



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE  
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
[www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://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. 2296  
RELATING TO ELECTIONS**

February 2, 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. 2296. The purpose of this bill is to authorize all-mail elections.

We believe the transition to all-mail elections will encourage voter turnout, streamline the administration of elections, and result in cost savings. Currently, elections consist of three systems: (1) absentee walk locations; (2) election day polling places; and (3) absentee mail. The vast majority of voters either vote at election day polling places or by absentee mail. As such, we believe it would be more efficient to focus our resources on absentee mail, with a significantly smaller election day presence limited to voters obtaining a replacement ballot package, or voting on a direct recording electronic voting machine; as well as some minor variation on the current absentee walk component. We have the following technical concerns regarding the bill.

We are concerned that the establishment of approximately 40 voter service centers that will be open from the tenth day prior to the election will replicate our current staffing issues. Additionally, this bill would require that voter service centers operate on Molokai, Lanai, and Niihau during this time period, which would be very difficult to operationally accomplish.

For comparison purposes, it should be noted that the City and County of Honolulu currently operates two absentee walk sites, while the largest county in Oregon is only required to have one site at their county building. This bill would require the City and County of Honolulu to establish 25 locations.

Similarly, while a ballot would be mailed to every registered voter and 40 voter service centers would be created, Section 6 of the bill appears to require one or more precincts within each representative districts (i.e., a minimum of 51 election day polling places). Additionally, Section 6 of the bill appears to envision the establishment of places of deposit that will operate immediately upon the mailing of ballots.

While on its face these are not objectionable attempts to expand voting opportunities, the administrative realities are that it would be difficult to consistently find available facilities to serve as voter service centers and places of deposit, in addition to the normal difficulties of staffing election day polling places. The County of Maui last year, testifying on a similar bill, noted difficulties with not only with finding voter service center locations but also with obtaining appropriate staffing.

The establishment of voter service centers in the counties presents logistical and staffing issues. As an example, the Office of the County Clerk, County of Maui, tried to establish an absentee walk site on Lanai for the 2014 Primary and General Elections. Although print and radio advertising was done to hire for the new absentee walk site, our office did not even receive three applications, the minimum amount of individuals required to staff an absentee walk site.

Our office consistently faces challenges in hiring for polling sites on election days, even though the volunteers would only be required to work the polling site for one full day. Finding qualified volunteers to work for ten days at six voter service centers around the County would present significant challenges. Most of our current polling place workers are comprised of teachers, students, retirees and other individuals who normally have election days off.

Finding locations that could accommodate the voter service centers for ten days on both the Primary and General Elections would prove challenging. Changing locations between the Primary and General Elections would create confusion and frustration amongst voters, and utilizing public locations, such as schools or community centers, for these functions would displace local community groups and residents who regularly utilize these facilities.

Testimony of Danny A. Mateo, Clerk of the County of Maui, House Committee on Judiciary, House Bill No. 124 (February 17, 2015)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2296.

# TESTIMONY

**The Libertarian Party of Hawaii  
c/o 1658 Liholiho St #205  
Honolulu, HI 96822**

RE: SB 2296 to be heard Tuesday February 2, at 9AM in conference room 016

## **OPPOSE**

To the Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary"

Currently voters have a choice to vote at the polls on election-day or by absentee mail in or walk in. This bill seeks to eliminate the most popular choice. Why annoy hundreds of thousands of voters who have shown by their behavior how they prefer to vote? Have you forgotten the van cams wherein the legislature thought forcing hundreds of thousands of drivers to obey our speed limits despite the clear knowledge that they didn't want to was a smart idea.

From a practical stand point mail in voting creates several problems. Not the least of which being the privacy of voting can no longer be assured. Nor can it be certain that the votes were cast by the voters indicated. Voters can be made subject to manipulation by persons from some group they belong to who sends representatives to their home to "assist them with the voting." Family members can also abuse the process. With fewer voting choices many of the people who now vote at the polls may stop voting.

I am sure there are do-gooders who think this is a wonderful idea. They will show charts and graphs and other stuff. I ask you to consider the people in your district who prefer to vote the old fashioned way and if you feel compelling them to do something different is what they elected you for.

Sincerely:



Tracy Ryan, Chair

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDL Testimony](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2296 on Feb 2, 2016 09:00AM\*  
**Date:** Friday, January 29, 2016 3:07:43 AM

---

**SB2296**

Submitted on: 1/29/2016

Testimony for JDL on Feb 2, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Smart	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)