ; 2) a secret ballot envelope for the ballot; and 3) a return ballot envelope that is to be signed by the voter and that will contain the secret ballot envelope. The bill proposes that the signature validation and opening of the outer return envelope be permitted to occur as ballots are received by the county clerks, with official observers able to be present during that time frame. The internal secret ballot envelope would remain sealed within the return envelope, and the ballots stored in a secured container.

Beginning on the fifteenth day prior to the election, election officials could begin to remove the secret ballot envelopes from the return envelopes, open the secret ballot envelopes, remove the ballots, and scan the ballots through the vote

counting equipment. Again, official observers would be authorized to be present during this process. No person present during the counting would be permitted to disclose any information concerning how voters voted on a particular contest or question and results will not be produced or distributed until close of polls on election day.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2113.

DANNY A. MATEO
County Clerk



JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Deputy County Clerk

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov/county/clerk

TESTIMONY OF DANNY A. MATEO

COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF MAUI

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

ON SENATE BILL NO. 2113

RELATING TO ELECTIONS

JANUARY 26, 2016

Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No, 2113. The purpose of this bill allows absentee ballots to be processed and counted prior to election day, to address the significant increase in absentee voting.

The number of ballots cast by an absentee ballot has increased over the last few years. Currently all of the processing and counting of mail ballots takes place on election day. This bill addresses the continuing increase in number of absentee mail ballots similar to procedures in elections by mail jurisdictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2113.



**ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101
LĪHU'E, KAUA'I, HAWAII 96766-1819

January 26, 2016

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT K. SATO
DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2113
RELATING TO ELECTIONS**

Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2113. This Bill would allow for the pre-Election Day opening of voted absentee mail ballot envelopes following signature verification. Additionally, the Bill would authorize the counting of valid absentee mail ballots beginning no earlier than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the election but continue to prohibit the release of any election results until all polls have closed statewide.

The popularity of absentee mail voting is growing with each election, but the amount of time allotted for scanning (counting) the increasing number of mail ballots remains static. This current model places a huge strain on both the volunteers needed to manually separate voted ballots from ballot return envelopes and election personnel operating ballot counting equipment, and will soon approach a point where it will no longer be possible to count all absentee mail ballots in a single day.

This Bill is a proactive measure that will spread work required to prepare and count absentee mail ballots over several days rather than continuing to compress the entire process into a single day as is currently the case.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2113.

SCOTT K. SATO
Deputy County Clerk, County of Kaua'i



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SENATE JUDICIARY AND LABOR COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, January 26, 2016, 9:00 A.M., Room 016
Sb 2113 RELATING TO ELECTIONS

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Co-Chair, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair Shimabukuro, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB 2113 which provides that preparation of absentee ballots could begin the day after ballots are transmitted to voters and continue through election day. Likewise, the bill calls for counting of ballots to begin no earlier than fifteen days prior to an election, and prohibits people present during the counting from disclosing results.

We believe preparing ballots earlier and counting ballots earlier is appropriate as it will allow for the timely processing of thousands of ballots that will be received by mail. The procedures outlined for preparing ballots and for accounting ballots are clear.

We urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.