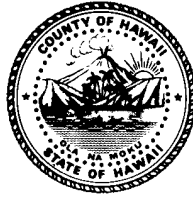


STEWART MAEDA
County Clerk



JON HENRICKS
Deputy County Clerk

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Elections Division
County of Hawai'i
Hawai'i County Building
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

TESTIMONY OF STEWART MAEDA

COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF HAWAII

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

ON SENATE BILL NO. 287, SENATE DRAFT 1

RELATING TO ELECTIONS

FEBRUARY 27, 2015

Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No 287, SD 1. The bill proposes to establish elections by mail for all elections in a county with a population of less than 100,000 beginning with the 2016 Primary Election, and for all elections statewide beginning with the 2018 Election.

The Office of the County Clerk, County of Hawai'i supports all mail elections, but would like to provide comments on Bill No. 287.

The bill raises questions as to the differences between an absentee mail ballot and a permanent absentee ballot since all voters will be mailed an election-by-mail package. The intent of the bill is to provide all registered voters an election-by-mail package this would also include all permanent absentee voters. A difference would arise when a voter requests that their ballot be mailed to an address other than their permanent mailing address. We would suggest that all ballot packages automatically be mailed to the mailing address contained in a voter's registration record, unless an application is submitted requesting the package be mailed to an alternate address.

All voters are provided with a pre-paid return envelope for their absentee mail ballot. Post Offices are conveniently located throughout the county. The post office also provides numerous mail receptacles in many locations (i.e. shopping malls, government buildings, banks, etc.). This should serve as places of deposit. In addition voters may deposit ballots at the Office of the County Clerk.

February 27, 2015

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We agree with the centralize processing and tabulation of ballots. We recommend each county be represented by Official Observers and County Election Officials.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 287.