

**HCR-8**

Submitted on: 3/21/2023 11:56:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/23/2023 2:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                        | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>    |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Daniel oley         | Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct | Support                   | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

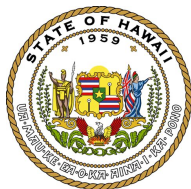
Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary and Hawaii Affairs Committee,

As Chair of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct, I support HCR 8 to urge each county to review its government structure to assess the outcome of past criminal acts and to identify areas of risk that are ripe for potential abuse. See Commission's December 1, 2022 Final Report at page 30.

HCR 8 would also urge each county to consult with state and county resources and personnel in performing the assessment and develop a plan for systematic improvement that will prevent corruption and ethical violations. Id.

The Commission found that improving each county' governmental structure, along with developing independent oversight over executive departments at the county level, will help restore the public's trust in county governments. Id.

Mahalo, Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)



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## HAWAI'I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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

Committee: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Bill Number: HCR 8  
Hearing Date/Time: March 23, 2:00 p.m.  
Re: Testimony of the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission in **SUPPORT** of  
HCR 8, Urging Review of Existing County Governmental Structure

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Ethics Commission (“Commission”) supports HCR 8, which calls upon the county governments to review their systemic governmental structure with a focus on avoiding future corruption and ethical scandals. This resolution is intentionally broad, recognizing a reasonable review could go down several paths. County officials are likely in the best position to determine the most sensible approach.

While the Commission does not wish to be proscriptive, one area of concern is the paucity of staffing support for the county ethic boards on Kauai, Maui, and Hawai'i island. We understand staff support is currently limited to a secretary and an attorney from the county corporation counsel office, both of whom have responsibilities outside of helping the all-volunteer ethics commission.<sup>1</sup> Additional staff capacity would ensure the county ethic commissions could actively provide advice and training to county employees, as well as increase enforcement efforts.

Considering the numerous public corruption cases at both the state and county-level, there is an evident need for systemic change. This resolution encourages the Counties to move forward with this type of review.

Mahalo for your continuing support of the Commission's work and for considering its testimony on HCR 8.

Very truly yours,

/S/ Robert D. Harris  
Executive Director and General Counsel

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/11/county-ethics-watchdogs-need-more-money-to-do-the-job-right-state-panel-says/> (last reviewed on January 27, 2023).

**HCR-8**

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 3:30:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/23/2023 2:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dara Carlin, M.A.   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Stand in Strong Support