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STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION


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March 16, 2023

TO: The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director
Campaign Spending Commission 

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 627, Relating to Campaign Finance.**

Friday, March 17, 2023
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports the intent of this bill.

This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-381 by adding a new paragraph to subsection (a) that allows a candidate to use campaign funds to pay for the cost of childcare or vital household dependent care where the care is needed because of the candidate’s participation in campaign activity. Commission staff notes that the payment for care could also be considered as being directly related to the candidate’s campaign.

SB-627

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 10:39:48 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/17/2023 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Louisa Duggan | Vote Mama Foundation | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Louisa Duggan - and I am submitting testimony on behalf of Vote Mama Foundation in strong support of SB627. It is an honor and a privilege to be speaking before you today on a piece of legislation that would benefit everyday caregivers throughout my home state.

Childcare obligations are one of the major factors families consider when weighing their decision to run for office. In many states, it costs more to send an infant to childcare than a mortgage payment. This is not an expense working families can take on - especially when campaigning.

By passing SB627 into law, the Hawaii State Legislature has the opportunity to strengthen access to democracy for everyday parents and caregivers. Addressing the structural barriers, like the cost of childcare, that prohibit working parents from running for and serving in office furthers our notions of good governance and equality. This legislation would advance public trust in how candidates can and do use their campaign funds on expenses directly related to campaign activities.

In 2018, the Federal Election Commission approved federal candidates' option to spend campaign funds on childcare through a unanimous, bipartisan vote.

However, this ruling does not apply to state and local candidates. Vote Mama Foundation is working to approve the use of Campaign Funds for Dependent Care by state and local candidates in all 50 states.

As of today, 28 states, both Democratic and Republican, have brought their state statutes in line with federal regulations. States like Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Montana, Vermont, and Washington all allow for candidates to use their campaign dollars on expanded caregiver expenses to include those for any dependent, just as this bill does.

This is a bipartisan initiative for moms and dads alike. As with any other campaign finance allowance, this bill creates an option for use and is not a mandate - candidates don't have to use campaign funds on caregiving expenses if they don't want to. Even better - this common sense solution is at no cost to taxpayers.

Strengthening access to democracy and making democratic systems more available to all Hawaii residents is a cornerstone of this legislature's values and ideals. I urge the House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee to support SB627 and vote it out of committee as a direct signal to our communities that we value our caregivers' voices and that their voices deserve to be at all levels of government.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I am happy to answer any questions.



To: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: March 17, 2023 2:00 PM
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB627

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and the Members of Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB627 which would allow candidates seeking election to use campaign funds for child care and vital household dependent care costs under certain conditions.

We support this measure because: .

1. Running for office is a full time job without pay.
2. The cost of dependent care in Hawaii is high, and at a time cost prohibitive for candidates that carry caretaker responsibilities.
3. The Federal Election Commission has already ruled in favor of campaign funds for childcare costs.
4. The public should not be deprived of necessary leadership and mothers and families should not be punished.

Please pass this measure so Hawaii can join other 28 states in allowing family caretakers to run for political leadership.

with Aloha,
Younghee Overly
Public Policy Committee, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaula'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for equal opportunities in education, at workplace and for economic security, and in leadership.



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: **SB 627 - Relating to Campaign Finance**
Hawai'i State Capitol and via Videoconference
March 17, 2023, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing **in SUPPORT of SB 627**, which allows candidates seeking election to use campaign funds for child care and vital household dependent care costs under certain conditions.

In 2018, the Federal Elections Commission ruled that congressional candidates could use campaign funds to cover campaign-related child care expenses. Although this decision has since been upheld and a record number of federal candidates have used campaign funds to pay for child care, states still need to make their own determination. Over half the states have taken action and now allow the use of campaign funds to cover campaign-related child care expenses.¹

Passing this bill would allow for all parents to have support for child care while campaigning but it would have an acute impact on women running for state office. Women still provide the majority of caregiving and running for office does not change this. In fact, mothers were much more likely, compared with fathers, to meet the majority of the demands for housework and caregiving during the pandemic.²

This bill would help reduce the barriers that women face when running for office. It is not a coincidence that there are few women with young children elected to office in Hawai'i. The high out of pocket expense of child care should not be a deciding factor when thinking about running for office, but for many women it is.

Having a young family is a barrier to running for office in Hawai'i. For many working parents, most notably mothers, running a campaign without childcare is not feasible.

Mahalo for your consideration of this testimony. Please pass this bill.

Thank you,
Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.votemamafoundation.org/cfcc-where-we-stand>

² <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>



To: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: Friday, March 17, 2023, 2:00 PM
Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 627

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and the Members of Committee,

Members of Hawaii State Democratic Women's Caucus thank you for this opportunity to testify **in SUPPORT of SB 237**, which would allow political candidates to use campaign funds to pay for childcare and vital household dependent care costs under certain conditions.

Women face many hurdles in the political arena. Women are 15 times more likely than men to be responsible for the majority of childcare. If a mother wants to run for office, they are harshly judged for "not focusing on their family." Instead of seizing opportunities in the prime of their professional lives, mothers who would be candidates are inclined to wait until their children are grown before running for office.

Moreover, this proposal would be in keeping with movement on the national level. In 1995, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) granted a request from Louisiana Republican Rep. Jim McCrery to use campaign funds for babysitting while his wife joined him at campaign events. In 2018, a congressional candidate in New York, Grechen Shirley successfully petitioned the FEC to use campaign money for childcare. Drawing on its decision on Rep. McCrery's 1995 request from 23 years earlier, the FEC unanimously granted Shirley's petition.

Since then, dozens of federal candidates, including Republican and Democratic men, have availed themselves of this pro-family change. The idea is now spreading to the states, with at least 11 having enacted similar legislation, and proposals having been introduced in at least 14 others. Hawaii, the state that sent Patsy Mink to Congress – mother of Title IX - should be among the first to pass this legislation.

Furthermore, this is a gender-neutral, non-partisan proposal that will profoundly lighten the burden not only felt by women, but by all caregivers, minorities, and those with low to middle income; which in turn, will increase their representation in elected office. For example, although more than 73% of campaign funds spent on childcare was by female candidates, women only made up 29% of U.S. House candidates and 24% of U.S. Senate candidates in 2022.

The timing for this proposal is certainly ripe. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on not just working mothers, but all parents and caregivers - making clear that child and dependent care is a basic economic issue. This bill would help get candidates - with real lived experience coping with these challenges - into decision-making roles; candidates who understand the need law and policy that will alleviate financial burdens felt by so many.

Sincerely,

Members of the Hawaii State Democratic Women's Caucus

SB-627

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 10:11:22 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/17/2023 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Will Caron | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please support SB627.

SB-627

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 2:14:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/17/2023 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Scott Shedko | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support this bill.