
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that removing barriers
2 for persons with voting accessibility needs ensures that all
3 individuals have equal access to the voting process. Existing
4 law requires the state office of elections and each county
5 election office to remove barriers, promoting greater
6 participation in voting by individuals with access needs who may
7 be otherwise excluded. However, understanding the unique needs
8 of each community statewide can provide valuable insight on
9 current and future accessibility issues for voters.

10 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:

11 (1) Require the office of elections to annually request
12 funding for the statewide elections accessibility
13 needs advisory committee; and

14 (2) Appropriate funds to the office of elections for the
15 statewide elections accessibility needs advisory
16 committee to carry out its mandate.



1 SECTION 2. Section 11-10.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "**§11-10.5 Statewide elections accessibility needs advisory**
4 **committee[-]; annual budget request.** (a) There is established
5 a statewide elections accessibility needs advisory committee
6 within the office of elections for administrative purposes. The
7 purpose of the advisory committee is to ensure equal and
8 independent access to voter registration, casting of ballots,
9 and all other office of elections services.

10 (b) The advisory committee shall consist of five members
11 appointed by the governor based on recommendations from
12 organizations within the State that are comprised of a majority
13 of officers and members who are persons with disabilities
14 including visual impairment. Each member shall identify as a
15 voter with accessibility needs arising from disabilities
16 including visual and hearing impairments that require an
17 accommodation to vote. The terms of advisory committee members
18 shall be four years; provided that initial terms shall be one,
19 two, three, or four years to ensure staggered rotation of
20 members.



1 (c) The advisory committee shall meet at least annually to
2 review election procedures, services, and technology and access
3 to information, and shall make recommendations to the office of
4 elections on at least an annual basis. The advisory committee
5 may meet and subsequently make recommendations at additional
6 times as determined by a majority of the members.

7 (d) Beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026 and each fiscal
8 year thereafter, the office of elections shall include in its
9 annual budget request line-item funding for the advisory
10 committee. To ensure the continuation of outreach and voter
11 education, the amount of funding requested shall scale
12 proportionally with fulfilled needs and funding requests
13 received by the advisory committee."

14 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
15 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
16 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
17 appropriations contained in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023,
18 and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure
19 ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
20 \$ or per cent. This current declaration takes
21 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal



1 year 2024-2025 in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023, and this Act
2 only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund expenditure
3 ceiling are that:

4 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
5 serve the public interest; and

6 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
7 addressed by this Act.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$10,000 or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the
11 statewide elections accessibility needs advisory committee for
12 information gathering, outreach, and voter education expenses
13 approved by the advisory committee; provided that any funds
14 appropriated pursuant to this Act shall be in addition to and
15 shall not supplant any portion of the base budget of the office
16 of elections.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of
18 elections for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

21 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



Report Title:

Deaf and Blind Task Force; Office of Elections; Statewide
Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee; Voter
Education; Expenditure Ceiling; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Office of Elections to annually request funding for
the Statewide Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee.
Appropriates funds to the Office of Elections Statewide
Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee to gather
information and provide outreach and voter education services
for individuals with accessibility needs. Declares that the
general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. (SD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

