

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **153**

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 10 2025

RE: S.B. No. 435
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 435 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VOTING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to improve voter awareness and usage of the voter guide by clarifying the manner in which the public is informed about the guide.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the League of Women Voters of Hawaii.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Office of Elections.

Your Committee finds that the introduction of the digital voter information guide beginning in 2024 has greatly improved voter access to information about the issues and candidates on the ballot in an election. However, a lack of publicization and information about the voter guide has left it underutilized. For example, the notice informing voters about the digital guide was included only in small print at the bottom of the ballot secrecy sleeve for the 2024 primary election, and no notice was required to be included alongside ballots for the 2024 general election. This measure will eliminate confusion about how to access the



voter guide and ensure that voters make the most of the digital voter information guide.

Your Committee notes that the Office of Elections estimates that it will cost approximately \$90,000 to print and insert an additional instruction sheet into each mail ballot packet as required by this measure.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting a blank appropriation amount;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of April 23, 2057, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee further notes that this measure, as amended, contains an unspecified appropriation amount. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$90,000 for the Office of Elections to print and insert an additional instruction sheet into each mail ballot packet as required by this measure.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 435, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 435, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



