

SCOTT T. NAGO CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF ELECTIONS 802 LEHUA AVENUE PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782 elections.hawaii.gov

#### TESTIMONY OF THE

#### CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

#### TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

#### ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1290

#### RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION

February 10, 2017

Chair Aquino and members of the House Committee on Transportation, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1290. The purpose of this bill is to require an applicant for a driver's license or civil identification card to choose to register to vote or not before their application is processed.

The Office of Elections believes that this bill will increase the opportunities for members of our community to register to vote, as it requires the applicant to directly address the question of whether they wish to be automatically registered to vote or to opt out as part of the driver's license and state identification card application process.

Additionally, this bill ensures the accuracy of the voter registration rolls by electronically transmitting voter registration data between the driver licensing/state identification card database and the statewide voter registration system. This includes the ability to update the voter file based on updates to the driver's license/state identification card file, such as name or address change. The electronic sharing of data between driver licensing officials and election officials will help to ensure timely compliance with the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act. 52 USC § 21083(a)(5)(B) & 52 USC § 20504.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1290.

Harry Kim Mayor



Collins Tomei Director

Deanna S. Sako Deputy Director



Finance Department 25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2103 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 (808) 961-8234 • Fax (808) 961-8569

## Testimony of the County of Hawaii Director of Finance Opposing H B 1290 Relating to Voter Registration

The Director of Finance, County of Hawaii provides the following comment on H.B. 1290, as it pertains to the voter registration application form. This law becomes effective "upon its approval", this is not sufficient time to design an application that is acceptable to all parties involved. We request an effective date of one year from date of approval.

For further assistance, please contact Naomi O'Dell, Vehicle Registration & Licensing Administrator at (808) 961-8021.

Collins Tomei Director of Finance County of Hawaii JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4800 TTY: (808) 241-5116



SCOTT K. SATO Deputy County Clerk

Facsimile: (808) 241-6207 E-mail: elections@kauai.gov

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

# TESTIMONY OF JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1290 RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION February 10, 2017

Dear Chair Aquino and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill No. 1290. This Bill would make a voter registration application affidavit a mandatory part of all driver's license and identification card applications, and would require the sharing of information among the counties, Department of Transportation, and election personnel.

Incorporating a voter registration application into all driver's license and identification card applications, and establishing an affirmative opt-out automatic voter registration process will create a seamless and much more convenient process, and will eliminate another impediment that hinders participation in Hawai'i's elections.

Providing for the electronic transfer of voter registration information ensures that the respective election officials receive voter data in a timely manner and reduces data entry errors, thereby increasing the overall integrity of the voter file.

We wish to thank the Legislature for hearing this Bill and respectfully request support of this measure. Additionally, please feel free to contact the County of Kaua'i's Elections Division if we can assist in clarifying issues pertaining to automatic voter registration, the electronic transmission of voter data, or related matters.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill No. 1290.

JADE K. POUNTAIN-TANIGAWA County Clerk, County of Kaua'i



House Transportation Committee Chair Henry Aquino, Vice Chair Sean Quinlan

02/10/2017 at 10:00AM in Room 423 HB1290 – Relating to Voter Registration

TESTIMONY / SUPPORT with COMMENTS Corie Tanida, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Dear Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Quinlan, and committee members:

**Common Cause Hawaii supports HB1290 and offers comments.** Under HB1290 applications for civil identification cards or driver's licenses would not be processed until the applicant declined to register to vote or completed the registration affidavit. HB1290 would also allow for the electronic transfer of voter registration information to county clerks and the statewide voter registration system.

This proposal, commonly known as Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) provides many benefits such as:

- Enhancing the security of our elections. The electronic transfer of data will lead to fewer typos, duplicates, and lost forms, thus our voter rolls will be more accurate and the chances of voter fraud will be reduced.
- The state will save money. States that have upgraded their systems estimate it costs approximately 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application.<sup>1</sup>

In order to ensure that only qualified applicants are registered to vote, we suggest including the following language:

- Every applicant who has a transaction with the DMV will be asked to answer yes or no to the following statements, in aggregate, and in the order specified below. The applicant shall also be informed of the penalties for false statements with regard to voter eligibility. The applicant shall be asked to affirm the following:
  - o I am a United States Citizen
  - I am a resident of Hawaii
  - I am over 18 years old
- If the applicant answers yes
  - He or she will be asked to sign an attestation that such information is true;
- If the applicant answers no to the eligibility question, the registration portion of the transaction ends and answers are not recorded.

Automatic Voter Registration works. Oregon was the first state to implement this system in 2016. Over 270,000 voters were registered via Automatic Voter Registration, of those 42.73% (or 97,184) voted in the 2016 General Election, which helped Oregon set a new state record for number of votes cast.<sup>2</sup>

As a state that consistently ranks last in the nation for voter participation, we commend your consideration of this important step to use existing technology and pathways to improve the process for registering eligible voters.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on HB1290.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Center for Secure and Modern Elections. (2016). Modernelections.org.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Oregon Secretary of State. (2016). Oregon Breaks 2 Million Ballots in Nov. 8 General Election, Setting New Record. Retrieved from http://oregonsosblog.us/2016/11/oregon-breaks-2-million-ballots-nov-8-general-election-setting-new-record/

Aloha Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Quinlan, and Members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is James Koshiba and I am writing in support of HB1290. I currently sit on the Advisory Board of Common Cause Hawaii. I am also the past Executive Director of Kanu Hawaii, which, among other things, worked to increase voter registration and turnout in low-turnout and low-income areas across Oahu.

Through this work, I encountered many residents who care deeply about Hawaii, and whose knowledge and lived experience would benefit our democracy. But too many of those people are discouraged from voting by an unnecessarily onerous registration process.

Today, we have the technology readily available to do away with paper forms, which require staff and manual data entry -a costly, time-consuming process, prone to human error. Modernizing our system will lead to increased processing efficiency and accuracy.

Furthermore, states that have switched to electronic systems have reported that it costs about 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application.

Finally, elections will be more secure. Due to the increased accuracy of voter rolls—thanks to real time data transfers, fewer typos, fewer duplicate records, no more lost forms, etc. the chances of voter fraud will be reduced. The use of an encrypted system rather than paper forms to transfer data, will also make our elections more secure.

Privacy is assured, and anyone can choose to opt-out of registration so their information will not be shared with the Office of Elections.

In short, there are several clear, well-researched, and tested reasons to pass HB1290, bring Hawaii's voter registration system into the modern age, and bring as many residents as possible into the democratic fold.

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:43 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	fosters005@hawaii.rr.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

# <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Scott Foster	Hawaii Advocates For Consumer Rights	Support	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.



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813 www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com

#### COMMITTEE ON TRASNPORTATION FRIDAY, February 10, 2017, 10:00 A.M., CONFERENCE ROOM 423

#### HB 1290 RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION

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

Chair Acquino, Vice-Chair Quinlan, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HB 1290 which provides that all applicants who are eligible to vote and apply for a driver's license will be automatically registered to vote (if not already registered to vote) unless the applicant affirmatively declines to register to vote.

This is excellent, much-needed legislation, if Hawaii is to make significant progress in improving its voter turnout. We will not be able to make inroads with voter turnout until we boost the number of persons registered to vote as a percent of those eligible to vote. One recent estimate is that about 36% of those eligible haven't registered.<sup>1</sup> Of course the League acknowledges motivating registered voters to vote also remains a challenge, and we are committed to working on this effort as well.

We are pleased that the actual affidavit for voter registration would be included as a part of these applications, and we like the language of the bill requiring that an applicant either declines to register to vote or completes the application related to voter registration. This should satisfy provisions of the National Voter Registration Act that require an "opt out" clause. Likewise, we support including an application for a permanent absentee ballot, if Hawaii converts to voting by mail this may not be necessary.

The bill makes clear that information from County departments of motor vehicles should be transmitted electronically to the clerk of the county on a real-time basis and permits the counties to electronically share

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Office of Elections, Hawaii registered voters as of 3/9/2016 = 711,518; U.S. Census Bureau Hawaii Voting Eligible Population is 1,111,117, March 2016., <u>https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2016/comm/cb16-</u> <u>tps35\_voting\_hawaii-social.html</u>



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the voter registration data with the statewide voter registration system, so applications to vote can be processed in a timely way.

The bill requires that for voter registration purposes data transmitted to the county clerk would include the digitized signature of the person who wishes to register. The bill also makes clear that databases operated by the counties or department of transportation should be electronically accessible to the statewide voter registration system. Though not the express purpose of this measure we fully expect these steps will also support quality voter registration data.

To us making data processing changes to correspond with this his bill are straightforward, so we are pleased to see that the Act would take effect upon its approval. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION Friday, February 10, 2017 10AM Room 423 In SUPPORT HB1290 Relating to Voter Registration

Aloha Chairman Aquino and members of the Transportation Committee,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i supports HB1290, which seeks to register voters automatically through the driver's license application process.

Since 1968, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i has been working to protect the unique natural and cultural resources of our islands. We know the importance of lowing obstacles to voting in order to ensure a more vibrant democracy.

We urge this Committee to support automatic voter registration because it will save Hawai'i money, ensures more efficient, accurate, and secure records, and improves voter participation.

Automatic voter registration relies on electronic systems that are more efficient, accurate and save money. States that have switched to electronic systems have reported that it costs about 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application.<sup>1</sup> Electronic voter rolls means less typos, fewer duplicate records, and real-time transfers of data between agencies. Due to the increased accuracy of voter rolls, the chances of voter fraud are reduced. The use of an encrypted system rather than paper forms to transfer data, also make our elections more secure. Privacy and the right to choose to participate is assured, as those who do not want to register to vote can opt-out and their information will not be shared with the Office of Elections.

Lowering obstacles to participating in the vote, such as pre-registration, increases voter turnout.<sup>2</sup> According to the Brennan School for Justice at New York University, "automatic registration is a positive step toward engaging a larger portion of the electorate in the democratic process. It can turn the registration system from a barrier to voting to a stronger tool to encourage participation. And it can do so while improving list accuracy, reducing the potential for fraud, and saving states money."

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Mahalo, Marti Townsend Director

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Center for Secure and Modern Elections. (2016). Modernelections.org.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Automatic Voter Registration Boosts Political Participation, (2016) https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/automatic-voter-registration-boosts-political-participation

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Thursday, February 9, 2017 7:36 AM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	808nateyuen@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/9/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
Nathan Yuen	Individual	Support	No	

Comments: I support HB1290. With the number of residents participating in elections at such low rates, policies to encourage citizen participating should be implemented. This bill will see to it that all drivers are registered to vote -- a step in the right direction. Please pass HB1290.

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.

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 10:25 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	333cory@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	No	

Comments: Aloha legislators, Please make voter registration easier for voters and government staff. Gary Hooser reports that: \*States that have switched to electronic systems have reported that it costs about 30 times less to process an electronic application than a paper application. \*Real time data transfers, fewer typos, fewer duplicate records, and no more lost forms, mean more accuracy and less voter fraud. An encrypted system, instead of paper forms, will also make our elections more secure. \*People who do not want to register to vote can opt-out and their information will not be shared with the Office of Elections. mahalo, Cory Harden, Hilo

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 10:15 PM
To:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	christinet54@gmail.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
christine trecker	Individual	Support	No	

Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 8:06 PM
To:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	shannonkona@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM
Categories:	Green Category

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments: YES! STRONGLY SUPPORT!!!!!!!!!

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.

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 7:02 PM
To:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	katc31999@gmail.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*
Categories:	Green Category

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Kat Culina	Individual	Support	No

#### Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 6:28 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	ben@bikesharehawaii.org
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Ben Trevino	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am a resident of ala moana and a strong advocate of open and fair elections and giving all citizens a voice. I strongly support this bill.

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.

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 6:07 PM
To:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	ajf@hawaii.rr.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Alberta J Freidus-Flagg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:52 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	deborah@imaginariums.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Deborah Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support this bill. It seems it will make our election process more accurate and will help to increase voter registration. Thank you!

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.

From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:41 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	slwsurfing@yahoo.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
sharon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:39 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	tulsigreenlee@icloud.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
Tulsi Greenlee	Individual	Support	No	

Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:37 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	hokuokekai50@msn.com
Subject:	*Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM*

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
Mary Lacques	Individual	Support	No	

Comments:

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Wednesday, February 8, 2017 5:24 PM
To:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	lady.flach@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/8/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing	
Teri Heede	Individual	Support	No	

Comments: I work the polls every election. I can't tell you how many voters think they are automatically registered when they get their driver's license and some get MAD when they find out that they are just organ donors ;-) Let's DO this and hopefully INCREASE our abysmal voter turnout!!

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Thursday, February 9, 2017 10:01 AM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	mnye21@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

## <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/9/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Michael Nye	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Any move that encourages engagement and participation in the democratic process is a move forward.

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From:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent:	Thursday, February 9, 2017 2:03 PM
То:	TRNtestimony
Cc:	meacham.hawaii@gmail.com
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/9/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Larry Meacham	Individual	Support	No

Comments: February 9, 2017 Thank you for the opportunity to Offer testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1290. Because of advances in technology, we can now expand and update our voter lists automatically, reduce errors, save money and make it easier to vote. We have the lowest voter turnout rate in the country and anything we can do to make it easier to vote will increase participation and citizen involvement in the process. Also, people can opt out if they wish. This has worked well in Oregon and other states, and we should take advantage of this idea to improve our system. Again, thank you for the the opportunity to offer testimony.

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From: Sent:	mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Thursday, February 9, 2017 11:06 PM	LATE
To:	TRNtestimony	
Cc:	hotyogahilo@gmail.com	
Subject:	Submitted testimony for HB1290 on Feb 10, 2017 1	0:00AM

#### <u>HB1290</u>

Submitted on: 2/9/2017 Testimony for TRN on Feb 10, 2017 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	<b>Testifier Position</b>	Present at Hearing
Shannon	Hot Yoga Hilo	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support this bill, out voter system is outdated. I would like to see fully automated voter registration, voting and possibly entirely mail in voting in the future. I believe this would increase voter participation, as we have the lowest voter turnout in the country. Please pass this bill. Mahalo

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