

HB-137-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2023 1:09:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/9/2023 10:00:00 AM

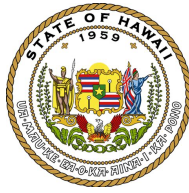
Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Foley	Testifying for Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

As Chair of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct, I support HB 137, HD 1, which would require information in the statement of expenditures reports that lobbyists are required to file with the State Ethics Commission to include the identity, by bill number, resolution number or other similar identifier, of the legislative or administrative action that was commented on, supported by or opposed by the lobbyist filing the statement to increase transparency and expose any potential conflict of interest. See Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct December 1, 2022 Final Report at page 28.

Mahalo, Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)



HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawai'i · Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 · Honolulu, Hawai'i

Committee: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Bill Number: HB 137, HD1
Hearing Date/Time: March 9, 2023, 10:00 am
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission in **SUPPORT** of H.B. 137, HD1, Requiring Lobbyists to Identify Lobbying Matters with Specificity

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission (“Commission”) **supports** H.B. 137, which requires lobbyists to identify the matters they lobbied on with greater specificity than currently required in Haw. Rev. Stat. chapter 97. This measure increases transparency and accountability in the lobbying process by providing more detailed information about the interests being represented and the issues being influenced.

Hawaii’s lobbying laws focus on transparency. This measure furthers that purpose by requiring specific description of the matter that the lobbyist engaged on, versus reporting a broad subject area. This information can be used by policymakers, the public, and other stakeholders to better understand the potential impacts of lobbying activities and to assess the influence of different interest groups on policy decisions.

Benefits of requiring lobbyists to identify lobbying matters with specificity include:

- (1) **Increased transparency.** This measure would increase transparency in the lobbying process and provide greater visibility into the interests being represented.
- (2) **Better decision-making.** Policymakers can make more informed decisions that reflect the needs and concerns of their constituents.
- (3) **Greater public trust.** By promoting greater transparency and accountability in the lobbying process, this policy can help to increase public trust in the political system and in the ability of government to represent the interests of the public.

While this measure may put an additional burden on lobbyists, the net benefit to the public greatly outweighs the burden. While we recognize it may be challenging for lobbyists to track behind-the-scenes conversations with legislators, this is the purpose of lobbying laws: to provide greater transparency, particularly with respect to conversations that occur outside of the public eye.

The Commission is committed to updating its online filing system to try to make this proposed new requirement as simple as possible, such as adding drop down fields or simple selector buttons for each bill or resolution.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 137, HD1.

Very truly yours,

/S/ Robert D. Harris

Robert D. Harris
Executive Director and General Counsel



Committee on Judiciary
Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard

Thursday, March 9, 2023, 10:00 a.m. and Conference Room 016
HB137 — Relating to Lobbyists

TESTIMONY

Judith Wong, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads Tarnas, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports BILL NUMBER HB137

This bill provides for transparency in lobbyists' spending. The requirements of the bill provide for detailed information regarding funds used in lobbying for or against any bills, programs or actions, thus allowing for transparency. This increases public trust.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-137-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/7/2023 12:50:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/9/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is similar to or identical to a recommendation of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct. I attended and participated in most of their meetings. This bill creates transparency.

The public at large wants to know who the influencers in legislation are, who are the "shadow" government behind the legislators, who is really calling or trying to call the shots. Please pass.

Testimony in Support of HB137 HD1

Submitted for: Judiciary Committee Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 3/9/23 at 10:00 AM.

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Greg Misakian and I support HB137 HD1.

This is my first year submitting testimony to the Hawaii Legislature for numerous bills, two of which I co-wrote regarding measures which will provide better consumer protections for condominium owners throughout Hawaii (HB178 and HB1501). What I learned along the way is that the process that is currently in place invites unethical and improper behavior, and without protections in place, including oversight, enforcement, and accountability, Hawaii will never be a fair and democratic state.

I thank those that are working to call out unethical and unlawful behavior, and those who provide measures that help make legislators, lobbyists, developers, and others accountable for their actions.