



STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 4, 2023

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Members of the House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 1543, SD2, HD1, Relating to Public Financing for
Candidates to Elected Office.**

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

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

This bill establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices to beginning with the 2026 general election year and appropriates funds to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and the Commission.

The bill establishes the maximum amount of comprehensive public funds (“CPF Max”) for each office. The CPF Max is designed to provide for an amount spent in recent elections by candidates who won their offices. It ranges from a low of \$20,000 for candidates for Hawaii County Council to a high of \$2,500,000 for candidates for Governor. When implemented as proposed, the Commission notes that it is possible that the CPF Max may overshoot or undershoot the average amount spent by candidates who won in recent elections. An example of overshooting is the Hawaii County Council candidate. The average amount spent by candidates who won in these recent elections was \$15,062.42. As proposed in this bill, the CPF Max qualifies them for \$20,000 of public funding which is 133% overage of the average amount spent by these winning candidates. An example of undershooting is the Honolulu Mayor. The average amount spent by candidates who won in recent elections was \$2,647,817.52. As proposed in this bill, the CPF Max qualifies them for \$2,300,000 of public funding which is 87% underage of the average amount spent by these winning candidates. With respect to all other offices, the deviation percentage appears to be reasonable. In summary, the CPF Max may not accurately

reflect or represent the appropriate amounts spent by winning candidates in recent elections for all offices.

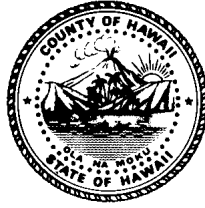
This bill also specifies on how to qualify for public funding. It establishes the minimum number of qualifying contributions each candidate must receive from registered voters residing within the respective district from which the candidate seeks nomination or election to office. It appears that, as originally drafted and amended in SD2, the minimum number of qualifying contributions is equal to .25 percent of the CPF Max for each office. HD1 raised the minimum number of qualifying contributions for Senate candidates from 250 to 400 and raised the number of minimum qualifying contributions to 200 for all offices that had a lesser number required in SD2.

In contrast to the existing partial public funding program, this bill makes it easier for candidates to raise the minimum qualifying contributions and receive more in public financing in the comprehensive public financing scheme when compared to the state's partial public financing program. For example, under this bill, a candidate for the office of Governor would have to raise 6,250 \$5 qualifying contributions amounting to \$31,250 to receive a maximum amount of **\$2,500,000** in public funds. Under the state's partial public financing program, a candidate for the office of Governor would have to raise 1,000 \$100 qualifying contributions amounting to \$100,000 to receive the minimum amount of public financing and raise an additional amount of \$330,680 in qualifying contributions to receive **\$430,680**, the maximum amount of public funding for that office. A candidate for the office of Honolulu Mayor would have to raise 5,750 \$5 qualifying contributions amounting to \$28,750 to receive a maximum amount of **\$2,300,000** in public funds. Under the state's partial public financing program, a candidate for the office of Honolulu Mayor would have to raise 500 \$100 qualifying contributions amounting to \$50,000 to receive the minimum amount of public financing and raise an additional \$176,750 to receive **\$226,750**, the maximum amount of public financing for that office.

Finally, the balance in the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund is \$1,687,121.83 as of June 30, 2022. Obviously, that amount is insufficient to pay for the comprehensive public funding program, including the additional personnel the Commission will need. The appropriation sections of the bill have been blanked out and would need to be reinstated with sufficient amounts to run the comprehensive funding program.

The Commission requests that this committee pass this measure with the described amendments.

Jennifer Kagiwada
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: April 4, 2023
TO: House Committee on Finance
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: SB 1543

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB 1543 to establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates running for office in Hawai'i. Publicly funded elections are one of the best reforms we can make to our current election system to level the playing field for all candidates and get special interest money out of our campaigns.

I'd like to offer the following additional comments on this bill as currently worded:

1. Please ensure there is a way to accept electronic signatures from campaign contributors.
2. Verify that the Campaign Spending Commission or Office of Elections has a method for checking those signatures for accuracy.
3. Recalculate the funding amounts in Section 11-G to reflect the actual amounts spent in the 2022 election cycle.
4. When recalculating the amounts only use those races that were truly competitive to form your averages, rather than including all races with more than one candidate. This will provide a more accurate picture of the total amount spent and better accomplish the goal of equity and fairness in public financing.
5. Lastly, if some candidates are subject to additional rules or restrictions regarding campaign funding and spending limits while other candidates are accepting large private donations with no spending limits, there will always be an imbalance that leaves the election process open to corruption and inequities. Ideally, ALL candidates should be beholden to the same spending limits, whether they choose to qualify for public funding or not.

SB 1543 is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in elections and the legislative process. 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations. Public funding for elections is an effective way to engage voters and create participation for a greater diversity of new candidates to run for office. Please pass SB 1543. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Jenn Kagiwada



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 5, 2023

2:00 PM Conference Room 308

In **SUPPORT** of **SB1543 SD2 HD1**: RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS SB1543 SD2 HD1**, which will help to relieve candidates of the need to fundraise from private entities to run a viable campaign, and thereby foster more rigorous discussion and refinement of candidates' policy platforms for the betterment of our islands and communities.

Our democratic system of governance is premised on the concept of an informed electorate choosing candidates whose policy priorities align with what their constituents care about the most. Unfortunately, the modern day costs of running a "viable" campaign often require candidates to expend considerable time and energy raising funds from private sources, rather than developing, debating, and refining campaign platforms, and engaging voters in this critical process.

Moreover, candidates must often solicit donations from private, corporate entities whose interests may be inherently narrower than those of the public at large. As a result, conflicts or perceived conflicts too often arise between policymaking that may be of particular benefit to certain classes of private entities, and the more comprehensive concerns of the broader community – including with regards to the environmental and cultural integrity, and the long-term livability, of our islands.

By providing for more meaningful public financing of campaigns for elected office, this measure would help us take a transformative step towards enabling our candidates and elected representatives more time to engage with their grassroots constituents during the campaign season; research, debate, and refine their campaign policy platforms; and thereby come into or return to office with a stronger and more comprehensive vision for policies that will ultimately benefit the public interest, as well as the public trust in our democratic system of governance.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** SB1543 SD2 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1543: RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

TO: Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Members
FROM: Brandee Menino, CEO, Hope Services Hawai'i, Inc.
Hearing: FIN on 04-05-23

Aloha,

My name is Brandee Menino and I am the CEO of Hope Services Hawai'i, which is Hawai'i Island's largest nonprofit homeless services provider. We are pleased to support SB1543, which would establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawai'i.

Our team uses evidence-based practices to help our neighbors avoid and overcome homelessness, and we achieve above-average results in helping people get housed and stay housed. However, as a non-governmental organization, we cannot change the laws that have led to the status quo.

In the United States, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are 39 times more likely to experience homelessness than Asians.¹

This is not the result of outsiders flying to Hawai'i to become homeless.

In Hawai'i County, 28% of people experiencing homelessness are children.²

This is not the result of failure to pull oneself up by one's bootstraps. This is the result of government policy that deprioritizes the well-being of its people, while pushing the responsibility onto individuals who cannot survive in a system that is stacked against them.

¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness. June 1, 2020. <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/racial-inequalities-homelessness-numbers/>

² Bridging the Gap: The Continuum of Care for Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i Counties & Homeless Management Information System. July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. btghawaii.org

The policies some lawmakers will support or oppose can often be predicted by looking at the major contributors to their campaigns. Lawmakers may receive pressure to keep these contributors happy if they want to keep the dollars flowing so they can win the next election. Candidates who reject this quid-pro-quo support are often unable to raise enough funds to stand a chance at winning. We all know it's wrong, we all know it happens anyway, and we all know that our local people are the ones who suffer because of it.

This committee has the opportunity to ensure that leaders from communities across Hawai'i, and not just those who have the financial means, have an equitable chance to make good policies. When donors who profit by displacing local people are no longer needed to win an election, the people of Hawai'i can be more confident that legislators are acting in their best interest. This investment is worth it.

I want to share the insight of someone like you, who was elected to serve her community in 2022. Representative Ambureen Rana serves in the Maine State Legislature, and when we asked about her experience with public campaign financing, she said:

“I was publicly financed and it's the only way it was possible for me to run, as a working class person. It goes a long way in removing barriers to allow young people to run for office, and people of color. As a 28 year old, first generation American, this made it possible for me.”

Please pass SB1543. Our people are worth it.

Mahalo nui,

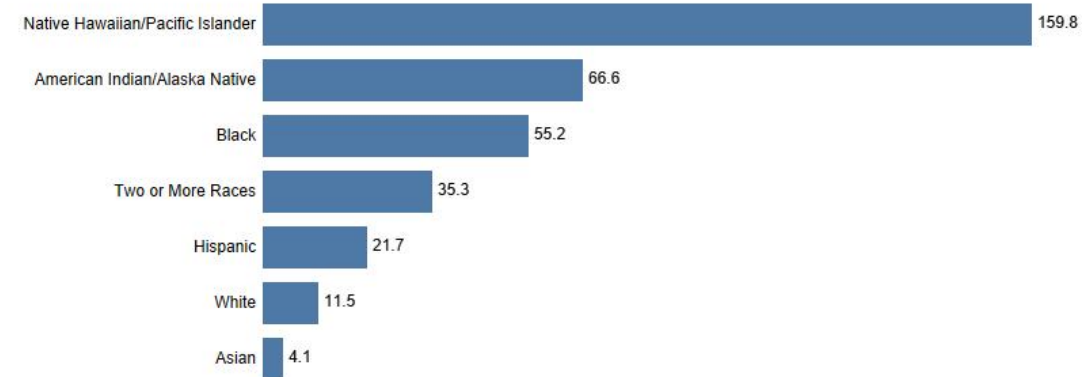
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brandee Menino". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Brandee Menino,
Chief Executive Officer

See enclosures with additional homelessness data on the following page.

Most Minority Groups Experience Homelessness at Much Higher Rates than Whites

Number of people experiencing homelessness per 10,000 in population by race and ethnicity



Homeless population data are for a given night in 2019.
Source: Annual Homeless Assessment Report Report to Congress, Part 1, 2020



Figure 1: National Alliance to End Homelessness. June 1, 2020. <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/racial-inequalities-homelessness-numbers/>

THE IMPACT OF HOUSELESSNESS HAWAII COUNTY AT A GLANCE

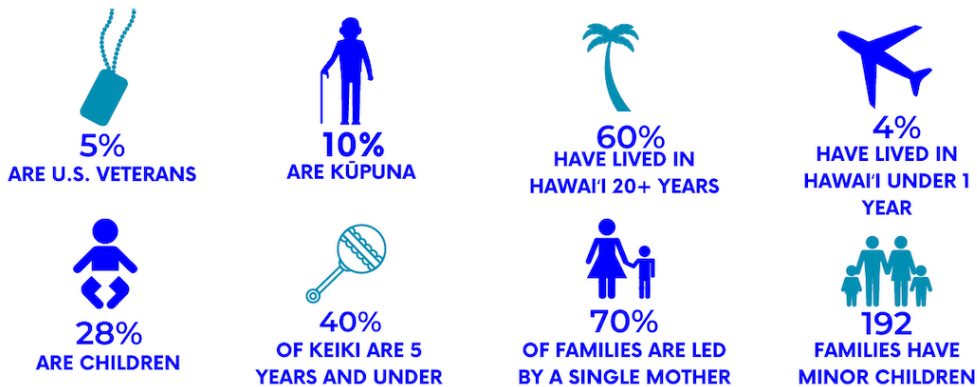


Figure 2: Bridging the Gap: The Continuum of Care for Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i Counties & Homeless Management Information System. July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. www.btghawaii.org



Hawaii
Holding Power Accountable

To: Finance Chair Yamashita and Committee Members
From: Brodie Lockard, Common Cause Hawaii Board Member
Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023

In strong support of SB1543

A reform like public financing has been due in Hawaii for many years. With last year's convictions of Senator J. Kalani English and Representative Ty Cullen for cash bribes, ethics in our state government has leapt to the front of the public's collective mind.

Some incumbents dislike public financing because they see it as a threat to their reelection. This is not necessarily the case. The 2012 Maine Policy Review found that "challengers are only more likely to win if they participate in MCEA [the 1996 Maine Clean Elections Act] and the incumbent does not. When incumbents accept public funding, they are actually more likely to win reelection" [1].

SB1543 is a fair bill. It includes every major state and county office, not singling out any one group for a trial, as some previous bills have done. After qualifying, candidates are "barred from soliciting, accepting, or using contributions from" anyone but voters in their districts. Violating the rules brings appropriate penalties, and thorough, regular reporting requirements should prevent abuse.

SB1543 is fiscally responsible. This year the state has plenty of money to fund the 2024 general election cycle. In the future, if funds are insufficient, the program will not be run for that cycle. Amounts will be adjusted with any change in the consumer price index.

Publicly-funded elections will make you and future elected officials better at your jobs. You can spend your time meeting with many constituents, not just a few large donors. Owing only your voters lets you take a principled stand on every issue. You can work on the needs of all voters, not just a few moneyed interests. And you can spend more time doing your real job.

To qualify for public financing, candidates must show a broad base of support in their community (something incumbents already have). That makes any lawmaker more effective and more respected.

Public financing will make your campaign easier. No one likes asking individuals for large sums of money. Public financing will free you from fundraisers and countless phone calls. And the steps required to qualify will help you get to know your constituents better, so you can better speak to their concerns.

It will improve the state legislature overall. Public financing has been shown to increase the diversity

of candidates, including women and people of color, and to encourage interaction between candidates and low- and moderate-income communities. Our elected officials will no longer be just career politicians or people who know the right people, but regular folks from all walks of life—nurses, veterans, small business owners, teachers. Candidates can spend more time on ideas and less time raising money that tends to commit them to special interests.

SB1543 will serve the people who elected you far better than the current system. One of the primary reasons for public funding is to avoid situations like Oahu's rail boondoggle, and the myriad more subtle ways voters' money is wasted. The role of special interests in government decision making will be greatly reduced; the voices of regular people amplified. This is one reason that rates of participation in Clean Election systems are high. They decrease real or apparent conflicts of interest for elected officials.

Public financing will restore faith in our elections and political system. After six years of questions about the integrity of our elections, Americans' confidence in voting needs a boost. Fraud in elections has always been extremely rare, but the corrupting influence of money in politics—real and perceived—continues to erode our confidence in the system.

Finally, it will improve Hawaii's political reputation. Thirteen states use some form of publicly-funded elections, as do 20 local governments [2]. Hawaii's partial public funding program is woefully out of date and underused. With Supreme Court decisions like *Citizens United* deforming our campaigns, a robust public funding system is long overdue. Following our recent passage of reforms like Vote by Mail and Automatic Voter Registration, passing public funding will arguably make Hawaii the most forward-looking state in the union in terms of elections.

SB1543 is a thorough, well-conceived bill with an array of benefits. Common Cause Hawaii strongly urges the Finance Committee to pass it. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brodie Lockard
Common Cause Hawaii Board Member

[1] <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=mpr>

[2] <https://www.commoncause.org/resource/the-for-the-people-act-in-the-states/>



holomua

COLLABORATIVE

OUR MISSION

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

OUR VISION

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

BOARD MEMBERS

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Meli James, *Board Chair*
Micah Kāne
Brandon Kurisu
Mike Mohr
Brad Nicolai
Mike Pietsch

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Josh Feldman
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Alicia Moy
Ed Schultz

Josh Wisch
President & Executive Director

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Page 1 of 1

Committee: House Committee on Finance
Bill Number: SB 1543, SD2, HD1 Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office
Hearing Date and Time: April 5, 2023 at 2:00pm (Room 308)
Re: Testimony of Holomua Collaborative in support

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

We write in support of SB 1543, SD2, HD1 Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office. The purpose of this bill is to establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year. It requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature, and it appropriates funds.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (the "Commission") had recommended a legislative proposal for partial public financing for elections. As several of the Commission members have previously noted, however, the Final Report of the Commission also specifically noted that "the increased amount of partial public funding of elections proposed in this (partial public funding) bill are intended as a floor, or minimum level. If fiscal resources are or become available, the Commission encourage the Legislature to be bold and devote additional fiscal resources to further the purpose of this bill and to seek additional permanent funding sources for future elections. Implementation of this proposal would assist in diminishing the impact and influence resulting from *Citizens United*."¹

We believe this bill clearly furthers the intent of the Commission's work and are pleased to support it.

As part of Holomua's mission, we aim to build cross-sector collaborative support to work alongside our appointed and elected government leaders and partners to co-create viable, sustainable solutions that benefit all working families in Hawai'i. We believe policies that help improve government functions, and public confidence in government, further that goal. We appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Josh Wisch
President & Executive Director

¹ See page 32 of the Final Report of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (<https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/Special/CISC/Document/FinalReport.pdf>).

April 3, 2023

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 5, 2023
2:00 pm
Via Videoconference



RE: **SB1543 HD1** Public Financing for Candidates (**SUPPORT with Amendments**)

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa & Committee Members,

Chamber of Sustainable Commerce testifies in support of SB1543 HD1, which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawaii, to begin with the 2026 general election year, requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature and appropriates funds.

As small business owners who believe we can strengthen our economy without hurting workers, consumers or the environment, we urge this committee to vote in favor of passing SB1543 HD1, because this bill brings us one step closer towards a democracy that protects small business owners, workers, consumers and the environment – and not just large corporate campaign donors who can afford to pay to play.

Developers, defense contractors, big pharma, agri-chemical corporations and others give incumbent candidates the max allowable contributions, then they hire lobbyists who give max contributions to these same candidates; and then some of those unchallenged incumbents buy max donation tickets to fundraisers for incumbents who have contested races; all of these max contributions quickly add up to a campaign war chest for the incumbent – that is almost impossible to challenge.

Furthermore, the campaigns of many legislative leaders have already benefited from state taxpayer money being funneled through state Grant-In-Aid (GIA) recipients that were hand-picked by legislative leaders with a portion of that money ending up in their campaign accounts. For examples of “GIA campaign kickbacks” take a look at how much taxpayer money went to GIA recipients Navatek and Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council and compare those numbers to campaign contributions from employees, consultants, lobbyists and family members of those GIA recipients. The legislature has exempted the millions of dollars of GIA awards from the Ethics Commission’s oversight.

**Hawaii
Legislative
Council**

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
Honolulu

Russel Rudderman
Island Naturals
Hilo / Kona

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Maui

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Kauai

Kim Coco Iwamoto
AQuA Rentals, LLC
Honolulu

Publicly financing campaigns through SB1543 HD1 gives candidates who are not receiving pay-to-play contributions or GIA kickbacks, a more equitable opportunity to educate voters in their district that they are viable candidates.

CSC urges this committee to **make the following amendments** to SB1543 HD1: 1) revert commencement to the 2024 election; 2) revert effective date to July 1, 2023; and 3) make sure minimum number of qualifying contributions (QCs) are accurately proportional to size of district and maximum public funding per race. HD1 is flawed in that 400 QCs are required for a state senate candidate to get \$100K but a governor candidate needs only 6,250 QCs to get \$2.5M. Since the governor's race covers 25 times the senate district, then governor candidates should be required to get 10,000 QCs. If this committee keeps the governor QCs at 6,250 then the state senate candidate should only have to get 250 QCs.

This bill offers just one step toward clean elections; the legislature should also make the following changes: cap the max allowable contribution at \$100 per donor per candidate, prohibit candidate campaigns from making contributions to other candidate campaigns and ensure the Ethics Commission has oversight over GIA recipients as the do other recipients of state funded contracts.



**Hawaii
Legislative
Council**

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
Honolulu

Russel Rudderman
Island Naturals
Hilo / Kona

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Maui

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Kauai

Kim Coco Iwamoto
AQuA Rentals, LLC
Honolulu

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:28:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Mulinix	Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita & Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of Our Revolution Hawaii's 5,000 members and supporters statewide, we stand in Strong Support of SB1543 that establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year. Requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

Passing of SB1543 is essential. Since the Citizens United decision, that falsely claimed that money is speech, special interest money in elections has sky rocketed, giving a smaller and smaller group of wealthy special interest donors exorbitant influence over our elections. This is a huge problem because corporate special interest money distorts democracy, increasing corporate special interest power, that drowns out our citizens voices. What the Citizens United decision did was create a situation where we now have the best government money can buy, and that is not democracy.

Passage of SB1543 will fairly and effectively deal with this problem, making our elections more democratic, creating an even playing field for candidates, refocusing elections back to the needs of the people, and not just the greed of those who donate the most.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

When passed into law, SB1543 will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices. This is what democracy is all about.

Please pass SB1543 to ensure we have fair elections in Hawaii, free of the corrupting influence of large special interest donors.

Mahalo,

Dave Mulinix, Cofounder & Hawaii State Organizer

Our Revolution Hawaii.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:54:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Culbertson	HULI PAC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Special thanks to committee Chair Yamashita for hearing this bill!

Please pass SB1543!

SB 1543 will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, HULI PAC, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut *and our own Hawaii County* have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

Mahalo nui loa!

R A Culbertson,

member HULI PAC

Honokaa



To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 2:00 pm

In strong support of SB1543 SD2 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the FIN Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SB1543 SD2 HD1** that establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year.

SB1543 SD2 HD1 will help restore the people's trust in government. With last year's convictions of Senator J. Kalani English and Representative Ty Cullen for cash bribes, it is clear that the legislature must do everything in its power to remove the influence that money has on our politics, including reforms like public financing. Public financing of elections is one of the most important ways to free our state political system from undue influence from corporations, businesses, and special interest groups. Three quarters of Hawaii voters support a system of fully publicly financed elections.

Public financing will make campaigning easier. No one likes asking individuals for large sums of money. Public financing will free candidates from fundraisers and countless phone calls. Reducing or even eliminating candidates' reliance on wealthy donors and the need to perpetually fundraise frees candidates and officials to spend more time with their constituents and to focus on the most pressing issues of their community, such as the impacts from the growing climate crisis. It also promotes public trust in officials and in government.

SB1543 SD2 HD1 would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawaii County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

Please take this opportunity to get money out of politics. Pass SB1543 SD2 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:33:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colehour Bondera	Kanalani Ohana Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair & Committee Members:

Please accept this testimony in support of SB1543.

Sincerely,

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

colemel2@gmail.com

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:10:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Foley	Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Finance Committee,

As Chair of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct, I support SB 1543, SD 2, HD 1, for reasons stated in the Commission's December 1, 2022 Final Report, specifically at page 32 and my testimony submitted to JHA on this bill.

Mahalo, Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:47:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maki Morinoue	HULI PAC	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,
I want to thank Chair Yamashita for scheduling this hearing.

HULI PAC is in full support of SB1543! *This is a pivotal voting stance for every legislative leadership to show that the people and our environment matter more than corporate funds.*

We are eager and hopeful as each island, and its residents follow this bill in numbers we have not experienced, while most of our legislative leaders have supported this bill.

The States of Maine and Connecticut *and our own Hawaii County* have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

Who wouldn't stand for that?

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo!
Maki Morinoue
HULI PAC, member
Holualoa
96725



House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB1543 SD2 HD1

Wednesday, April 5th, 2023 2 p.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

We support SB1543 SD2 HD1 which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State.

It's crucially important that the legislature does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on politics. Candidates work for donations that create relationships that can cause corruption or the perception of it. Money is crucial to winning, for example 91% of candidates who outspend their opponent go on to win. Many elections are uncontested because potential candidates can't afford the high price tag. Furthermore the average house winner spends \$40,000 compared to only \$16,000 for the loser. Over half of all campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors who each gave at least \$6,000.

Clean Elections will create a fairer system. Publicly financed elections will allow candidates to get support from their constituents rather than wealthy donors. As a result, elections will become more competitive with a more diverse set of candidates. Legislators will be free to act on behalf of voters without being concerned about what their donors think. Candidates will also be able to spend more time with constituents rather than fundraising. Furthermore, a system of fully publicly financed elections is supported by 74% of Hawai'i voters.

In addition to being good for our local democracy, the cost of this program is very small. At less than \$25 million, the program will cost less than 0.2% of the state budget. In fact, the state's current general funds balance of \$2.6 billion could pay for over 100 years of clean elections.

Publicly funded elections are already being successfully implemented locally and in other jurisdictions. Hawai'i Island County Council races had this program in 2010 and 2012. Connecticut and Maine have clean elections statewide which are both very popular and successful. Over 70% of Democratic legislators use this program in Maine. Connecticut's program was established to get money out of politics following large corruption scandals.



SB1543 SD2 HD1 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections, a.k.a. clean elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

Please take this opportunity to get money out of politics and give political power to the people!

Winning publicly financed elections is the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts Hawai'i's land and people first — not big money interests.

Please support SB1543 SD2 HD1! Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



150 Hamakua Drive #341
Kailua, HI 96734

(808) 224-0644
our-hawaii.org

Testimony in Support of SB1543

Submitted to the House Finance Committee
by Evan Weber, Managing Director, Our Hawai'i, 4/4/223

Committee members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to speak before you today. On behalf of Our Hawai'i's thousands of members and supports, I stand in strong support for Senate Bill 1543, relating to public financing of candidates to elected office. Our members and supporters are local people — kama'āina and kānaka maoli, keiki and kūpuna, from Kaua'i to Kohala, Kailua to Kapolei and every place in between. They have joined our movement to fight for a Hawai'i that puts local people — not big money interests — first, because they are deeply worried about the direction of our islands and believe now is the time for change.

Our supporters are not alone. Our corruption and public trust in government crisis has reached a tipping point. After years of the FBI putting our officials in handcuffs, resignations, and scandals, [Hawai'i voters as a whole in this past election ranked government corruption as their number 3 top issue, only behind inflation and affordable housing, and 74% favor the adoption of a policy like SB1543 which would provide full public financing of elections and ban corporate and private donations.](#) With public trust at an all time low, now is not time for band-aids, it's time for real solutions. While you all have advanced a number of important pieces of reform-minded legislation this session, none of them go far enough in addressing the overriding issue of money in our politics where it begins, in our elections.

SB1543 would go as far as is legally possible under the constitution, by providing a viable alternative for campaigning from the private-money driven status quo. It's a historic opportunity to get big money out of our elections, allow every day people an equal voice with the rich and powerful, and allow candidates and legislators like you all to be beholden only to their voters, their constituents, their values, and their conscience. No longer would legislators have to look over their shoulders, worried about how their donors who will fund their next campaign might react to each and every vote. They can be fully focused on delivering for their constituents, the people. That's how democracy is supposed to work!

And, we know that programs like this work: we've seen it in places like Connecticut, Maine, and now Seattle. And we know it's popular. In addition to previously mentioned strong public support, the bill has the backing of the state Democratic Party, current and former legislators from both the Republican and Democratic Parties, support from dozens of leading organizations in Hawai'i, was introduced by a historic 40% of legislators in both chambers, and now has passed the Senate in a bipartisan manner on a nearly unanimous vote. **And we know we have the resources: the program would cost less than 0.1% of the state budget and could be funded with our current surplus alone for 100-250 years or more.** On that manner, I've attached a memo on the cost of the program to my testimony which was previously sent to all House members on the day of Senate passage.

We have the policy. We have the resources. We have the public desire for change. The only question is do we have the political will? That will be up to you to make it so. As you deliberate, know the public is watching.



MEMORANDUM:

Democracy Is Worth It, Pass Clean Elections Now

Date: 3/7/23

To: All House Representatives & Other Interested Parties

From: Evan Weber, *Our Hawai'i & Clean Elections Hawai'i Coalition*, evan@our-hawaii.org

Subject: SB1543 Clean Elections Cost Estimates

Today, SB1543 to fully fund publicly financed “clean elections” officially passed the Hawai'i Senate with a vote of 23-1. This historic and transformational legislation, which would help put an end to pay-to-play corruption as we know it in our islands, now heads over to the Hawai'i House of Representatives where House Leadership, relevant Committee Chairs, and all House members will decide its fate.

The premise of this Clean Elections legislation is simple, but its impact would be profound: *allow candidates who demonstrate adequate grassroots support from their community access to competitive public funds to run their campaigns, and in exchange, prohibit them from raising or spending private dollars.* Through this program, more and more candidates could be elected only being accountable to their voters, not to private donors. As a result the influence of big money in our politics would wane, as has been the case in Connecticut, Maine, and other places that have implemented similar systems.

There are many, many reasons to pass and implement a Clean Elections system. It's [sound policy](#). It's got the backing of [dozens of organizations, current and former politicians, scholars, and advocates](#). It's favored by [74% of voters](#). As the legislation now advances to the House and its respective committees, and the potential of a change to the status quo becomes more possible, some people might ask what a program like this will cost. **We want to share the facts, and highlight how inexpensive Clean Elections would be. We hope legislators will agree: democracy is a worthy investment.**

Fact #1 — Clean Elections would not be costly: Our estimates show that this program would likely cost the state *less than \$10 million per year, less than 0.1% of the overall general budget*. With an over \$2.6 billion surplus in state coffers this year, Hawai'i could pay for over 260 years of Clean Elections. Even if the program somehow ended up costing \$25 million/year, we could pay for over 100 years of Clean Elections with this year's surplus alone. This was supported in a recent [UHERO brief](#) which found that a “robust system of public funding...could be supported by a relatively modest appropriation from general funds.” **See our charts below for further breakdown.**

Fact #2 — We have the resources: The House “Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct states in its final report, “If fiscal resources are or become available, the Commission encourages the Legislature to be bold and devote additional fiscal resources to further the purpose of [publicly financed elections] and to seek additional permanent funding sources for

future elections.” This is that moment. With a historic surplus and a number of new revenue-raising proposals such as Marijuana Legalization and the Green Fee advancing, now is the time to be bold and invest in our democracy and the public trust.

Fact #3 — Clean Elections have been cheap and effective in other states: The following are clean election costs for House and Senate races in Connecticut and Maine who have been running clean election programs for over a decade.

Connecticut Costs: Connecticut's participation has slowly grown from 1.45 participating candidates per seat to 1.73 from 2008 to 2020. Their annual cost is currently just below \$6.8 million. With a population of 3.6 million people, that is a cost of \$1.65 per person per year.

Year	Legislative Participants	Participants per Seat	Cost per Election	Annual Cost	Annual Cost per Resident
2008	274	1.45	\$9,238,775	\$4,619,388	\$1.30
2010	253	1.34	\$9,550,480	\$4,775,240	\$1.33
2012	273	1.44	\$10,785,371	\$5,392,686	\$1.50
2014	280	1.48	\$11,375,131	\$5,687,566	\$1.58
2016	268	1.43	\$8,930,184	\$4,465,092	\$1.25
2018	317	1.70	\$12,870,939	\$6,435,470	\$1.80
2020	327	1.73	\$13,537,603	\$6,768,802	\$1.88

Maine Costs: Maine had strong participation with 1.68 legislative candidates per seat using clean elections in 2006. However, just over 1 candidate per open seat uses the program now. The annual cost of the program is currently just below \$2.3 million. With a population of 1.38 million people, that is a cost of \$1.65 per person per year.

Year	Legislative Participants	Participants per Seat	Cost per Election	Annual Cost	Annual Cost per Resident
2006	313	1.68	\$3,347,775	\$1,673,888	\$1.26
2008	303	1.63	\$2,954,035	\$1,477,018	\$1.11
2010	295	1.59	\$3,301,006	\$1,650,503	\$1.24
2012	242	1.30	\$2,102,850	\$1,051,425	\$0.79
2014	199	1.07	\$1,990,380	\$995,190	\$0.75
2016	227	1.22	\$3,344,830	\$1,672,415	\$1.26
2018	206	1.11	\$3,552,017	\$1,776,009	\$1.33
2020	192	1.03	\$3,868,858	\$1,934,429	\$1.42
2022	214	1.15	\$4,568,030	\$2,284,015	\$1.65

SB1543 Cost Estimate Breakdown: Clean Elections for Hawai'i: The following estimates assume 2 candidates per office. This number was chosen conservatively, because it exceeds the average number of actual candidates in other states. In addition this figure is similar to or exceeds the current number of candidates in Hawai'i for most races. Costs per election are

calculated by multiplying the number of candidates by the max amount of funds available for that office. The annual cost is calculated by dividing the cost per election by how often the elections occur. Seats that have 2-year terms divide the cost per election by 2. Seats that have 4-year terms divide the cost per election by 4, except annual Senate costs are calculated based on 3 elections every 10 years. The totals for scenarios beyond 2 participants per seat are included at the bottom. 3 candidates per seat along with excluding some high cost races are provided. No matter how you cut it, this is a program we can afford. With rampant corruption at the top of voters' minds, the question should be: can legislators afford not to make this change?

Office	Estimated Participants	Participants per Seat	Max Funds Available	Cost per Election	Annual Cost	Annual Cost per Resident
Governor	2	2	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$0.87
LG	2	2	\$1,200,000	\$2,400,000	\$600,000	\$0.42
State Senator	50	2	\$100,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1.04
State Representative	102	2	\$50,000	\$5,100,000	\$2,550,000	\$1.77
HNL Mayor	2	2	\$2,300,000	\$4,600,000	\$1,150,000	\$0.80
HNL Attorney	2	2	\$225,000	\$450,000	\$112,500	\$0.08
HNL Council	18	2	\$135,000	\$2,430,000	\$607,500	\$0.42
HI Mayor	2	2	\$360,000	\$720,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
HI Attorney	2	2	\$40,000	\$80,000	\$20,000	\$0.01
HI Council	18	2	\$20,000	\$360,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
Maui Mayor	2	2	\$600,000	\$1,200,000	\$300,000	\$0.21
Maui Council	18	2	\$30,000	\$540,000	\$270,000	\$0.19
Kauai Mayor	2	2	\$350,000	\$700,000	\$175,000	\$0.12
Kauai Attorney	2	2	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$12,500	\$0.01
Kauai Council	14	2	\$30,000	\$420,000	\$210,000	\$0.15
OHA	18	2	\$40,000	\$720,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
Total All Races	256	2			\$9,297,500	\$6.46
Different Scenarios						
Excluding Gov and LG	252	2			\$7,447,500	\$5.17
Excluding Gov, LG and Mayors	244	2			\$5,642,500	\$3.92
3 Candidates per Seat	384	3			\$13,946,250	\$9.68
3 Candidates per Seat Excluding Gov and LG	378	3			\$11,171,250	\$7.76
3 Candidates per Seat Excluding Gov, LG and Mayors	366	3			\$8,463,750	\$5.88

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:03:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Hooser	Pono Hawaii Initiative	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Committee Members,

I offer this testimony in strong support of SB1543 which will create a more even playing field for all candidates. SB1543 if passed into law, will help focus elections back to the needs of the people and remove the constant push from candidates and incumbents alike for more and larger campaign contributions. The need to appease and satisfy those donors is a reality of the process and inevitably leads to giving the donor inordinate access and influence.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important. It deserves your strong support.

Sincerely,

Gary Hooser

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:01:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Shimei	Indivisible Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

IN SUPPORT

Indivisible Hawaii supports SB1543 SD2 HD1. This bill has the support of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct and will go a long way towards rehabilitating public perception of our elections and restoring faith in government, both of which are essential for our democracy. Publicly financed elections have strong voter support, a proven track record, and the benefits far outweigh the relatively minor costs. Please pass this bill.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:58:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization fully supports SB 1543 SD 2 HD 1.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:55:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kupuna for the Mo'opuna	Kupuna for the Moopuna	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORTING fair and equal representation in our government by taking big money out of politics. **YES to SB 1543, SD2, HD1.**

Mahalo,

Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna

Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i



HAWAII WORKERS CENTER

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

Defending and Respecting the workers of
Hawaii'i

(508) 967-5377
hawaiiworkerscenter@gmail.com
hawaiiworkerscenter.org

April 4, 2023

Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

RE: Strong Support for S.B.1543 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR
CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Dear Chair Rep. Yamashita, Vice-Chair Rep. Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on
Finance:

The Hawaii Workers Center envisions a Hawaii in which all workers are empowered to
exercise their right to organize for their social, economic and political well-being.
It is a resource of information, education, training and organizing for Hawaii's low-wage and
immigrant workers.

The Hawaii Workers Center stands in strong support for S.B. 1543 SD2 HD1 to set up a
system of fully publicly financed "clean" elections.

We need to get money out of politics. The influence of money in politics puts our working
class communities at a disadvantage when it comes to ensuring their voices are heard. More
often than not, the interests of large donors connected to corporate interests drown out the
voices of our working class.

Candidates and elected officials who represent the voices of workers and not corporate
interests are often at a disadvantage when supporters do not have the large financial
resources needed to support their candidate. S.B. 1543 will create a much fairer system and
helps level the playing field for our working class residents. Big money in politics and the
appearances of impropriety in government are major issues for Hawaii's residents. The
impact is truly felt by our working class families, whose interests are often overshadowed by
corporate interests and those with the deep financial pockets to substantially donate to
candidates.

If we are serious about cleaning up the undue influence of money in politics. S.B. 1543 SD2
HD1 is a game changer as it takes the bold step we need for a 100% fully funded campaign
finance system. It is a major step in the right direction to ensure that democracy works for all
of us, not just those at the top.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. 1543 to finally give
workers a chance against anti-worker, big-money interests in politics.

Sincerely,

Sergio J. Alcubilla
Executive Director

Executive
Committee of the
Board

Rev. Sam Domingo
Board Chair
Mary Ochs
Vice President

Dr. Arcelita Imasa
Secretary
John Witeck
Treasurer

Board Members

Yoko Liriano
Nanea Lo
Innocenta
Sound-Kikku

Ray Catania
Justin Jansen
Marites Uy
Leyton Torda
Robyn Conboy

Co-Executive
Directors

Tony Doroño
Sergio Alcubilla III,
Esq.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 1:58:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Back when I lived in Maine public financing of elections had just begun. A good friend who could not have afforded the cost of running for state representative was able to garner sufficient \$5 donations to qualify, ran for office and won. That is how it should be - not making money be a deciding factor in an election. Please support SB1543 as a beginning to getting the power of money out of Hawaii politics!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 2:14:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

We must level the playing field to make sure every candidate has a fair chance of running. Mahalo nui for scheduling this bill and I urge everyone to pass this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards pintor

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 2:18:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlene K. Rowley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Free and fair elections are the backbone of our democracy. SB1543 PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE is a right step towards leveling the playing field for Hawai'i Canidates to run for public office without being beholden to donors or special intrests. Not only does this give opportunities for new up and coming canidates, it also helps to restore erroding faith and support in a crumbling democratic system.

Along with my 'ohana on Maui, I strongly support SB1543 Publicly funded election reforms.

Sincerley,

Kiana Rowley, BSN RN

'Oma'opio Kula Maui

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 2:28:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Whitney Herrelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the public funding of elections because it allows grassroots candidates to have a chance at running and being elected into office. It would help level the playing feild, and allows for fair access to carreers in politics.. Currently, the pay to play system gives the wealthy and priveliged candidates a chance that working class or poor people don't have. These groups deserve to have candidates that are farmiliar with the lived experience of poverty and working class. I support this bill.

Whitney Herrelson

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 3:11:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha FIN Chair, Vice Chair & Committee,

Voters have lost faith in their Hawaiian politicians. They have seen how corporate power and special interest has far more influence than us voters! Some politicians even flaunt their contempt of voters! How do we level the political playing field?

SB1543 is the way forward! When passed into law, [SB1543](#) will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

SB1543 will create an level playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most. You might ask is this a 'Pie in the Sky' legislation? A dreamers paradise? The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

Bill SB1543 is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

Here's an [easy to read very good description of SB1543](#) and a statement of strong support by the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration,

tlaloc tokuda

Kailua Kona HI 96740

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 3:39:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

SB1543 SD2 HD1 would set up a system of fully publicly-financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for the Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on politics. Corruption is growing problem that won't simply go away on its own. Please take this opportunity to get money out of politics and help get our democracy back on track. Mahalo!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:03:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bradley Shields	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in very strong support of this bill to institute public funding for elections. Special interest groups have way too much power in our state capital in my hope is that this bill will help balance that.

mahalo,

Bradley Shields

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:24:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** for public financing of elections of candidates who voluntarily agree to abide by campaign fundraising and expenditure guidelines!

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo! Ted Bohlen

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:25:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

When passed into law, [SB1543](#) will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:27:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Representative,
Please pass SB1543. SB1543 will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Mahalo,

Greg Crawford

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:27:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this important legislation to keep money out of politics, and help your constituents regain trust in the system.

Mahalo nui,

Judith C. White

Kapaa

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:30:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jim Cooper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB1543.

When passed into law, SB1543 will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

SB1543 is truly important legislation and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

SB1543 will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Mahalo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:33:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madolin Wells	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 - the election reform that makes all the other reforms possible! Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:33:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Ahrnsbrak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 SD2 HD1. !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:34:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara L Franklin	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would support the bill if it was effective on June 30, 2025, and not on June 30, 2075 (fifty years in the future?) Why wait so long? Please correct that error, otherwise, I would tell you to go back to the drawing board and come up with something workable now, not fifty years from now.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:34:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Larson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 SD2 HD1

Sadly the community often suffers when our elected officials are required to rely on business donations to fund their campaigns. I believe if all politicians were publicly funded we would more easily create a healthy balance between business interests and the public good. I want my children and grandchildren to live in a better world than the one my generation has created.
Thank you

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:34:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Pizzitola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Special interest money does not belong in politics. **Please pass [SB1543](#).**

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:40:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jocelyn Fujii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I strongly support SB 1543 for the following reasons:

1. Other states have this legislation, which has worked well.
2. Special interest lobbying efforts are well-financed and have too much power. Frequently, legislation is controlled by special interests and does not represent the public good.
3. Our hope is that this bill will empower ordinary citizens and give us a bigger voice, especially in affairs that rule our lives.
4. Public trust in government has declines, and it is time to reverse that trend.

Sincerely yours,

Jocelyn Fujii

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:40:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey Mermel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators.....PLEASE PASS SB1543 (Public Financing of elections.)

Maine and Connecticut have already implemented similar legislation.

It's really time to GET BIG MONEY OUT of our local elections.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Ronald Jeffrey Mermel

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:48:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Sage	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill to protect our states democratic system of government. PACS, corporations and billionaires with their self interests are undermining the sanctity of elections.

Our elections are we the people not we the people with money. Stop selling our freedoms. Protect the Constitution. Protect elections. Protect democracy.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:48:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary K Ochs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Aloha Committee Members,

I urge you to pass SB1543 which will establish a system of public financing of ALL candidates, refocusing elections on the candidates positions and not heavily weighted on the wishes of those who can donate large amounts of money. That is why I support SB 1543 and hope you will also.

Mahalo,

Mary Ochs

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:51:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kaaumoana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support fairness and clean elections by passing SB1543. MAHALO

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:53:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucille Morelli-Vine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[SB1543](#) is a no brainer! It will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Let Hawaii take money out of politics and be a shining light that others can follow!

Aloha,

Lucille

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:56:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alisen Celestyne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 because we need public funding for elections to make elections more fair for everyone.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:56:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Puanani Rogers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. I speak in full support of this measure. Mahalo!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 4:59:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to Committee Members,

Please, please, PLEASE support SB1543, which would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. I am strongly supportive of ALL the legislative reforms proposed by the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct, and **the clean elections bill is the top priority one for me**. In Hawai'i we have had ample evidence in recent years of the corrupting influence of money in politics. When politicians depend on donations in order to get elected, it's just too easy for corruption to creep in. Also, without publicly financed elections, politicians have to spend far too much of their time doing fundraising -- time better spent just concentrating on working on crafting good legislation!

Thank you very much for your consideration of my comments.

Aloha, Marcia Kemble (Makiki)

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:01:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soo Sun Choe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 and clean up our election financing!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:07:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Geyer	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Please support SB1543, to make a more fair and honest system of government.

Aloha,

Matthew Geyer

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:08:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raphiell Nolin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support. Keep corporate money out of politics!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:10:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and Mahalo to the committee for hearing this important bill.

As a Hawai'i resident, tax payer, professor, and mother of two, I look to the leadership of legislators in our great state to ensure that my children and I are taken care of. Without trust in leadership and without legislators of great integrity working on behalf of the people we do not have a reliable system on which to build our communities and our lives.

Bills such as SB1534 ensure that legislators are serving public interests. Please support measures like this one that increase transparency and accountability in government. We need a government that serves our people. We need an equal playing field for all who are running for office. Please support this important bill.

April Ching

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:11:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Finance Committee. Please pass SB1543. Mahalo.

Randy Ching

Honolulu

makikirandy@yahoo.com

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:12:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Allen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello & thanks for taking the time read this

Please vote affirmative to make SB1543 the law of the land as this will equalize the playing field giving each candidate the means to get their message out and have their voice be heard.

it will allow citizens to hear from all the candidates allowing for more informed decisions by the voters.

Please let me know you support this Bill and will vote for it.

Mahalo,

Anthony Allen

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:13:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

04-03-23

RE: SB1543

Aloha,

I am in strong support of [SB1543](#) and how it will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices. I think this is an important "reform" that will make our elections fair, equitable, just, and more transparent.

Mahalo,

John A. H. Tomoso+, MSW

51 Kuula St, Kahului, HI 96732-2906

808-280-1749, john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:13:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandra Stokes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve Bill SB 1543! We need to clean up our elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:13:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

Let's create a more positive and 'fair' government.

Please vote yes and for pass SB 1543

I strongly support SB 1543

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

Mahalo for your service to the people of Hawaii.

Kate Thompson

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:15:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this very important bill which will level the playing field for candidates and give voters a much wider choice of candidates to represent them!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:17:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543

Regards,

Susan Stayton, Lawai, Kauai, HI

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:20:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:22:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Pinto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB 1543. It is critically important to have a functioning representative democracy and SB 1543 is an important step to getting corporate and special interest money out of our elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:25:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee members,

It's time to think outside the status quo box. PASS THIS BILL.

Marilyn Yamamoto

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:26:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael L Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The sure way to destroy democracy is to give special interests and lobbyists carte Blanche access to politicians by way of money! Nothing can be more destructive to a representative form of government that is supposed to be for "the people"! Please pass SB1543

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:31:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Reyes Oda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:31:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I have support public financing of campaigns for years in order to create a an even playing field for all candidates not based on big money.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible.

I urge you to support and pass this bill for ethical government in Hawai'i legislature.

99-7815 Kapoha Volcano 96785

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:34:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Moana Huff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please make the people we put into office accountable for their actions. Big government and their endorsements of and for any public office should never be considered. It's the will of the people not the money pushers in the background. We're all so tired of the gray areas and elected officials that do not act on the will of the people but only those that endorse them through finances!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:35:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
irene kloepfer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. The constitution say by the people, for the people and of the people. What we have become is for sale to the highest bidder. We, the people no longer trust our bought officials. That is why you must pass this bill, to restore trust and restore our democracy. I pray you will be pono on this and return to the tenants of the constitution and passing this bill is a step back to democracy and trust. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:41:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lanning Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. We need this now.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:42:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joyce Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:49:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TOM DIGRAZIA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My age and carbon footprint restrict my ability to testify in person.

Please do the right thing and pass SB1543, Our democracy requires a level and fair electoral playing field.

Mahalo nui!

Tom

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, & Committee Members:

I am writing in strong support of SB 1543, SD 2, HD 1.

I had the privilege of serving on the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) last year, which was convened by Speaker Saiki in the wake of the federal indictment of two veteran lawmakers.

The [CISC Final Report](#) states that, should resources become available, the Legislature should “be bold [and] seek additional permanent funding sources for future elections.” This could include an increase in the amount that that can be “checked off” on state income tax forms under HRS Section 235-102.5(a).

The Hawai‘i Election Campaign Fund (HECF) is currently under utilized, with [a recent policy brief from the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai‘i \(UHERO\)](#) observing that partial funding programs are generally “ineffective.”

The UHERO report also finds that “most scholarship shows that generous public financing programs increase electoral competition, contribute to greater diversity among candidates and donors, and encourage more contact between office-seekers and voters.”

Recent experiences with Hawai‘i County Council elections in 2010 and 2012 indicate that implementation of a fully financed program can be successful with adequate funding.

Moving toward a full public financing of electoral contests in Hawai‘i will not eliminate the influence of money so long as *Citizens United* remains in force. However, public financing can give those candidates with community support the opportunity to be competitive.

Former Gov. George Ariyoshi put it very well in his most recent volume, *Hawai‘i’s Future* (2020):

I hope that we do not give up on campaign reform.... Most people are sick of the campaign finance system. That includes business people. While the average voter may look at large campaign contributions as a means of achieving undue advantage, many a businessperson resents the inherent pressure exerted by political campaigns. [We] have a regulatory Campaign Spending Commission with all the right elements, and its role is widely accepted. We now need an enlightened discussion and a purposeful movement for more far-reaching reforms. This is a leadership challenge waiting for a group of emerging legislators to take action.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Nikos A. Leverenz
Aliamanu

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:55:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Committee Members,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom a Kanaka Maoli.

I'm writing in FULL SUPPORT of HSB1543 SD2 HD1.

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:01:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Huntemer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Finance Committee Members,

Please show your support for this important issue. SB1543 support shows you are serious about clean politics.

Thank you,

Angela Huntemer

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:04:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Ravarra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Finance Committee,

Congratulations on reaching this momentous position on behalf of the people of Hawai'i! You have read and reviewed all the necessary documentation and have arrived at this point with information in your hands and goodwill in your hearts. All you need to do now is approve this measure. So please, please, PLEASE: pass it and move it along to become the law.

That's all I have to say.

Patricia Ravarra, resident of Honoka'a

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:06:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Worley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass [SB1543](#).

Mahalo,

Robin

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:07:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Andersen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

Linda Andersen

POBox 815

Makawao, HI 96768

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:17:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Plz pass bill SB1543 and get big money out of politics!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:18:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Larry Alfrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Your testimony can be as simple as “Please pass [SB1543](#)”

When passed into law, [SB1543](#) will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai‘i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:32:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Baron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Senators, Thank you for your careful consideration of SB1543 and the testimony you are receiving from your constituents. Long ago I attended a hearing on a similar bill and watched it die in spite of broad support and high expectations of the public. I hope those times are over and we can see a fresh start on the horizon.

Please support this long awaited and worthy bill, for all of us in Hawaii, our children and grandchildren, who need to see that we take this very seriously. I think they are watching us now. Let's make them proud.

Aloha and Mahalo

Gail Baron

a long time voter

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:33:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabriela Schneider	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:35:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlene	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass [SB1543](#)

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:35:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anjani Thomas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB1543.
Mahalo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 6:54:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlene Rodrigues	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB 1543. It is important for our elected officials to not be influenced by corporations and special interest lobbyists to do their bidding. Let's keep our elections free from corruption! We must keep the playing field as even keeled as possible. Mahalo for the chance to testify.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:03:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Irena	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the pono, right thing.

Mahalo nui loa,
Irena Bliss
Ha'ikū, Maui

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:05:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this badly needed and long-awaited legislation. Mahalo for all good work and effort to get big money out of politics, and keep it out.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:08:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:16:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leah	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

It's vitally important that you do everything in your power to remove the influence and weight money has on our politics. Pay to play systems hold back progress on solutions to important local issues; from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

Restore a small amount of faith in the system for MANY by doing the right thing.

Thank you for your time.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:19:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee members,

I SUPPORT SB1543 SD2 HD1.

Sincerely,

Noel Morin

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate

Hilo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:22:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Kisor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The old joke went we have the best government money could buy. Those of us without money can't buy our own government and those who do have the money have very poor taste in legislation. Our electoral system should be entirely self contained without outside graft and corruption. All of our graft and corruption should come from inside.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:29:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elzadia Kaina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:38:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bruce L Hultgren	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill should be passed. There is great voter enthusiasm for it. It will give better representation for our citizens.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:00:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Tapia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:04:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Lu Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha.

[SB1543](#) when passed into law will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Do the right thing and pass SB1543!

Thank you.

Mary Lu Kelley

Kapa'a Kauai, HI

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:11:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harry Cramer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:14:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Dylan Ramos, I was born and raised in Hawai'i, and I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB1543. This measure is not a cure-all, but it is a strong, important step toward a better, healthier democratic process.

Mahalo,

Dylan Ramos

96816

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:14:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mele Stokesberry	Maui Peace Action	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am asking for you all to support and pass SB1543 because it will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices, and will help create an even chance for all candidates, and refocus elections back upon the real needs of our communities, and not just the needs of the monied few who donate the most cash.

I know that SB1543 is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

I urge you to strongly support this much-needed change for Hawaii.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:29:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bruce Corker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support SB1543.

Based on recent history and as recognized by the Hawaii Democratic Party, our State of Hawaii needs election reform and a system of effective public financing of elections.

Please pass SB1543.

Thank you,

Bruce Corker

Holualoa, Hawaii County

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:33:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha/ Please support SB1543. This bill

will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

Mahalo for your assistance.

Elizabeth Hansen, Hakalau HI 96710

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:33:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Sachs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill will even the playing field and make the citizens of the island's votes count. This year hundreds of thousands of dollars poured into the Maui County races from developers on and off the islands. This created an uneven playing field where the candidates now beholden to this money won. Please, let's create an environment where our elected officials can work on legislating for the people rather than spending time raising money with strings attached.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:34:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josephine Keliipio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please keep big money out of our elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:35:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zack Stoddard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha committee members,

Thank you for scheduling a hearing for SB1543! In 2018 I ran for City Council and spent months knocking on doors, getting to know constituents from Aiea to Kakaako and their many concerns. So many of the systemic problems that make life difficult for ordinary people come down to the fact that the voices of the struggling are simply not as “loud” as the voices of monied interests. So I decided to run with the slogan "Keep Money out of Politics."

I got an amazing amount of support from community members, who have become deeply jaded and lost faith in our government. I looked into running using the existing partial public funding program, realized that it would not be helpful, and decided to campaign using a small amount from my own savings. It was an eye-opening experience, as I’m sure you are all very familiar, but I could only muster a little over a thousand votes while spending very little and working full-time.

A fully publicly financed election system would do so much toward fixing the foundation of our government and restoring trust in constituents. It’s one thing to say that we cannot be bought or sold, but with this system, that sentiment will be plainly documented. Voters will know that their representatives aren’t beholden to the wealthy or to full-time lobbyists any more than they are beholden to working class families, who suffer the tragic irony of needing the most help but having the least amount of time and resources to ask for it.

As dedicated public servants, please do what is in the public’s best interest, and pass this bill! It has widespread support, as demonstrated in the committees it has already passed, and will make a real difference, like it already has in places like Maine and Connecticut. Please help pave the way for truly unbiased political work, which is sorely needed to bring about genuine economic, environmental, and social justice. Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:35:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rodger Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha/ Please support SB1543. This bill will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

SB 1543 will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

Mahalo for your assistance.

Rodger Hansen, Hakalau HI 96710

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:36:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Stowell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Julie Stowell

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:43:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Walker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing today to ask you to please support SB 1543. I believe this bill is critical to the future of Hawai'i. In the past, our state has suffered from the effects of political corruption, which is one of the greatest stumbling blocks to good governance and passing laws that will directly address the needs of the residents of Hawai'i. The electorate has expressed that this is one of their major concerns in our current political climate; the overpowering influence of big donors has contributed to a feeling of disenfranchisement and hopelessness concerning our future and the ability to be truly represented by our elected officials.

Public financing of campaigns and the prohibition of private donations are effective methods to create an even playing field for candidates and to put a stop to large donations influencing how our representatives vote. The expense of creating this public funding option is small compared to the incalculable value of establishing the credibility of our elected officials again after the many years of corruption, scandals, and influence that the voters have been subjected to.

If each eligible voter does not trust the process or the office holders, democracy is lost. Please vote to support this bill, which has received bipartisan support from elected officials and is widely supported by my fellow Hawaiian voters.

Mahalo,

Maria Walker

1728 Hulu Rd.

Kapa'a, HI 96746

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:52:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Troy Schacht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to get money out of politics to make the system more fair

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:52:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Onopa MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly in favor of this bill. I am truly sick and tired of some in our government being paid off by the highest donors- a system highly likely to propagate corruption even In legislators who start out with pure intentions of integrity. I support the League of Women Voters, and have heard their voices and strongly agree that this bill is needed as one step to clean up our government, recently wracked by scandal and corruption. I am not voting for folks who are being paid off by big money; I am voting for people who are looking out for the welfare of the people of Hawai'i.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:56:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Bernstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the FIN Committee:

I'm writing in **strong support** of SB1543 SD2 HD1. Following this and recent legislative sessions, I've seen too many bills with great public support fail to get a hearing or a vote because of the influence of big money. For a small cost of less than \$10 million per year, which is less than 0.1% of the state budget, we can set up a system that will lead to cleaner elections and help end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

SB1543 would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. Partial public financing is not enough. As long as candidates need to rely on private donations to get elected, there will always be the risk of corruption, or the perception of it.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. All of these things are badly needed. Voters rank government corruption as the #3 top issue facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

So please hear the voice of the public and fulfill their wish for a fairer and cleaner election system by passing this important bill out of your committee.

Respectfully,

Paul Bernstein

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:16:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra M Javar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I FULLY SUPPORT SB1543. Legislators should be the voice of the people. They should work For the community and not work for the people who Pay them to be their puppets. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:22:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Torkel Patterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. I have seen it work in Maine and in some small countries to the extent that I believe it will work well in Hawaii.

Thank you.

Torkel Patterson

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:23:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Polk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and members of the House Finance Committee.

Thank you for hearing this important bill that would provide public funding for candidates for office who can demonstrate enough support to be considered viable candidates. Our current system of financing elections contains the potential for corruption, and forces all candidates, whether they want to or not, to spend considerable time, even after they are elected, raising money, leaving little time for meeting with constituents and seriously considering the myriad of bills on which they must vote. Let's do away with this inefficient system by instituting public funding of candidates for office.

Please pass SB1543!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:30:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha E. Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543.

It will allow candidates who do not have badking from corporations and from special interest groups to run and be elected without needing large contributions.

Martha E. Martin

40 Kunihi Lane #226

Kahului, HI 96732

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:34:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sam Small	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's campaign finance system unfairly favors a small handful of wealthy donors.

There is a growing disconnect between elected officials and most people they represent. Part of the blame lies with a campaign finance system that unfairly stacks the deck in favor of the few donors able to give significant contributions.

Citizens United and other court rulings ended decades of commonsense campaign finance laws. Now a handful of wealthy special interests dominate political funding, often through super PACs and shadowy nonprofits that shield donors' identities.

Small donor public financing could fix that. So, I enthusiastically support SB1543 SD2 HD1. Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:53:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
janice palma-glennie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

aloha,

Mahalo for hearing the people and having this hearing for SB 1543. In fact, there is NO MORE IMPORTANT LEGISLATION TO COME BEFORE YOU THIS SESSION.

Only by getting special interest and other 'too much" money out of our elections can we (that means "you", our legislators) protect and save our democracy from the ravages of corporate and other selfish special interests' "largesse".

Hawai`i County briefly tested a similar system of publicly funded elections several years back. tThere were glitches (like the amount of money provided to a candidate was dependent upon what the candidate in that district had raised or spent in the preceeding election allowing already overly-funded candidates to unfairly fill their coffers more heavily than other candidates in less well-funded prior races); but it was a good start. SB1543 seems to be a more mature versiom of that law and others across rhe country.

there's no ethical reaons not to support publicly funded elections or taking other strong measures to protect our republic's most sacred One Person, One Vote system. For these and other profound reasons i insist more than urge you to Use your integrity and support and vote "YES" on this critical legislation.

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

Judith Wilhoite
208 Kuleana Loop, Hilo, Hawaii 96720

To: Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing: Friday, April 5, 2023

Time: 2:00 P.M.

From: Judith Wilhoite

RE:SB 1543 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED
OFFICE

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support SB 1543 and thank you for holding this hearing.

There is a growing disenchantment between our elected officials and many of the citizens they represent. Citizens United and other court rulings ended decades of commonsense campaign finance laws. Now a handful of wealthy special interests dominate political funding.

If Hawai'i wants to have independent as well as diverse candidates, we need to be prepared to help pay for them.

Please support SB 1543.

Mahalo nui loa.

Eileen Cain
720 Mahi'ai St., Apt. E
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826-5635
eileencaïn808@gmail.com
April 3, 2023

Testimony in Favor of SB1543, SD2 HD1 (HSCR 1434): Relating to Public Financing of Candidates to Elected Office

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice-Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My love of fairness in government makes it necessary for me to ask you to vote in favor of SB1543, SD2 HD1 (HSCR 1434).

1. There is fear and concern among us ordinary citizens that the wealthy may be given priority when testimony is offered to elected officials.
2. This bill would eliminate undue influence over or even intimidation of elected officials. Perhaps some elected officials feel that it is difficult for them to vote for what is in the public's best interest because of wealthy groups acting out of selfishness, trying to sway officials or even intimidate them. Publicly financed elections would allow officials to breathe easy, to be free from such tactics by monied interests.
3. This bill would safeguard the public interest. Citizens like me need to trust that decisions made by elected officials are not dominated by powerful lobbies paid for by large corporations.
4. We citizens need to know that our voices are actually heard when we give testimony, that our needs and views are given serious consideration, even if we don't have a lot of money.

Please vote yes on SB1543, SD2 HD1 (HSCR 1434).

Mahalo,

Eileen Cain

Eileen Cain
Mō'ili'ili, Honolulu, Hawai'i

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:49:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

Please support SB1543. Hawaii desperately needs clean, transparent government.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify!

Barbara J. Service MSW

Child Welfare Supervisor (ret.)

Kupuna Advocate

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:09:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Wichmann-Walczak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

When passed into law, [SB1543](#) will establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

SB1543 is essential. Please pass it now!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:16:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to infrastructure to protecting our environment and resources and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters in Hawaii ranked government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo nui,

Earle Kuikahi Medeiros, Sr.

Mavis Ivalani Oliveira-Medeiros

John-Bull PalaniEnglish

Earle Kuikahi Medeiros, Jr.

Megan Theresa Ualaniha'aha'a Medeiros

Ashley Anela English

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:16:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Polli Oliver	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pease pass SB1543 !**Public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices is critical and essential. Passing [SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates. PLEASE PASS SB1543. Mahalo**

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:02:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
karolle t. bidgood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 and ask that you pass this important bill.

Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:23:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marisa Plemer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support 1543 SB

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:12:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:48:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josh Stanbro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Removing money from our political process liberates representatives to engage with their constituents and govern, rather than raise money, and allows for better policy solutions to address cost of living, environmental, and social issues. Please pass SB1543 SD2 HD1 and put Hawaii on a different path from the mainland where money is increasingly valued over community.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:01:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Epstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe this legislation is critical to making Hawaii the pono place it needs to be. We have so many needs that could be resolved if big business and money weren't so important to elections. You in the legislature know this better than anyone. And you can see how much time you waste raising funds, and how beholden that makes you to your biggest benefactors.

let's do this now.

mahalo nui loa.

roger Epstein

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:47:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Harmon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote in favor of SB1543SD2HDI. Reduces money in politics. THIS REFORM MAKES ALL OTHER REFORMS POSSIBLE.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:13:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Carsten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. Corporate and special interest money has no place in public elections.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:01:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure will refocus elections back to the needs of the people of Hawai'i nei. I humbly ask that you pass SB1543.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:13:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keani Rawlins-Fernandez	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:22:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
nona morgan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:27:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I have long supported Clean Elections in Hawai‘i and give my strong support for SB1543 SD2 HD1. It’s crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai‘i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more. I humbly ask for your strong support too. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:30:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John P Gerry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote for SB1543. I support public elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:39:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kris Bordessa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support SB1543.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:42:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erik Horsley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this important bill to help reduce corruption in government.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:55:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pedro Haro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please ensure clean elections. This is the way that Hawai'i can make sure it truly is a democratic government.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:56:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bob Grossmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maine leads as an example and Hawaii should follow. One likely benefit would be a "ceiling" for funds spent on campaigns. This would help focus public funds on honed campaigns that better define critical policy differences among candidates. Election integrity would improve. More residents would consider running for office.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:08:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Acasio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the House Finance Committee

From: Laura Acasio, Former Senator District 1 Hilo

SUPPORT: SB 1543 - RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

As Democrats, and in alignment with our party platform, I urge you to pass this measure for increased public funding to candidates running for public office. As Democrats, we believe that a government of, by and for the people should be accountable to the people. We believe that a democratic government functions best when it is accessible to all its people. We support government reforms that limit the influence of money on the creation or execution of policy. We support campaign finance reform that limits the amount of money organizations, corporations or individuals can donate to political campaigns. We support full public-financing of elections.

This measure, Senate Bill 1543 is a key step in the right direction of real representation of the people rather than monied interests which are most often from outside an elected officials own district.

Please support this measure all the way through conference committee and send SB 1543 to Governor Green to be signed into law.

Sincerely, Laura Acasio

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:09:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Nearly three quarters of Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

Why? Because money in politics retards progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, to saving lives through better public policy on a host of issues from redcing alcohol-impaired driving to protecting how we take care of our natural resources and ensure that future generations can thrive.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal. Either we take the Commission's recommendations seriously or we don't.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all.

We know it works. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

Voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i.

This bill the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please move this bill forward. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:10:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion McHenry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. As an active member of the Democratic party of Hawaii, I can affirm that this measure is a top priority. If passed, this bill will refocus election in our state back to the needs of our people, not just the needs of those who can donate large amounts of money.

Thank you,

Marion McHenry

Kauai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:11:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lory Ono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I believe that we must keep corporate and special interest money out of politics. Please pass this important bill.

Mahalo,

Lory Ono

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:13:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Alapai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:18:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tawn Keeney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1543 Before the House Finance Committee

Chair Yamashita and members of the House Finance Committee,

In the interest of government as is envisioned by the public citizens of Hawaii, the influence of financial and monied parties on Hawaii's future must be diminished. In our view, the interest of the common man, the public at large must be the force giving shape to our future. This bill is an important element of legislature's lead toward that future. Please pass HB1543.

Respectfully,

Tawn Keeney MD

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:18:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ezgi Green	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing to the cost of living to protect our environment.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign and would ban them from receiving private donations. This system worked well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and worked well statewide in Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This bill is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of

the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Your vote to make the politics for the people or corporations.

Corporations do not care about us or 'āina or the culture of Hawai'i.

You are part of us. You are the island's child. We know you love these islands and their people.

I believe you have the courage, empathy, and dignity to change the narrative and help the people of Hawai'i Nei.

We believe in you!

Mahalo,

Ezgi Green, Kaimanu/Waialua

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:22:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nako'o Warrington	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

YES to clean elections!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:32:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret. Guiler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 for the sake of fair elections

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:33:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anela Kelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. Partial public financing is not enough. As long as candidates need to rely on private donations to get elected, there will always be the risk of corruption, or the perception of it.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. All of these things are badly needed. Voters rank government corruption as the #3 top issue facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:41:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John S. Bailey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543! Please support all means of making democracy fair and more accessible to the people.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:50:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

You can also help by supplying every voter with a booklet of information on candidates, instead of relying on newspapers.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:53:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Members,

I am writing to respectfully ask that you support SB1543, the Clean Elections legislation.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:53:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiana Kapumau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. Partial public financing is not enough. As long as candidates need to rely on private donations to get elected, there will always be the risk of corruption, or the perception of it.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. All of these things are badly needed. Voters rank government corruption as the #3 top issue facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing. Mahalo.

Chair Kyle Yamashita
Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa

House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
2:00PM

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB1543 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a graduate of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, a labor activist, and a member of the Hawai‘i State Youth Commission, testifying as an individual in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB1543 SD2 HD1**, Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office.

Money is crucial to winning an election. 91% of candidates who outspend their opponent go on to win. Regular working people cannot afford to run for office, which is why so many elections go uncontested. This measure would set up fully publicly financed elections, going beyond our partially financed system. This means that if you participate as a candidate, you will be given an amount that will allow you to run a viable, effective campaign. If enacted, this measure would also ban participating candidates from receiving any private donations at all. This means that working people who don't come from well-to-do and well-connected backgrounds, or "professional" jobs (with all due respect) will also have the opportunity to step up and have the funding to seriously run for office in order to serve their communities. It is good for democracy when our elected officials look and share the experiences of the broader community. It is also good for democracy when we have more competitive elections that can get people interested and engaged.

A important part of Senate Bill 1543 is that it encourages candidates to spend time in their constituencies and actually get buy-in/support from the broader community, which includes going to meetings and events in order to share why they are running for office, what their plans are, what are their thoughts on issues of the day, etc. It encourages you as a candidate to continue to seek and encourage public input and participation in your work once elected. It also slowly builds trust, it builds hope that the government can actually help make people's lives easier and better. Hope that we are in desperate need of after all the corruption scandals. The House Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct strongly supports public financing in its final report. However even if you're an incumbent now, this will make your life easier too. You won't need to deal with the pressure of having to keep raising money in order to be reelected and you can just focus on doing the work of the people. You as an incumbent will be able to save costs in your overall campaign budget as well!

This system worked very well for Hawai‘i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. This is an opportunity to lessen

the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, make your lives as candidates easier, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. Please **PASS Senate Bill 1543 SD2 HD1** out of your committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,

State House District 23 | State Senate District 12

Cell: 808-255-6663

Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:06:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Hartmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Committee Members,

I am testifying to express my **STRONG SUPPORT** for SB1543 relating to clean elections. It’s critical that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai‘i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: affordable housing, cost of living, protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai‘i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut’s program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai‘i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people’s trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai‘i, and 74% of the Hawai‘i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That’s because we know that it’s the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai‘i that puts kama ‘āina and kānaka maoli first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo for your time,

Hannah Hartmann

96720

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:10:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for SB1543, a bill that establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in Hawaii. This proposed legislation is a significant step towards promoting transparency and fairness in our political system by reducing the influence of big-money donors and promoting the involvement of everyday citizens in the electoral process.

By establishing a public financing system, SB1543 aims to make running for office more accessible for individuals who are not independently wealthy or well-connected. Furthermore, this legislation provides an avenue for candidates to compete on a level playing field, without being beholden to special interests.

The establishment of a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in Hawaii is a crucial step towards creating a more transparent and democratic election process. The legislation ensures that candidates will be accountable to the people they represent, rather than to wealthy special interests. I urge lawmakers to support SB1543 and help to promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in our political system.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:14:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John B. Clark	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. This is a fundamental necessity if we are to preserve our endangered democracy.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:16:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michaëlle Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern at the State Legislature, I am a 40 year resident of Kauai and I strongly support the passage of SB1543. This bill will give all political candidates and equal playing field in elections. I think people should be elected based on their experience and views rather than how many donations they receive to win an election. This could possibly affect the whole country and make the government by and for the people again. Too many times, laws and bills are passed that appear to favor corporate over citizen interests.

mahalo,

Michaëlle Edwards

3812 Ahonui Place

Princeville Hawaii 96722

808-652-3823

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:27:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Senators,

Lets get big money interests off the table. We elected you to serve the citizens not corporate interests of those who mostly don't even live here!

please support SB1543,

mahalo,

pamela burrell

kalihiwai, Kaua'i

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:32:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
keomailani von gogh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need this bill to pass in order to ensure fair and non corrupt elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:34:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gretchen Goo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543 to help diminish the sway of special interests, foster diversity among candidates, and strengthen the public's faith in our democratic system. As a former educator, state worker, and 5th generation family on Kauai I would like to see the stress reduced on candidates who wish to hold political office with the public good in mind and be unburdened by obligations to donors now needed to finance their campaigns. In this way they can focus on improving the lives of struggling local residents in lieu of wooing special interests who are only out to improve their bottom line for stockholders.

Please consider us kamaina and the future for our keiki to be able to remain in our home and enjoy the quality of life that our parents and grandparents have worked so hard to achieve by providing passing this measure to level the playing field for altruistic persons wanting to be in public service who haven't the means to finance their campaigns and do not wish to be beholden to big money interest's agendas.

[Maine and Connecticut](#) have successfully implemented public funding systems for over a decade, leading to greater competition, increased voter turnout, and more women and people of color [running for](#) office. There is a remarkably low cost to do this and we have ample resources. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:35:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William R. Higa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The citizens of Hawaii need and deserve clean and fair elections. Please support this bill! Mahalo & Aloha__Bill Higa from Hilo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:35:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isis Usborne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

- Isis Usborne

Committee Members,

I have been watching the progress of SB1543 for sometime now and I am submitting testimony again in strong support. I believe that this bill is key to giving teeth to **all the** other reforms proposed and supported by The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC).

This bill in particular provides adequate public funding for elections to allow candidates to not have to rely on large donors or special interest groups.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with the funding they need to run competitive campaigns, and would ban the receipt of special interest support. This system worked well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works in Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its proportionately small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high candidate participation rates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics and restore the people's trust in state government. Voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

Let's build a Hawai'i together that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo for the good work that you do.

Mike Lillie
Hawi

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:49:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Oba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

I strongly SUPPORT SB 1543 SD2 and urge you to pass it. Publicly financed elections that are fully funded reduce the influence of money in politics and promote diversity and representation in the political system.

The Hawaii House of Representatives showed courage in creating the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct in response to citizen concerns about government corruption. That commission proposed 31 bills and includes full publicly financed elections which sits before you now. SB 1543 received almost unanimous backing from the Hawaii State Senate. It is now up to the House to pass it and send it on to the Governor's desk.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:51:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Sutherland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:52:56 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Goodyear	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this important bill.

Mahalo,

Brian Goodyear, Ph.D.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:53:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB1543. Thank you.

Jane Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

Honolulu, HI 96816

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:05:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bill Watts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:10:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Franz Weber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This will make elections more transparent, and less influenced by PACs

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:15:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Pillen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I urge this body to do everything in its power to remove the harmful influence corporate and private donations have on our politics in Hawaii. Corruption is far too rampant here and the decades of pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Please be pono and put kama‘āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Thank you,

Michelle Pillen

Kailua, Oahu



Committee on Finance
Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa

Wednesday April 5 2023, 2:pm Videoconference/Rm 308
SB1543 SD2 HD1 — RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES TO
ELECTED OFFICE

TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii wants to thank the Committee Chairs and members for hearing this valuable and popular bill.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB1543 SD2 HD1 which Establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year; Requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature; and appropriates funds. We also offer comments.

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that methods of financing political campaigns should enhance political equality for all citizens; protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; enable candidates to compete equitably for public office; ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

Delegates and voters in the 1978 Constitutional Convention in Hawaii realized the importance of this concept, resulting in the creation of the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund and Hawaii's partial public funding option. Below is a quote from the Convention during the discussion of the HECF:

“ . . . if we think these tremendous sums being spent [on elections], these tremendous sums being contributed, **are not sums for which we are going to ultimately pay** because of poor government . . . and because of undue influence . . . we are fooling ourselves.” -Delegate Naomi Campbell during the 1978 Constitutional Convention.

Who funds privately funded elections? Wealthy businesses and individuals. Over half of all Hawaii campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors who each gave at least \$6,000¹. (The sources of campaign contributions changed markedly in Connecticut legislative races after implementation of full public funding. In 2018, 99% of campaign funds used by legislative candidates came from individuals, in sharp contrast to preprogram practices when less than half of the contributions made to political candidates came from individuals.²)

Why could this be a problem? **The affluent have different priorities:** 68 percent of the general public believes politicians ought to see to it that everyone who wants to work can find a job, while only 19 percent of the wealthy believe the same; the general public is twice as likely to support raising the minimum wage high enough to keep families out of poverty as affluent respondents; a majority of Americans think that wealth should be taxed at the same rate as work, but the wealthiest 20% of Americans, who are most likely to make substantial contributions to political campaigns, are those most likely to profit from low taxes on capital gains.³

The broader public is short-changed by policies which may be influenced by wealthy business interests. Publicly funded elections let the voting public have more influence on political decisions, **as is widely appreciated by voters.** A survey of Hawaii voters in 2022 showed that 74% of the Hawai'i voting public would be more likely to support a candidate who refused campaign donations from out-of-state developers, major landowners, hotel conglomerates, and energy companies; 70 percent of voters were more likely to support a candidate who refused donations from lobbyists and corporate PACs.⁴ When large contributions are made by business interests, it's likely that the **customers of those businesses indirectly pay, in higher prices, for these contributions.** Again, the **public pays for the costs of privately funded election**

campaigns. When candidates are funded by the public, politicians are free to make decisions based on the merit of ideas, not biased, consciously or not, by consideration of who gave or will give money to their election campaigns.

The costs to implement Full Public Funding of Elections are reasonable and affordable. Connecticut’s program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai’i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.⁵

Connecticut’s Citizen’s Elections program (CEP) shows how **full public funding can repay its cost:** “For many years, environmentalists tried to expand the bottle bill recycling program..., but the powerful beverage industry and its paid lobbyists were able to stop every effort at reform because they gave thousands of dollars to legislators. This year (2016), the legislature—with three-quarters of members having participated in the CEP—voted... to reclaim millions of dollars’ worth of unclaimed bottle deposits, ... approximately \$25 million a year out of the pockets of the beverage industry and into the general fund. This alone recoups more money than the CEP costs”.²

Instead of fundraising, candidates can spend more time talking to their constituents or analyzing and discussing solutions to Hawaii’s problems as quoted by CT state legislators.²

SB1543 SD2 HD1 will support a more diverse field of candidates. Currently people without wealth or wealthy families and friends, who may be politically akamai and interested in running for office, often feel (probably rightly) that they will not be able to conduct winning campaigns, since 90% of races in nationally and in Hawaii are won by the candidate who spends most in an election contest.

These campaign finance objectives, which I believe are widely shared, lead directly to recommending full and realistic public financing of election campaigns and supporting SB1543 SD2 HD1.

Comments: 1) We recommend that the amounts to be appropriated in Sections 6 and 7 of SB1543 SD2 HD1 be restored to the amounts in SB1543 SD1. **2)** On page

20, lines 1-5, of SB1543 SD2 HD1, dollar amounts are (presumably inadvertently) missing.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly urges this Committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Citations

¹ Analysis of CSC database on contributions to 2022 elections

² Rotman, B.A. & Nightingale, L. Amplifying Small-dollar Donors in the *Citizens United* Era: Connecticut's Citizen's Elections Program Shifted the Balance of Power to the People. Common Cause Education Fund, 2017

³ Callahan, D. & Mijin Cha, J. Stacked Deck: How the Dominance of Politics by the Affluent & Business Undermines Economic Mobility in America. Demos, Feb. 2013

⁴ Hawaii Voter Candidate Preference Memo. Data for Progress, 2023

⁵ Why don't we cite the costs in AZ? Because the legislation establishing full public financing for AZ elections failed to provide automatic increases in dollar amounts to account for inflation; therefore the number of participating candidates dropped gradually and continually over years of implementation. SB11543 SD2 HD1 wisely includes indexing dollar amounts to inflation.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:39:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1. Please support this bill.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:41:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Finance Committee Members,

SB1543 SD2 HD1 establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawaii, to begin with the 2026 general election year. This measure would **provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign.**

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

Public financing of elections is one of the most important ways to free our state political system from undue influence from corporations, businesses, and special interest groups, and focus on important concerns from constituents.

Please pass this very important bill **SB1543 SD2 HD1.**

Respectfully submitted with Mahalo,

Marsha Hee, Senate District 02, Volcano, Hawaii Island, (808) 985-8725

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:45:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neil Frazer	Frazer-Frantz Ohana	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Everyone in my ohana strongly supports this bill.

It is heartbreaking, and personally embarrassing, to reside in a state where the costs of election campaigns make the corruption of elected officials so rampant and egregious.

Publicly funded elections is not a new concept, and has been demonstrated to work well in several other states. It will work here too, if we give it a chance.

Mahalo for your unselfish service to the people of Hawaii.

Testimony to the Thirty-Second Legislature, 2023 Regular Session
House Committee on Finance
Colin D. Moore, Ph.D.

Senate Bill 1543, SD2, HD1: Relating to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office
Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am Colin Moore, a political scientist and professor at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am also the author of a UHERO report on public campaign financing available for download here: <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Public-Campaign-Financing.pdf>

I strongly support SB 1543, SD2, HD1. It follows the successful model of public campaign financing currently used in the states of Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut.

There are three principal reasons why I support this bill:

1. Research shows that block grant programs can increase electoral competition and lead to more candidates running for public office. More competitive elections often lead to stronger voter mobilization and communication efforts. Arizona's public financing program has been shown to reduce ballot "roll off," which is the tendency of voters to leave ballots blank for less-visible legislative and municipal races.
2. These programs have been shown to contribute to greater diversity among candidates for public office. The advent of Connecticut's full funding program led to the election of more Latinos and women to the legislature. In Arizona, far more Native American and Latino candidates ran for office than before.
3. Perhaps most important, public financing eliminates the need to raise private funds. This may make candidates less beholden to donors, but it also allows them to spend more time connecting with voters and discussing public policy. For example, when candidates in Maine were freed from the pressures of fund-raising, they spent more extra time canvassing and attending community events. In one survey of office-seekers, respondents frequently mentioned this benefit as a primary reason they decided to accept public funds. This bill is good for candidates and good for citizens.

Finally, I know that cost is a concern, but even if we assume very high levels of participation, this program is unlikely to cost more than \$10 million per year. In Connecticut, the program cost about \$13.5 million for the entire 2020 election; in Maine it cost \$4.5 million in 2022.

For these reasons, I urge you to support SB 1543, SD2, HD1. It's a good investment in the health of our local democracy and one we can afford.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:47:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Lamson Leatherman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Megan Leatherman

Honalo, HI

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:49:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:52:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Polland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass [SB1543](#)

What a wonderful world it will be to have campaigns all on an even track where the ISSUES become the focus. Mahalo nui. Let's get this done!!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:52:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in Strong Support of this long overdue effort to establish comprehensive system of public financing for candidates to elected office in Hawai'i.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:54:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Livit Callentine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the establishment of a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

[SB1543](#) will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Please pass [SB1543](#). Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:56:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Ann Gerry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 and believe public funding of elections will benefit our political system.

Mary Ann Gerry

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:58:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Carolyn Eaton. I am a resident of Honolulu and a long time League of Women Voters member. I would be so proud and happy were you to approve this bill and make possible a brighter future for democracy in Hawaii through public funding of our elections.

Mahalo for your consideration of my plea and for your hard work.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:00:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Deges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. Partial public financing is not enough. As long as candidates need to rely on private donations to get elected, there will always be the risk of corruption, or the perception of it.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. All of these things are badly needed. Voters rank government corruption as the #3 top issue facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:06:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ilene bellerue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. Publicly funded election campaigns will level the playing field and allow all candidates the voice they need in our state.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:12:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Gray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public

financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:16:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cathy Cunningham-Little	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Cathy Cunningham-Little

Committee on Finance

Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa

Wednesday, March 17, 22, 2023, 2:00 p.m., Room 325 & Via Videoconference

SB1543 SD2 HD1- RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING FOR
CANDIDATES TO ELECTED OFFICE

TESTIMONY- Janet Mason, Honolulu

Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I strongly support SB 1543, SD2 HD1, which would establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State of Hawaii, beginning with the 2026 general election year.

Public funding for candidates, not political parties, should be available for all State and County elective offices in both the primary and general elections. One common sense reason is that reciprocity (responding to a positive action with another positive action) is normal social behavior for people, including politicians. But research shows that while politicians may claim autonomy from the feelings of obligation associated with gifts and favors that influence everyone else, they are also susceptible.¹

This year's House "Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature provide funds to candidates, "because public funding expands the reach of many small donors and can relieve candidates of the need to rely on the support of special interest groups or large donors." SB1543 could contribute toward these objectives while helping to restore confidence that Hawaii's elected officials are not unduly influenced by private lobbyists and campaign donors.

Some people have objected to this bill on the basis that future publicly funded candidates would not have to devote the time and energy to raising private campaign money in the same way incumbent elected officials have. While this may be true, full public campaign financing is a better approach, providing political opportunity for anyone who is not wealthy or does not have access to wealth through conventional fundraising. Since candidates are required to raise qualifying contributions sufficient to demonstrate they are viable candidates, public investment in their candidacy is warranted.

The HD1 version of this measure requires that there be a minimum of \$30 million in the Hawaii Election campaign fund before any funds are disbursed for the program described in this bill. It is impossible to know with certainty what the initial "take up rate" would be for the proposed program, and this probably explains concerns about the adequacy of

¹ Fehr, Ernst; Gächter, Simon (2000). "[Fairness and Retaliation: The Economics of Reciprocity](#)". *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. **14** (3): 159–182. [doi:10.1257/jep.14.3.159](#) found that in the 2002 election, U.S. Congress Representatives who received the most money from special interest groups were over seven times more likely to vote in favor of the group that had contributed the most money to their campaigns.

this appropriation, or whether \$30 million would be too large an appropriation. But this ignores the fact that there will be a period of evaluation following an initial public investment, and this evaluation centers around the Legislature's normal budgeting review process, where our elected representatives can weigh in on the advisability (and affordability) of the next round of campaign financing.

In addition to the initial appropriation to the fund, the original version of this bill authorized \$200 thousand from this fund for fiscal year 2023-24 and \$200 thousand for fiscal year 2024-25 to prepare for elections taking place in 2024. I defer to the Campaign Spending Commission on the adequacy of these amounts, but it is essential to provide additional staff for the Campaign Spending Commission for the new and broader mission they would carry under this bill. If the measure does not take effect until the General Election of 2026, these amounts and dates need to be adjusted accordingly.

It is my sincere hope that the spending limits for elective offices described in the bill will be accepted by potential candidates. Hawaii is searching for a "sweet spot," where candidates find the limits adequate, but taxpayers are not overly burdened. Other states like Maine have successfully taken the plunge, so Hawaii can learn from their success.

The U.S. Supreme Court in its "Citizens United," ruling has already decided that spending limits are unconstitutional unless candidates accept public funding. Let's try a different path here in Hawaii - a public financing program that helps reduce the escalating cost of campaigns, eliminating the reliance on big contributions from wealthy donors. Let's also make it likely that qualified first-time candidates without wealth or access to wealth could be more confident about paying for campaign expenses.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:32:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dominique Meyer Gere	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please schedule a hearing and pass SB1543. Corporate and special interest money should stay out of politics, and SB1543 would establish a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices.

Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:35:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
d leong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please pass

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:36:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Howard Shapiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543. It is important that all candidates have a equal chance of funding their campaigns. Now it is big money that is controlling most of our politics.

Thnak you for supporting **Public Financing for Candidates** running for public office.

Howard Shapiro

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:36:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Huynh Eller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:37:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deb Marois	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please pass SB1543 to establish public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices. More fairness is needed in elections – the most amount of money should not be the deciding factor! Reform has happened in other states with positive outcomes and it can work in Hawai'i too.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Deb Marois, Makawao

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:41:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Berrett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543.

Mahalo !!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:42:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dale Jensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

With support for SB1543 SD2 HD1 you have an unique opportunity in our democracy: To remove the influence of big money from Hawaii's election process. This is unprecedented and is entirely appropriate to the times in which we live.

Our state faces many incredible challenges including fighting homelessness, reversing the flight of young people from our state, dealing with Hawaii's high cost of living, preparing ourselves for both the predictable and unpredictable effects of climate change, doing our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and of course, overcoming the corruption in our state government. For the average Hawaiian resident it is difficult to know how the often nefarious and hidden effects of big money have played a part in both creating these problems and solving them. Removing the influence of outside money from our elections will eliminate such suspicions and help restore trust in government.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

This bill is the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big

money interests. Please take this opportunity to do the right thing for the people of Hawaii whom you represent.

Mahalo.

Dale Jensen

Prof Engineer, Ret'd

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:44:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of the House Committee on Finance,

I am in **STRONG** support of SB1543 SD2 HD1. This is a *long* time coming and absolutely necessary in order to take big money **OUT** of politics and create the kind of democracy the people of Hawai'i nei deserve.

Mahalo nui for your consideration.

April 4, 2023

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i, and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012 and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting publicly financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo and Aloha Pono,

Setsuko Morinoue
Holualoa, 96725

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:56:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dale A. Head	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

SB1543 SD2 HD1

Establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year. Requires the Campaign Spending Commission to submit a progress and final report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 03/22/2075. (HD1)

Aloha House Committee on Finance Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa, and, esteemed members:

1. I strongly support passage of SB1543 SD2 HD1. We the public are pretty much fed up with corruption of our state government, something which is endemic and systemic due to private donations funding candidates for political office. The only way to deal with it is through public funding. So be it, even though this is decades overdue.

2. Since 2016 I have made multiple trips to our Legislature in search of respecting and conferring normal voting rights on members of Home Owners Associations (HOAs) for their own elections. When Developers foist ByLaws on buyers of properties in HOA complexes, there is no language about due process or the right to cast one's own vote. Instead, that is made 'conditional' upon physically attending an Annual Meeting within which an election for Boards of Directors is included. This necessarily screens out everyone who cannot attend, meaning, mobility challenged, disabled, and investors (landlords) who are too busy. Much chicanery happens due to this, and, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) is unwilling to investigate unethical and dishonest misconduct of privately contracted management companies. The DCCA response to complaints from the Public about this is usually 'contact your Legislator' (to change the 'law'), and, 'go hire an attorney' then go to Civil Court. Quite ridiculous, in my opinion, we pay taxes for them to do their job, and their attitude is, 'that's not my job. They must regard taxpayers as \$uckers.

3. Twisted humor Hawaii Supreme Court issued a ruling against 'Gut & Replace' tricks within our Legislature, but does not enforce that. So, I contacted our State Attorney General Office with a simple question. "Does your Office enforce Hawaii Supreme Court decisions on our Legislature". Very belated response via email was, 'Go hire an attorney'. Wow, another useless state Office. Over 650 employees of which 180 are attorneys. What a waste of taxpayer dollars they are, in my opinion.

4. Our new Governor, who has control of the State Attorney General, should look at impressing this philosophy on it. If it is good enough for the feds, it should be good enough at the state level.

<https://www.justice.gov/jm/jm-9-28000-principles-federal-prosecution-business-organizations>

9-28.010 - FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF CORPORATE PROSECUTION

[The prosecution of corporate crime is a high priority for the Department of Justice. By investigating allegations of wrongdoing and bringing charges where appropriate for criminal misconduct, the Department promotes critical public interests. These interests include, among other things: (1) protecting the integrity of our economy and capital markets by enforcing the rule of law; (2) protecting consumers, investors, and business entities against bad actors that gain unfair advantage or cause economic harm by violating the law; (3) preventing violations of environmental and worker safety laws; and (4) discouraging business practices that would permit or promote unlawful conduct at the expense of the public interest.

One of the most effective ways to combat corporate misconduct is by holding accountable all individuals who engage in wrongdoing. Such accountability deters future illegal activity, incentivizes changes in corporate behavior, ensures that the proper parties are held responsible for their actions, and promotes the public's confidence in our justice system.

Prosecutors should focus on wrongdoing by individuals from the very beginning of any investigation of corporate misconduct. By focusing on building cases against individual wrongdoers, the Department accomplishes multiple goals. First, the Department increases its ability to identify the full extent of corporate misconduct. Because a corporation only acts through individuals, investigating the conduct of individuals is the most efficient and effective way to determine the facts and the extent of any corporate misconduct. Second, by focusing on individuals, the Department increases the likelihood that those with knowledge of the corporate misconduct will be identified and provide information about the individuals involved, at any level of an organization. Third, the Department maximizes the likelihood that the criminal investigation appropriately identifies and holds accountable culpable individuals and not just the corporation.

These Principles provide internal Department of Justice guidance. They are not intended to, do not, and may not be relied upon to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any party in any matter civil or criminal. Nor are any limitations hereby placed on otherwise lawful investigative and litigative prerogatives of the Department of Justice.] (updated March 2023)

5. Please pass this Bill, SB1543 SD2 HD1.

Respectfully, **Dale A. Head** [dale.head@aol.com] Tuesday 4 April 2023

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:24:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is foundationally important

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:32:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bill SB 1543 should become law..

A wonderful addition to our great electoral process.

Fair elections are a foundation of Democracy.

Mahalo,

Chuck Brown

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:38:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Matson	Individual	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of publicly funded elections, but I have a number of concerns about this bill as currently written that I want to express before you pass this important legislation.

1) I think the start date is a decade overdue. Since we can't go back in time, let's begin sooner, rather than later--in 2024, not 2026. I know that the CSC will need a chance to catch up with these proposed changes and there will be a learning curve, but what better way for candidates to get a chance to test it out and figure out what is working and what isn't than to jump into it and then work out the issues as they come up.

2) I disagree with the decision to move all races to a 200 minimum of qualifying contributions and believe that those running in counties with smaller population numbers should have to seek fewer qualifying contributions, potentially as few as 100 for those counties with the least population.

3) I believe requiring a signature from the contributors is perfectly reasonable, as long as the CSC is comfortable with the added requirements of verifying signatures. Also is there some mechanism available to accept electronic signatures? Some candidates fundraise using social media/websites/email and to limit them to only accept "wet" signatures and paper money/checks is a significant limitation. I am reading wording that suggests that an electronic form of payment made in accordance with procedures approved by the commission will allow for electronic signatures as well and am just looking for verification that is something that feels doable for the CSC to keep track of, and that an electronic option can be utilized.

4) Last, but possibly **MOST** importantly, if the amounts in Section 11-G, specifically for County Council races in counties with populations between 195,000 and 499,999 aren't raised for races that are contested it will not really be providing support for a fair and competitive race between those who choose to use public funds and those who don't. I would advise that when taking averages of prior spending amounts in races that **ONLY** races that had competitive challengers be factored in. Also the amounts from the 2022 races should be included for the most accurate picture of what it currently costs to run a competitive race in both the primary and general election in that category. I have not evaluated all of the funds proposed in all of the races, but this is one I am familiar with and can attest that the proposed maximum of \$20,000 is less than

half that would be needed to truly run a competitive race in the current political climate in our County.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Shannon Matson

Hawai'i Island Resident

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:38:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fred cadiz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly urge you to pass this bill in order "to level the playing field" for all aspiring politicians. Make it FAIR and EQUITABLE for all and not only those who come from money and have the right "connections."

Then maybe there will be hope for better government for a better Hawaii

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:52:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu 96822

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:54:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:00:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Le?a Ka?aha?aina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please pass SB1543. We need representatives in our government that will truly represent us, the voters and citizens, not just those who finance their campaigns. It will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Mahalo,

Le?a Ka?aha?aina

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:07:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JarraeTehani Manasas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Its crucially important that this body does eveything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay to play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families; from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boose public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an efectibe campaign and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012.

This is an oppourtuny to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people and restore the peoples TRUST in this body and in each of you. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

End pay to play corruction in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli first.

Mahalo,

JarraeTehani Manasas, Kailua Kona Hawai'i

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:18:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Maitino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli,

local people, first — not big money interests.

Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Maria Maitino

Kilauea, Kauai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:20:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Elizabeth Rey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully request that you please pass SB1543.

I think it is important for there to be a level 'playing field' for all candidates to participate in focusing on the needs of the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:20:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Yamashita and Finance Committee,

My name is John Fitzpatrick "Fitz" and I am in strong support of public financing of elections to get big money out of our politics. The estimated \$10-20 million every two years is well worth it to get the perceived tit for tat out of our election system and level the playing field so regular people can run for office and win.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to get a plethora of \$5 donations to run for office instead of being beholden to wealthy contributors that max out thousands of dollar contributions to campaigns. In the last election cycle I heard so many of you complain about the big money in politics. This is one large step in getting big money out of our political system so government can work better for the people of Hawaii.

Please pass SB1543 and get big money out of our elections.

Mahalo,
Fitz

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:21:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
denise woods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Please, do the right thing. We all know that politics is about money and power, but the least you could do is make a pretense that it isn't. Please pass this bill and give hope to citizens.

Denise Woods, RN

Kauai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:38:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne ('Antu') Harvey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo Chair Yamashita for scheduling this hearing and providing opportunity to testify in writing from neighbor islands.

Aloha Finance Committee Members,

PLEASE SUPPORT this bill to help ensure we are governed under a democratic system by improving fair and clean elections. We MUST rebalance citizen say in who represents us by reducing the special interest sway that Big Money current has.

We are feeling all but disenfranchised. Our voter turnouts are some of the lowest in the Country. This doesn't mean we will quietly go along like 'sheeple'. Raise the bar, lead the way to Clean and Fair Elections. Stop the autocratic exploitation. We ALL live on these islands TOGETHER. We are one ohana. Please hold space and give voice to us all, not just the big donors, power brokers, 'old boys' and lobbyists.

We are watching whether you help uplift us all. **Please do the right thing. Support a level playing field/ Fair Elections. Please support this bill.** We will happily invest in a better future by providing public financing for candidates for state and county offices. It is the right path.

Mahalo nui.

Antu Harvey | Hōlualoa

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:42:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marya Grambs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. It's time to get money out of politics. Our elected officials could do so much more good for the community if they weren't having to fundraise all the time!

Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:44:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemarie Jauch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former first time candidate from Kauai I strongly approve of this bill.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:55:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beryl Blaich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairman Yamashita, Vice-chair Kitagawa and Members of the House Finance Committee,

Thank you for hearing this very important bill. I am very much in support of the recommendations of the Commission to Improve Standards and Conduct for the Legislature and for government as a whole. I do support the public financing of elections measures set forth in this bill.

With aloha,

Beryl Blaich

PO Box 1434

Kīlauea, HI 96754

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 2:00pm - Conference Room 308, State Capitol
RE: SB1543 Relating to Public Financing For Candidates To Elected Office

Position: Strong Support

Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Finance Committee:

It's crucially important that we remove the impact money has on our elections. Just like other positions within government, elected officials should not be dependent upon private donations to stay in their seat. We now need a robust full public financing of elections system as in SB1543.

We Need Money Out Of Politics Now

The influence that money has on our elections needs to end. If we want our government officials to act on behalf of its residents rather than those who fund their campaigns, we need to end the current system. The potential for corruptive behavior is too large when people are giving thousands of dollars every year to help get legislators elected.

Money is incredibly crucial in our elections, as candidates who outspend their opponents win at a 91% rate. Of all campaign donations candidates received in the 2022 election cycle, over half of the money was given by just 980 donors who gave at least \$6,000 each. This massive political power by a small group is not democratic.

Too many candidates are reliant on their donors to stay in office and an even larger number of potential candidates don't have the wealthy donor connections that are needed to win. This is a formula for uncompetitive elections and elected officials that respond to a few private interests rather than the public at large.

Reasonable Cost

Hawai'i County Council races had a very successful public funding program in 2010 and 2012. Both Connecticut and Maine have statewide public funding programs that are hugely popular. Over 60% of all legislators in Maine and 80% in Connecticut participate in their program and receive no private donations.

This amazing policy can be implemented for a reasonable price. Connecticut's system was established as a response to their huge corruption scandals and with more than twice our population still costs them less than \$14 million per election cycle. The charts below show that even with high participation rates the cost for Hawai'i should average less than \$10 million per year. This would be less than 0.1% of the state budget or less than \$7 per person.

The following cost estimates assume 2 candidates per office. This number was chosen because it exceeds the number of eligible candidates in other states with full public financing of elections. In addition this figure is similar to or exceeds the current number of candidates in Hawai'i for most races. Costs per election are calculated by multiplying the number of candidates by the max amount of funds available for that office. The annual cost is calculated by dividing the cost per election by how often the elections occur. Seats that have 2-year terms divide the cost per election by 2. Seats that have 4-year terms divide the cost per election by 4, except annual Senate costs are calculated based on 3 elections every 10 years. The totals for scenarios beyond 2 participants per seat are included at the bottom. 3 candidates per seat along with excluding some high cost races are provided.

Estimated Cost of Full Public Financing of Elections for All Races

Office	Estimated Participants	Participants per Seat	Cost per Election	Annual Cost	Annual Cost per Resident
Governor	2	2	\$5,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$0.87
LG	2	2	\$2,400,000	\$600,000	\$0.42
State Senator	50	2	\$5,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1.04
State Representative	102	2	\$5,100,000	\$2,550,000	\$1.77
HNL Mayor	2	2	\$4,600,000	\$1,150,000	\$0.80
HNL Attorney	2	2	\$450,000	\$112,500	\$0.08
HNL Council	18	2	\$2,430,000	\$607,500	\$0.42
HI Mayor	2	2	\$720,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
HI Attorney	2	2	\$80,000	\$20,000	\$0.01
HI Council	18	2	\$360,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
Maui Mayor	2	2	\$1,200,000	\$300,000	\$0.21
Maui Council	18	2	\$540,000	\$270,000	\$0.19
Kauai Mayor	2	2	\$700,000	\$175,000	\$0.12
Kauai Attorney	2	2	\$50,000	\$12,500	\$0.01
Kauai Council	14	2	\$420,000	\$210,000	\$0.15
OHA	18	2	\$720,000	\$180,000	\$0.12
Total All Races	256	2		\$9,297,500	\$6.46

Different Scenarios for Hawai'i

Office	Estimated Participants	Participants per Seat		Annual Cost	Annual Cost per Resident
3 Candidates per Seat	384	3		\$13,946,250	\$9.68
Excluding Gov and LG	252	2		\$7,447,500	\$5.17
3 Candidates per Seat Excluding Gov and LG	378	3		\$11,171,250	\$7.76
Excluding Gov, LG and Mayors	244	2		\$5,642,500	\$3.92
3 Candidates per Seat Excluding Gov, LG and Mayors	366	3		\$8,463,750	\$5.88

If we are serious about ending the corruptive practices that plague our state we need to establish a fully publicly financed elections program now.

Mahalo,

Nate Hix
808.469.8740

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:59:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barryn Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone born and raised here on O`ahu, I am in support of publicly financed elections.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:00:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Thal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

Please pass SB1543 SD2 HD1! It makes sense to bring our state into a fair election process.

Mahalo,

Sherry Thal, Kea'au, HI 96749

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:33:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Hustace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:45:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilihea Inaba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Thank you so much to Chair Yamashita for scheduling this hearing. This is a supportive testimony for SB1543. This bill has gotten this far and it is not without you that it will be able to move forward. It is so relevant right now that this bill be passed as it will remove dirty money and dirty power from the politics of this place. By setting up a fully publicly funded election, we would end corporate and private donations. This is to benefit the people of Hawaii, the land, and waters that feed us. This would put trust back into the system that is supposed to be doing the greatest good for Hawaii's people. So I urge and ask that you please support SB1543.

Mahalo,

Kilihea Inab

Kaloko, Kona, Hawaii

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:46:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Neal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strongly support for SB1543.

The Big Island's Clean Elections Program of 2010 and 2012 was very popular and a great success. Even initial detractors of the program acknowledged that it was better to meet with their constituents about issues rather than time spent fund-raising.

SB1543 as proposed establishes a more citizen concentric elections and a more citizen focused government SB1543.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Neal

Waimea

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:50:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:50:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hela	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

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That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:01:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara L. George	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONGLY SUPPORT. Public financing of elections is absolutely crucial to real voting reform and the democratic process in Hawaii. Please support, vote for, and pass this bill!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:06:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
robin knox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Clean Elections

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:07:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Winston R Welch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Please remove the influence money has on our politics by SUPPORTING SB1543 SD2 HD1.

Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo, Winston Welch

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:15:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Momi Ventura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Alohamai Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money it has on our Hawaii politics. Corruption is far Far to rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Seriously Money in politics will always hold back progress on all the issues which are important to our local working families, from the cost of living to much needed affordable housing resources, to sourcing protection for our environment, and much more.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is a favorable opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play serious corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'I that puts kama'āina and our Host people the kānaka maoli and the local people, first — And not big money interests.

Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:27:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Navarra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is really important to get money out of the political process. Please pass this bill!

CLIFFORD CHANG, MPH

RESIDENCE

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BUSINESS

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Cell phone: (808) 347-8035
Email: <cliffordchangconsulting@yahoo.com>

Date: April 4, 2023
To: Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance
Re: Strong Support, with comments, for SB1543 SD2 HD1 Related to Public Financing for Candidates to Elected Office
Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, 2023; 2:00 pm; Videoconference, Conference Room 308

My name is Clifford Chang, testifying today as a private individual. I am a Hawai'i resident since 1976 after graduating from college, whereupon I attended graduate school at the UH Manoa School of Public Health.

I am testifying in **strong support for SB1543**, which establishes a comprehensive system of public financing for all candidates seeking election to state and county public offices in the State, to begin with the 2026 general election year.

I have been fortunate to have been involved with in advocating for public health policy since 1995, advocating and testifying on issues related to HIV/AIDS, tobacco prevention and control, and community access to primary health care. I have seen the effects of what I believe are "big money" donations influencing and affecting public health policy, both at the City and County, Hawai'i state, and US federal levels. I believe it is past time for Hawai'i to join those states that have already implemented public funding systems for elections. I believe SB1543 will do much to break the inevitable bond between big donors and those seeking office.

I believe SB1543 will do much to create an even playing field for all candidates, refocusing elections back on the key issues and needs of the community, rather than on the overwhelming need to fund raise continuously for those in office to remain in office, and having to face and deal with the desires and needs of those who donate the most.

It is my belief a fully publicly financed election system which provides equal funding to all candidates, will enable people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives to run for office without worrying about raising funds. This would increase competition and diversity among candidates and give voters a broader range of options and voices in our democracy. I do not see any downsides to Hawai'i implementing such an election system.

I ask that you pass SB1543 out of the Committee on Finance and support the passage of this bill into law.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify.

Aloha,



Clifford Chang

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:39:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Kaaz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this very important bill. It is critical to prevent legislators from being influenced by the large sums of money currently being donated to their campaigns by special interest groups.

Sincerely,

Joy Kaaz

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:40:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Mowdy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for all the reasons that HAPA has listed in their testimony. We must move in this direction as soon as possible.

Thanks for the opportunity to submit this.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:50:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacy Soderholm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass [SB1543](#)! We MUST have public financing of elections in order to ensure true democracy and government that represents the *people*, not the corporations and other powerful individuals and entities.

Democracy in this country is teetering on the brink. Let Hawaii be part of the solution and an example for other states.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:51:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support this important legislation.

Mahalo,

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:59:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rexann Dubiel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let's dispense with the cloud over Hawaii's Legislature.

Let's play fair and stop "pay to play" politics.

Let's level the playing field.

Pass SB1543.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:00:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Langham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. It's fair and just makes sense.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:04:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shayla Middleton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:08:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen McKee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the passage of SB1543, legislation that I believe will help level the playing field for all candidates. Keeping money out of politics, specifically from special interest groups with deep pockets, I believe will aid in keeping our democracy intact.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Eileen McKee, Kihei

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:09:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellior Marcus	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Ellior Marcus

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:18:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elaine Wender	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support. Please pass this critical legislation to take money out of politics. All the other committes have passed it; now it is up to you to do the right thing.

Elaine Wender

Wailuku

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:26:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julio Magalhães	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Legislature:

I am writing in support of SB1543 which proposes public financing of elections. I strongly urge you to vote "Yes" on this measure.

This bill will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

Public financing of elections for state and county offices is essential for our government to properly represent the interests of the people. Public financing has been successfully implemented in a few other states, and Hawai'i deserves to be part of this demonstrated path to more democracy in our state.

Please vote "Yes" on SB1543.

Sincerely,

Julio Magalhaes

Kilauea, HI

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:29:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Kaneko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Please pass SNB1543. Hawaii elections are not for sale. It is vitally important to have elections publicly financed. It is imperative that special interests and corporations do not buy elections and candidates. Again, please pass SB1543 and level the playing field. Let's put the people of Hawai'i first.

Thank you,

Sarah Kaneko

Kalaheo, Kauai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:32:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Landreau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The future of Hawaiian government depends upon getting money out of politics. We have suffered corruption too long. Support and pass HB 1543. Mahalo and aloha.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:33:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
j Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ha Committee Members,

I have lived here 15 years and come from Texas but never on the mainland have I seen such a small area have so much obvilous inter state collussion to get so many people who are not at all concerned with THEIR CUSTOMERS concerns please take this opportunity to start a serious change in that direction! Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine. **Thank you for doing the Right Thing**

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost.

Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:10:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members - please do not miss this opportunity to make a real difference in our local politics. SB 1543 is a much much needed step towards getting money out of politics.

I say this from my perspective as a retired lobbyist and executive at IBM and at KPMG!

These opportunities do not present themselves often or easily.

Mahalo,

John Webster

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:11:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ingrid Peterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

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That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama 'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

Please, do the right thing.

*Mahalo,
Ingrid Peterson, Kailua, Ko'olaupoko*

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:15:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
betsy neaves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB 1543. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:21:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Coan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 5:39:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nadezna Ortega	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

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Mahalo.

Nadezna Ortega

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:23:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleopono Norris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to all you legislators.

I'm doing okay near the bottom of the income ladder but see every day so many Hawaii people who are REALLY struggling! The political process has up to now let down the vast majority of citizens. Special favors to the powerful have ruled the political process, giving short shrift to the powerless hoipoloi. Appeals to the legislature from the grassroots people for relief have by and large been ignored for DECADES! I think this is extremely serious dereliction of duty on the part of current and former elected legislators.

You each and all must surely be aware of how difficult and hard making a living and having a good life is in Hawaii these days...even if you are probably fortunate to have a comfortable standard of living for yourself and your family members. Given these facts, the people are crying out for public ho'oponopono of legislators and their neglected constituents. This legislation to provide realistically adequate funding for all political candidates in Hawaii from here on out is essential, even from my point of view mandatory.

Please don't pass the buck on this one! Do right by ALL the people. Hear this bill in Finance Committee and then duly pass it in the full legislating body.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kaleopono Norris

Hilo

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:29:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Women's Caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is our best option to help stop pay-to-play corruption in our political system, and put people first.

Money has too big of an impact on our elections and can lead to influencing our elected officials. This is clearly seen in the case of Hu Honua

We need clean elections where people without funding can still participate.

Voters support a publicly funded elections.

It's been done elsewhere and it is effective and financially feasible

As a legislator you are either part of the problem or part of the solution when it comes to ending political corruption, to be blunt.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:34:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlies Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It sounds like a lot of money but it's way more fair for everyone involved, especially Native Hawaiian Candidates!

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

Marlies Lee

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:00:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Ward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Deborah Ward, and I am extremely disappointed with the current election system, and it is clearly under the sway of large corporate donations, and the outcome is apparent. I am begging you to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

Deborah Ward

Kurtistown Hawaii

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:43:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
De Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

THIS IS A NO BRAINER. Seriously.

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now.

Point #1 - Money currently has huge impact on our election

- Candidates work for donations that create relationships that can cause corruption or the perception of it.
- Legislators are responsive to donors, since they fund their campaigns.
- Money is crucial to winning. 91% of candidates who outspend their opponent go on to win.
- Many elections are uncontested because potential candidates can't afford high price tag
- **Average house winner spends \$40,000 compared to only \$16,000 for the loser.**
- **Over half of all campaign donations in 2022 came from just 980 donors who each gave at least \$6,000.**

Point #2 - Clean Elections will create a fairer system

- Candidates can get support from their constituents rather than wealthy donors.
- Elections will become more competitive with a more diverse set of candidates.
- Legislators will be free to act on behalf of voters without being concerned about what their donors think.
- Candidates can spend more time with constituents rather than fundraising.
- A system of fully publicly financed elections is supported by 74% of Hawai'i voters.
- Corruption is the third biggest issue for Hawai'i voters after affordable housing and cost of living concerns.
- The House Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct strongly supports public financing in its final report.

Point #3 - Cost of this program is very small

- **At less than \$10 million per year, this is less than 0.1% of the state budget.**
- **The state's current general funds balance of \$2.6 billion could pay for over 200 years of clean elections.**
- **A \$1 visitor fee or marijuana legalization would generate more revenue than this program.**
- Legislators who aren't beholden to donors can save costs elsewhere in the budget.
- **SB1543 would likely cost about \$6.50 per resident per year.**
- Clean Elections have been cheap and effective in other states

Point #4 - We aren't reinventing the wheel

- Big Island County Council races had this program in 2010 and 2012.
- Connecticut and Maine have clean elections statewide which are both very popular and successful.
- Over 70% of Democratic legislators use this program in Maine.
- Connecticut's program was established to get money out of politics following large corruption scandals.
- HB1481 would have offered statewide clean elections in 2013 but it died in conference committee.

Point #5 - Backed by CISC, Common Cause, LWV and dozens of other organizations

- The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct was created to address areas that are ripe for corruption and determined that increasing publicly financed elections was necessary to diminish the impact of large donors and special interest groups.
- Common Cause and the League of Women Voters have been fighting for better governmental reforms for decades and full public financing of elections has been a key tenet of their mission
- Dozens of other local organizations focused on a variety of issues have all come together to support SB1543 due to its importance and impact across many areas.

How is it not obvious this is the best way to destroy money's influence on our political system? For the people, by the people; and in Hawai'i, which has been rough shod by American colonization, it is even more vital that we rip off the lampreys of interest groups and other lobbyists and just OWN UP to the responsibility we have to protect the NATION of Hawai'i.

With respect but also with caution toward your next move,

D. Austin

Kānaka Maoli, parent, educator, voter and resident

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:47:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judie Hoepner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB1543 to get money out of politics. Thank you for giving credence to my opinion.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:50:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JONATHAN LOTT	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill. Might help reduce the temptation of the mother's milk of politics... money.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:24:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Wiener	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is imperative that we take our best actions to maintain and preserve our democratic system. Instituting publicly-funded elections and halting manipulation of our government by private interests is a critically important and effective step in that direction.

- the cost of such program is minimal, a tiny fraction of our State budget
- it will allow legislators to answer to their constituents rather than large donors
- a vast majority of Hawai'i residents support this measure

For these and multiple other reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote for SB1543. Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:30:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn J Ishii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB1548 aims at restoring our democracy for the people, by the people. It is a funding priority that gets to the roots of political corruption.

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Lynn Ishii, Wahiawā

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:32:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 in the strongest possible terms. This bill brings us a massive step closer to genuine democracy.

Thank you,

April Martin

Kapa'a HI, 96746

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:37:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:46:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank DeGiacomo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

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That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:05:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elisabeth Sherman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:15:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Tokita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:18:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul McKimmy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543, if we don't invest in fair elections then corporations buy them.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:24:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

This is a way to clear some of the fallout from recent scandals. Voters rank corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i.

mahalo,

Cory Harden

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:39:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 1543

Kanani Kai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:06:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neal Chantara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is way overdue. We no longer trust our elections. Please vote in favor.

Many thanks,

Neal Chantara

Kilauea, Hi 96754

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:20:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Trujillo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

aloha from the Garden Isle

please accept this late testimony in favor of passing sb1543 as a pathway to cleaner elections and reducing the influence of deep pocketed donors. passing sb1543 is a start to improving election and campaign processes statewide.

mahalo for considering this testimony in favor of SB1543 sd2 hd1
with respect and aloha,

james g trujillo
po box 33
kapa'a, HI 96746

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:18:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven J. Nishimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept my support of SB1543. Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 12:30:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Wolf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB1543. Stop letting mainland rich corporations mess around with our state. Enough already. Maine and Connecticut already did similar bills and they are doing just fine. So nothing to worry about. Pass SB1543. Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 1:11:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[Chair Yamashita and Members of the House Finance Committee](#)

Thank you for scheduling the bill for hearing, instead of killing it without explanation.

Far too many of the legislative reform bills introduced this year have already been killed unilaterally by one committee chair without explanation.

This is one of those bills that's truly important and represents systemic change. Some call publicly funded elections "The reform that makes all other reforms possible."

SB1543 will create an even playing field for candidates and refocus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is a top priority of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, is strongly supported by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity..

IF THIS BILL DIES IN CONFERENCE--BEHIND CLOSED DOORS YET AGAIN-- YOU CAN EXPECT VOTERS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU RUN FOR RE-ELECTION NEXT YEAR, AND FOR ONCE AGAIN TALKING THE TALK, BUT NOT WALKING THE WALK.

Mahalo for your time and consideraton of this bill.

Thomas Brandt

Forsight and Policy Analyst

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 2:27:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bevin Parker-Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and good afternoon:

I am testifying today in support of SB1543. I believe it is an important measure and urge your Finance committee to help Hawai'i eliminate and remove the ugly and negative influence that money has had on our recent politics.

Corruption is already a big issue in Hawai'i and our politicians do not need additional reasons to feel indebted to certain persons and organizations. For the first time in 2022 I noticed the huge influx of outside money on local campaigns, money spent on expensive high gloss mail flyers and advertisements that even the candidate was not aware of. I'm sure it has happened previously, but last election cycle it felt more obvious and much more apparent that money from outside of our state was being spent on most candidates.

This dark money often took away from important local issues and urgent needs of our local residents. This money and campaign tactic subverts important priorities like affordable housing, safe drinking water, our environmental needs, childcare, and earning a living wage.

I understand that The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct recommended that you, our elected officials, in the legislature and as members of this committee support and vote for public funding so that candidates will not have to rely on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. I hope you will support this endorsement as a way to achieve that goal.

I urge you to vote to support SB1543 to publicly finance elections to provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding. Without such funding, many candidates cannot afford to run an effective campaign at all due to age, race, or gender bias. Eliminating the need to support campaigns with private donations and banning them from receiving any private donations at all would make our elections more diverse and fair.

I personally believe from my research study that this system is currently working very well in other states across the nation, to more unilaterally support candidates who also represent their constituent need and identity. This is an opportunity to give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in our legislature and elected candidates and to rid the perception of corruption from our elected house and senate.

I believe that Hawai'i voters favor enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations. As a woman, in particular, I see a need for such public funding as there are many prejudices against women candidates, younger candidates and also persons of color who are discriminated against due to our current system of outside money influence.

Please, vote for publically funded elections to keep Hawai'i rooted in Hawaiian values and not dominated by outside greed and influence.

Mahalo, Bevin Parker-Evans, Koloa, Kaua'i

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 3:28:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorraine Newman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

While I am currently off island, and it is difficult to find time to take action on political matters, I find I cannot miss an opportunity to ask that you pass this bill.

We all know the benefits of public funding over that of special interest groups, so let's just pass this bill and practice true democracy... where the power to elect is the power of the people.

Mahalo,

Lorraine Newman

Kilauea, Kauai

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 3:52:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David McCluskey	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Good Afternoon, my name is David McCluskey, a former 6 term Connecticut State Representative and one of the members of then-Governor Rell's Campaign Finance Reform Working Group.

I am honored to testify in support of Senate Bill 1543 concerning Public Financing For Candidates To Elected Office. I am excited that the legislation passed the Senate and hope your Committee and the full House will give it your strongest consideration with any needed revisions. Of course, the House is always more democratic - small D - and in touch with residents than the "upper" chamber!

In 2005, Connecticut became the first state in the nation where legislative incumbents passed a full public financing law that applies to their own political campaigns. Every state has unique legislative and political environments and I am not here to tell you to simply adopt Connecticut's Public Financing law which has been modified, for both good and for bad, since its inception. However, I am testifying that our system works. It has significantly reduced the influence of large moneyed interests in our legislative deliberations and it has made our elections more democratic by having more competition in our primaries and elections. Earlier this year, CT's State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC)'s Executive Director Michael J. Brandi recently submitted testimony in our Government Administration and Elections Committee that candidates have strongly embraced public financing with: **"participation rates nearing 90 or 100% for many offices."**

Since the 1800s, Connecticut has been called the land of steady habits. Change continues to be very hard in my state and asking legislators who know how to get reelected under the existing rules to adopt new campaign financing rules was particularly tough. But we were successful after a lot of struggle both inside and outside our State Capitol. Hawai'i can and should enact public financing of elections to improve the credibility of the legislative process for your state residents and to free legislators from the increasingly chaotic and escalating rush to raise funds.

In Connecticut, candidates must raise small to moderate amounts from residents in the towns they represent. Once they reach the necessary number of in-district contributions and the necessary dollar amount, the state provides them with a reasonable amount to campaign. This process is heavily regulated by SEEC to prevent fraud and abuse. Asking your family, friends and neighbors for reasonable contributions is actually very liberating. I am not burdening them multiple times in a campaign for more and more money. Instead of spending an enormous amount of time raising dollars, I can spend it talking to voters.

Since Public Financing has been adopted, there has not been wholesale ouster of incumbents as was feared. Yes, some incumbents do lose in primaries and general elections, but mostly because they are no longer in touch with their voters, a policy issue or an economic situation, NOT because their opponent was publically funded. Yes, our system can punish incumbent complacency, but their opponent is equally funded, no more, no less. Incumbents still have the advantage in elections if they are doing their job and are talking to their constituents.

In terms of legislative deliberations, incumbents can now vote their convictions and without having to worry as much about being punished in re-election campaigns by well-healed lobbyists and interest groups who used to provide the lion's share of campaign dollars. Again, this is very liberating to most incumbents and has, in my opinion, significantly improved policy outcomes for Connecticut residents.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the House to adopt public financing for Hawai'i's state legislative races. I would be happy to answer your questions.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 5:50:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am a member of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i in support of public funding for elections. I am also an advocate for Native Hawaiians who are underrepresented in elected public positions. **Please support this legislation with amendment.**

I note that the bill would require OHA candidates to have two hundred qualifying contributions, the same for the office of state representative; yet, the office of state representative would qualify for funding up to \$50,000, while OHA candidates would be eligible up to \$40,000.

OHA candidates have to campaign statewide, while representatives only have to campaign within their District. Thus, costs to campaign is higher.

Recommend OHA candidates be eligible minimally the same as representatives. Please amend the legislation accordingly. Otherwise, reduce the number of qualifying contributions.

Mahalo for your consideration of my comments.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 6:13:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
PAMELA SUMMERS	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 6:54:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Howard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a no brainer. Stop the corruption and start doing the people's work!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 8:01:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ned Dana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Ned Dana

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 8:54:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
gabrielle davidson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB1543 SD2 HD1! Thank you!

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:06:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Fine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Elected officials too often are financed by corporations, organizations and PACs to whom they become beholden. Those who wish to serve in elected office who want to represent their constituents often cannot raise enough money to compete with those taking corporate funding. This would help level the playing field to elect representatives of the people and to create a less corrupt system.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:24:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Kizer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1543 SD2 HD1.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:26:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Noelani Ahia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Corruption is far too rampant in Hawai'i and the pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

Noelani Ahia

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:27:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this legislation. Please carefully consider this. Thank you.

Elizabeth Nelson

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:40:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Timothy Quirante	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

It's crucially important that this body does everything in its power to remove the influence money has on our politics. Since the SCOTUS ruling in Citizens United case, the amount of power that corporations and billionaires hold over our political system has corrupted our democracy and left us in a situation where politics only works for the wealthy. Corruption in Hawai'i has continued and pay-to-play behavior needs to end now. Money in politics holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families, penalizes the bravest politicians, and paralyzes those who would attempt great and positive change.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates amongst candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai'i, and 74% of the Hawai'i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

That's because we know that it's the single biggest thing we could do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai'i that puts kama'āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests. Please, do the right thing.

Mahalo.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:43:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 1543 because it works to keep big money and corruption out of politics within our state. SB 1543 would enable candidates to focus on the actual needs of their constituents, kama'āina and kānaka maoli first vs. being beholden to corporations, developers, and others funding their campaign.

When candidates are left to actively seek donations, this can create relationships that can cause corruption or the perception of it. Money now has a big impact on elections and this can lead to corruption and, at the very least, unfair influence and bias. Legislators are forced to listen to donors because they fund their campaigns.

Statistics show that money is crucial to winning. 91% of candidates who outspend their opponent go on to win. And the result is candidates who owe their donors something. Also, many potential candidates can't afford the high price tag to run and many elections are uncontested. There should be an even playing field for running for office.

Please clean up elections in Hawaii by passing SB 1543. Ban candidates from receiving any private donations at all. Allow legislators to be free to make decisions without concern as to what their donors think.

Mahalo for considering my views.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:44:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Jaycox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'll be brief. We need this bill to pass.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:44:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Thank you.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 9:46:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MARILYN JOHNSON	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please help the public regain trust in our State and Local governments. This bill is critical!

Thank you for keeping this bill alive.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 10:12:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roberts "Bob" Leinau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is time to clean things up. there is too much influence money in politics.

SB1543 SD2 HD1 for FIN 4-5-23

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and House Finance Committee members, I am Dr. Joe Ritter and am testifying as a private citizen **with comments on SB1543**.

If this committee in its wisdom decides to pass this bill, I respectfully request an amendment.

A premise of this bill is that candidates who opt in must collect many small donations. In a typical local district House race for example on Maui, the bill would require knocking on doors for a large fraction of the required 200 donations. I point out that 14% of our society is mobility disabled and that number is growing. Indeed many of us here will experience this in our lifetime. I myself had a broken spine. I stand here today for those unable to stand.

In Hawai'i, much campaigning is done by door knocking. Many mobility disabled candidates may be unable to walk up long or steep driveways in my district, or walk at all to solicit donations.

Thus this bill as written imposes a disparate, uneven challenge on those with a mobility disability. In an enlightened society this is not acceptable. I therefore respectfully suggest there may need to be an amendment, to use the legal term from the 1990 Federal ADA law, for "Reasonable Accommodation" of mobility disabled candidates.

I don't need to remind the committee of invaluable contributions to our society of smart mobility disabled people like Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt who served from his wheelchair, Physicist Dr. Stephen Hawking, or heroes like Democratic Senator Tammy Duckworth.

I respectfully suggest that to make this bill compliant with the principle of equality, and possibly with federal law, that if the chair and committee in their wisdom pass it, that it be amended to fairly adjust for mobility disabilities.

For the mobility disabled (1 out of 7 in our aging population) door knocking may be 10x as hard. As a compromise for legal reasonable accommodation I would suggest that the \$5 donation number requirement be reduced by 66% for those with a certified mobility disability, and for that, verification and certification be required by Hawai'i licensed M.D. or by a federal agency in order to maintain the absolute integrity of the process.

I thank you for considering this amendment, and the fundamental principle of equality and equity in our unique and outstanding democratic system which we are all here to support.

Thank you, both for considering my testimony and for your dedicated service to our society.

Dr. Joe Ritter HD 11 SD6 Kihei Hawai'i

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 10:50:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grace L Hutchinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support public funding for elections.

Lets get "dark money" out of elections. This is a democracy. Lets keep it that way.

Aloha,

Grace Hutchinson

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 11:10:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Citizens funded please.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 11:27:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members, I am writing in favor of SB2543 SD2 HD1.

I believe public financing of our elections is a great leveler and will help enhance the health of our democracy. It is a policy that is very popular and endorsed by the majority of Hawai'i's electorate.

As you are aware, there is a great deal of corruption in our state politics. It is rampant in Hawai'i, endangering our republic and making some people's voices more important than others.

The pay-to-play behavior of our politicians needs to end now.

Money in politics, especially large and undisclosed private sums to campaigns and candidates, holds back progress on all the issues important to local working families: from affordable housing, to cost of living, to protecting our environment, and more. Lining the pockets of some politicians prevents true policies that work for all of us to be implemented and the populace is left to deal with the aftermath.

The Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC) recommended that the legislature should boost public funding for elections to help candidates avoid relying on financial support from large donors or special interest groups. The CISC endorses this bill as a means to achieve that goal.

SB1543 would set up a system of fully publicly financed elections. It would provide participating candidates with competitive amounts of funding they need to run an effective campaign, and would ban them from receiving any private donations at all. This system worked very well for Hawai'i County Council races in 2010 and 2012, and currently works very well statewide in places like Connecticut and Maine.

The benefits of this program would be enormous compared to its relatively small cost. Connecticut's program spent less than \$14 million during the last election cycle. Even with high participation rates among candidates, estimated expenses for Hawai'i are less than \$10 million per year, representing less than 0.1% of the state budget.

This is an opportunity to lessen the influence of money in politics, give political power to the people, and restore the people's trust in this body and in you all. These are all necessary, given

that voters rank government corruption as one of the top three issues facing Hawai‘i, and 74% of the Hawai‘i voting public favors enacting public financed elections and ending the influence of corporate and private donations.

I am aware of the major argument against this kind of bill is that it 'limits free speech', which makes a moral equivalency of bribes with people doing with their money what they wish to do with their money. As there are people who wish to make bribes with their money, I believe this 'free speech' argument is a hollow one. It also has nothing to do with 'socializing' election campaigns, as people can choose to donate to public financing or not, as they see fit. I believe the 'free speech' argument is mostly conducted by those who are afraid they will lose their easy access to candidates to push forth agendas without any concern of democratic principles, for at the very least, every person's vote should only count as one vote, not each dollar spent equals one dollar, hence a donation of a million dollars from one actually is a million times more powerful. This does not sound like democracy, this sounds like oligarchy.

The single biggest thing we can do to end pay-to-play corruption in our politics and start building a Hawai‘i that puts kama‘āina and kānaka maoli, local people, first — not big money interests.

My only major caveat is that I would like to see this bill enforced in the 2024 election, and not passed on to the election three years from now.

Considering the rampant corruption that is taking place nationally with coffers being lined up with dark money on both sides of the aisle, this kind of reform needs to be done now, not down the line sometime. If this addendum were included I would consider this to be a perfect bill.

However, this bill's referendum is better than what we have at the moment and I believe this is important to implement even as is.

Please, do the right thing and pass SB 1543 SD2 HD1.

Mahalo for your time.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 11:41:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynne Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Public financing for an April primary for each party for the Presidential election is a good thing. The more public financing of elections, the less possibility of corruption..

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 12:10:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Wolfshagen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill - sb1543 - will focus elections back to the needs of the people and not just the needs of those who donate the most.

This measure is supported by organizations that prioritize voting rights including www.represet.us, Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and many other community leaders working to reduce the influence of big money on Hawai'i elections.

The States of Maine and Connecticut have successfully implemented similar public funding systems with positive results that include increased voter turnout, greater electoral competition, more women candidates, and in general more diversity.

Mahalo for listening and voting for all the people of Hawaii, not just the rich ones and corporations and PACs.

- Randy, Mirka & Pueo Wolfshagen / Kekaha

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 12:16:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
brett gobar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thankyou for lookin out for the kanaka.

My observation of decision making in Hawaii, indicates corporate hotels and farmers, landholders have undue influence in the decision making process and are over represented. They seem to influence through donations and lobbying.

Any methods you can use to reduce the imbalance in electiions AND in law making and POLICY creation seem appropriate ASAP!

Gratefully,

Brett Gobar

B.S. Water Resource Management

Paia, Maui, Hawaii

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 12:37:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Gonce	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support, this is long overdue.

SB-1543-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 12:40:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cora Yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB1005 SD2 HD1. I am testifying as an individual.

This bill encourages more candidates, who have some degree of credibility, to run for office. It would even the playing field somewhat to lessen the heavy advantage of incumbents. If enacted, this legislation will provide a base for additional restructuring of political campaign financing.

The status quo is a pay-to-play system which provides incentives and opportunities for bad ethical decisions and flawed legislation. If an individual, corporation, non-profit, association, union does not donate enough cash or in-kind, their voices are ignored or muted. Many qualified and passionate voters do not consider running for office because they do not want to have to chase the money.

Cora Yamamoto

Lower Alewa, Liliha