



**STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**


235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 11, 2025

TO: The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 345, S.D. 1, Relating to Public Financing.**

Wednesday, March 12, 2025
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission ("Commission") supports the intent of this bill but has concerns regarding funding.

The bill increases the amount of funds available to qualified candidates participating in the partial public financing program by:

1. Increasing the expenditure limits for elected offices by 20%; and
2. Raising the maximum amount of public funds available from ten or fifteen percent of the expenditure limit to 67% of the expenditure limit.

The bill also increases the matching fund ratio from \$1 for each \$1 of qualifying contributions raised to \$2 for every \$1 of qualifying contributions raised in excess of the minimum qualifying contributions that a candidate must raise to participate in the partial public financing program.

Under this bill, if one candidate for each elected office qualified and received the maximum amount available, the maximum amount available for public financing would be \$10,298,546 in the primary election and another \$10,298,546 in the general election.¹ Under the

¹ By the Commission's calculations, the enhancements to the partial public financing program made by this bill increases the funds available to qualified candidates to an amount more than

existing partial public financing program, if one candidate for each office qualified to receive funding in the 2026 elections, the maximum available for public financing would be \$1,474,306 in the primary election and another \$1,474,306 in the general election.

In Section 5 of the bill, the original version of the bill contained an appropriation of \$16,000,000 for this fiscal year and the same amount for the next fiscal year, into the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund. S.D. 1 blanked out the appropriation amount. The balance in the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund is \$2,199,230.60 as of December 31, 2024. Obviously, that amount is insufficient to pay for the bill's enhancement of the partial public financing program. The original draft's appropriation of funds is necessary and should be restored.

Further, the Commission strongly recommends the insertion of a new Section 6 containing an appropriation of \$200,000 for this fiscal year and the same amount for the next fiscal year, for the Commission to hire two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) temporary positions to prepare for this much enhanced partial public financing in the 2026 elections.² The Commission has not had an increase in personnel for the past 29 years despite the number of candidate committees and noncandidate committees having almost doubled in size. Currently, there are only 5 staff members who oversee 700+ committees that have anywhere from 1-3 officers who require assistance on how to comply with the various requirements of campaign finance law thereby generating hundreds of staff hours assisting committees over the phone, in-person, and by email as well as a number of enforcement actions for violations. Under HRS §11-314(7), one of the Commission's 14 duties is to investigate and hold hearings for receiving evidence of any campaign finance violations. The Commission has no investigator on staff and has had to rely on contracts for investigative services with outside agencies.³ In comparison to other State and county good government agencies with compliance and enforcement duties, the Commission has had a modest budget and nominal staff despite a tremendous growth in committees, an expansion in its duties and responsibilities, and enforcement mandates. The Commission respectfully seeks your support so that the Commission may ensure that the integrity and transparency of the campaign finance process is upheld.

that offered by S.B. No. 51, the measure proposing a comprehensive publicly funded campaign program.

² The Commission requested 2 full-time permanent exempt excluded positions in its FY 2025-2027 budget to which the Governor has approved – specifically, the request was for \$200,000 for FY 2026 and \$180,000 for FY 2027-2029. Notably, the Commission is an administratively attached agency with the Department of Accounting and General Services.

³ Act 10, Special Session 1995, was the single year that a sum of \$70,000 was appropriated for one investigator for the Commission for FY 1995-1996 and was then sunset.

The Commission supports the intent of this bill so long as the necessary funds are appropriated.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB345 SD1, RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

March 12, 2025

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** SB345 SD1, RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING. Pursuant to the platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and Resolution 2024-21, the Party supports full public-financing of elections and policies that will get the State of Hawai'i closer to that objective.

Updating the cap on matching funds and expenditure limits will bring the Partial Public Funding Program much closer to meeting the current standards around campaign expenditures. This will encourage more members of our community to participate in our electoral process as voters or even political candidates, thereby enhancing the accessibility and inclusivity of our democracy.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in Support of SB345 SD1, RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING. Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Democratic Party of Hawai'i at legislation@hawaiidemocrats.org.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:48:46 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of Committee,

My Name is Susan RobertsEmery, I am co chair of the Greem Party. We would like to offer Strong Support for SB345 SD1. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Mahalo,
Susan RobertsEmery
Green Party of Hawai'i
Paauilo

HAWAII PATRIOT REPUBLICANS

Written Testimony in Opposition to S.B. No. 345 (S.D. 1)
Submitted to the Senate Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
March 11, 2025

Honorable Members of the Committee,

As a citizen committed to limited government, fiscal discipline, and the empowerment of hardworking taxpayers—principles I believe cut across party lines—I strongly urge you to vote "No" on S.B. No. 345 (S.D. 1). This bill, which expands Hawaii's partial public financing program by raising expenditure caps, increasing matching funds from \$1-to-\$1 to \$2-to-\$1, and appropriating unspecified millions from the general fund, is a reckless overreach. It burdens taxpayers, distorts electoral competition, and fails to deliver on its promises, as evidenced by similar programs elsewhere. Below, I present my objections with facts and appeal to your shared duty to safeguard Hawaii's families and democracy.

1. Unjustifiable Taxpayer Burden in a High-Cost State

This bill doubles the public matching funds for candidates—from \$1 to \$2 per dollar of qualifying contributions (Section 11-429)—and hikes expenditure limits (e.g., from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per voter for governor, Section 11-423). With appropriations from Hawaii's general revenues (Section 5), this means millions more extracted from taxpayers already grappling with the nation's highest cost of living. Democrats who prioritize working families and Republicans who demand fiscal restraint should unite against this: why should struggling residents subsidize politicians' campaigns when schools, housing, and healthcare cry for funding?

Consider New York City's public financing program, which matches small donations at a 6-to-1 ratio (since raised to 8-to-1). A [2021 New York Post analysis](#) pegged its cost at \$126 million for one election cycle, with taxpayers footing the bill amid budget shortfalls. Hawaii cannot afford to mimic this drain on public resources.

2. Tilts the Playing Field Toward Established Candidates

Raising expenditure caps and matching funds sounds like a boost for all candidates, but it disproportionately benefits incumbents and well-networked politicians. The bill retains a requirement for minimum qualifying contributions (Section 11-429), which favors those with existing donor bases—often the political elite. Grassroots candidates, especially from marginalized communities Democrats seek to uplift, will struggle to compete against this flood of public cash for entrenched players.

Arizona's partial public funding system offers a cautionary tale. A [Goldwater Institute study](#) found that between 2000 and 2010, incumbents won 85% of races using public funds, as higher caps and matching funds amplified their advantages. Hawaii's bill risks creating a similar imbalance, undermining its claim to "mitigate the outsized influence" of big donors (Section 1).

3. Invites Waste and Fraud with Weak Oversight

Doubling the matching funds to \$2 per \$1 (Section 11-429) and raising the cap to 67% of expenditure limits (Section 11-425) pumps more public money into campaigns with inadequate safeguards. The bill relies on post-election audits by the Campaign Spending Commission, but history shows this is too little, too late. In Connecticut, the Citizens' Election Program, which offers generous public grants, saw

candidates misuse funds for personal expenses—like luxury trips—costing taxpayers over \$50 million in its first decade, per a [2017 Yankee Institute report](#). Fraud was only caught after the damage was done.

Hawaii's taxpayers—whether Republican, Democrat, or Independent—deserve proactive protections, not a system that hands out cash and hopes for honesty.

4. No Proven Reduction in Corruption or Influence

The bill asserts that public financing curbs the “perception of influence” of large donors (Section 1), but where's the evidence? Hawaii's partial funding system has operated since 1978 without a crisis warranting this expansion. In Los Angeles, a public matching program (up to \$500 per donor) has been in place since 1990, yet a [2022 LA Times investigation](#) exposed ongoing corruption scandals tied to campaign finance loopholes. Public funds didn't stop influence-peddling; they just changed the players.

A [Campaign Finance Institute study](#) confirms public funding rarely boosts voter trust or turnout. Why double down on a system that's unproven at best and a failure at worst?

5. Undermines Free Market Principles and Voter Freedom

This bill's expansion of public financing erodes the free market of ideas by injecting more government cash into elections. Candidates who opt out face a steeper climb against publicly funded rivals, skewing voter choice. Democrats who value free speech and Republicans who champion individual liberty should see this as a threat: why should the state pick winners and losers with taxpayer dollars?

North Carolina's judicial public funding, repealed in 2013, showed how this distorts democracy. An [Institute for Justice report](#) found it reduced candidate participation and competition, as privately funded challengers couldn't keep up. Hawaii's diverse electorate deserves a level playing field, not a government-subsidized one.

6. An Unnecessary Fix for a Functional System

Hawaii's current partial public financing, capped at \$1-to-\$1 matching and modest expenditure limits, has worked since 1978 without breaking the bank or sparking scandal. The bill notes the last update was “two decades ago” (Section 1), but offers no data showing a problem—only vague perceptions. Other states expanded public funding after specific corruption crises; Hawaii hasn't faced one. This is a solution chasing a ghost, risking unintended consequences over a system that's served us well.

Conclusion: Vote "No" to Protect Hawaii's Taxpayers and Democracy

Honorable members, S.B. No. 345 (S.D. 1) promises reform but delivers a taxpayer-funded giveaway that favors insiders, invites abuse, and lacks evidence of success. Democrats, think of the families squeezed by rising costs—don't divert their money to politicians. Republicans, reject this government overreach that stifles freedom and competition. Examples from New York City, Arizona, Connecticut, Los Angeles, and North Carolina prove these schemes falter. Hawaii's current system isn't broken—don't break it with this bill. I respectfully urge you to vote "No."

Sincerely,

Andrew Crossland

Hawaii Patriot Republicans

hawaiipatriotRepublicans@gmail.com



Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe]

March 12, 2025 2 pm Room 325
SB345 — RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING

TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB345 SD1. The League of Women Voters of the US believes that methods of financing political campaigns should enable candidates to compete equitably for public office and ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public. Hawaii's Partial Public Funding Program (PPFP) is intended to support those goals.

The amount available through the PPFP to publicly funded candidates has not changed in over two decades. Inflation in media prices, postage, and labor costs make the current amounts far less than competitive. The current amounts available to qualified candidates for public funding are far below the amounts spent by privately funded candidates who won election to the same office. Not surprisingly, the number of candidates using the PPFP has decreased every year since at least 2016. The increases proposed in SB345 SD1 unquestionably offer an improvement on the status quo.

In addition, SB345 SD1 cuts the amount of qualifying contributions required to access public funding for several offices, making the program easier to access.

To enable the Campaign Spending Commission (CSC) to fulfill the requirements of this bill as well as its existing duties, SB345 SD1 adds 2 positions to CSC staff and increases the CSC budget by an unspecified amount.

Please pass SB345 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports: SB345
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 2:00pm; Conference Room 325**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) strongly supports SB 345, which strengthens our state's partial public campaign financing system by increasing the matching funds available to candidates and ensuring adequate funding for the program.

Hawai'i's partial public financing system has not been meaningfully updated in over two decades, despite inflation and the rising cost of running for office. The program was established in the public interest to reduce the influence of large private donors and ensure fairer elections. However, the current funding levels are inadequate, making it difficult for candidates to rely on public financing as a viable option.

SB 345 addresses this issue by increasing the cap on matching funds to 67% of the campaign expenditure limit, raising the expenditure limit itself by 20%, and doubling the public match to \$2 for every \$1 in qualifying contributions beyond the minimum threshold.

The proposed changes in SB345 align with other reform efforts in the state. In 2023, lawmakers passed many recommendations from the Foley Commission, including strengthening penalties for government fraud and reforming lobbying practices. However, some of the toughest reform measures, such as full public financing of elections and prohibiting campaign contributions during legislative sessions, have yet to be enacted.

This bill also ensures that the Campaign Spending Commission has the resources necessary to administer and oversee the program effectively. It appropriates \$16 million over the next two fiscal years to replenish the Hawai'i Election Campaign Fund, which has been underfunded for years. Without this investment, the program cannot function as intended.

We urge you to support SB345 as you have the opportunity to respond to public sentiment for an equitable and transparent electoral system.

Thank you for your support and consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick'.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



150 Hamakua Drive #341
Kailua, HI 96734

our-hawaii.org

Testimony in Support of SB345

Submitted to the House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee
by Evan Weber, Managing Director, Our Hawai'i, 3/12/2025

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and all Committee members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify before you today. On behalf of Our Hawai'i's over 38,000 members and supporters across the pae 'āina, we write in strong support of Senate Bill 345, which expands the state's Partial Public Financing Program to reduce the influence of big money in politics and make elections more accessible to everyday people.

In the historic 1978 Hawai'i Constitutional Convention, the public financing of elections was established as a key part of our constitution, stating that a public campaign fund could dilute "the effective influence of money and large contributors" and "equalize opportunity for all to participate meaningfully in the political process."

In the years that followed, public funding of elections played a meaningful role in major races up and down the ballot in Hawaii's local elections. But in recent decades, with rising costs, and the flood of unlimited political spending unleashed by the US Supreme Court's Citizens United decision in 2009, our public financing programs have not kept up with the reality of modern political campaigns. In fact, we have not made adjustments to our public campaign finance system since 1995 — before most people were using personal computers or cell phones.

The result of this is that we have seen an increase in big money in politics, and a declining use of our public financing system. **Why? Primarily because the campaign spending cap you must abide by when you opt in to taking public funds is too low to run and win an average campaign.**

Earlier this session, the House passed HB370, which was put forward by the Judge Foley Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct as a "floor, or minimum level" in reforming our system. And it does that — modestly increases the amount of funds available to candidates for the first time since 1995. But HB370 does not address the fundamental flaw of our current partial public finance system — the insufficient expenditure caps.

HB370 is certainly a better upwards adjustment than nothing, but as it stands the campaign expenditure limits it forces candidates to abide by are simply too low.

For example, the **current average expenditure limit for the upcoming 2026 election for a State House race is \$23,632**, for the primary or the general election. That means if you want to receive public funds, you have to agree to spend less than \$23,632 on your election.

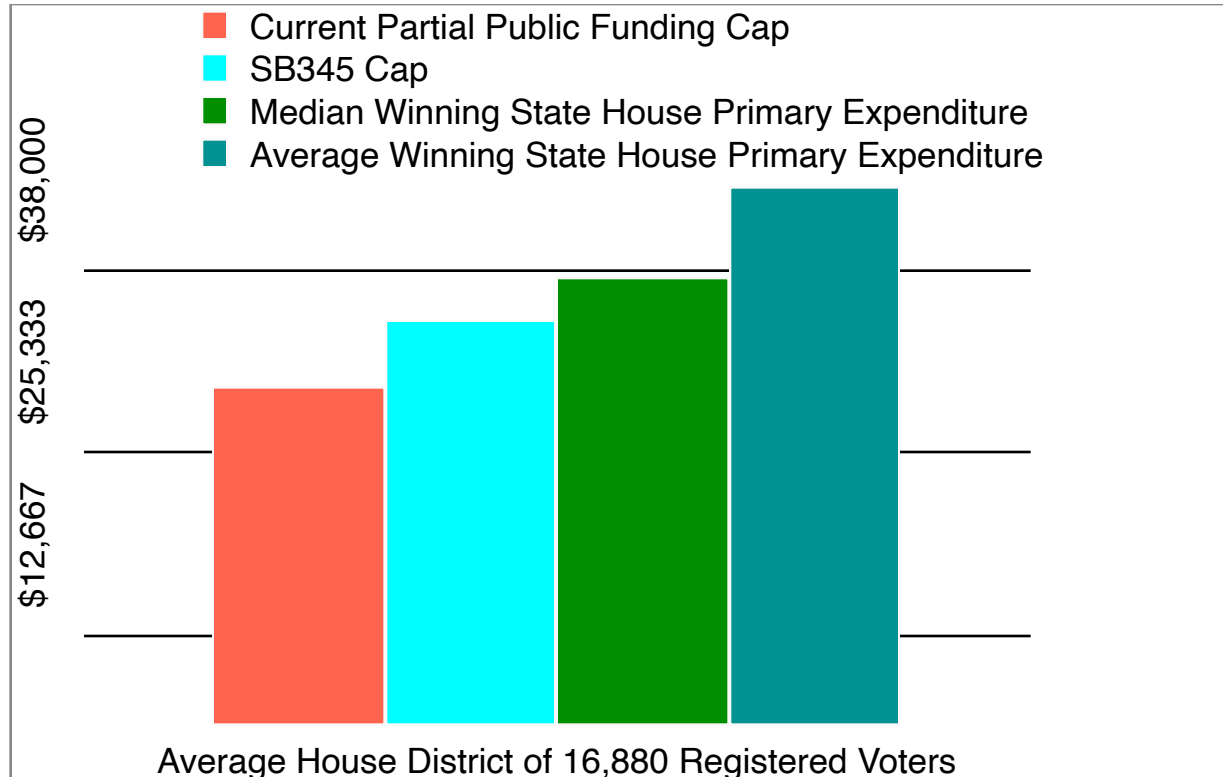
However, the median amount spent by State House primary winners in 2024 was **\$31,311.60**, and the average amount spent in winning primary races was **\$37,473.95**. That means **currently, if you are a State House candidate who wants to do the right thing by opting into our public financing system, you have to agree to run on less than what it takes on average to win a race.**



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SB345 makes progress towards addressing this by increasing expenditure caps by 20% across the board, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates to support them to run competitive races without having to be over reliant on private funds.



While campaign finance reform progress has been made in recent years, it is not enough. On April 17th, 2024 the New York Times dropped a [bombshell exposé on the front page of the New York Times](#), exposing to the world the deep culture of pay-to-play corruption that has existed at high levels of Hawai'i political leadership. With just days left in the legislative session, Hawaii Lawmakers did not act to correct these real problems of corruption or the crisis of public trust they have exacerbated. Now, you all have the opportunity to act.

SB 345 builds on Hawai'i's existing Partial Public Financing Program by increasing the amount of public funds available to candidates, raising expenditure limits, and improving the match ratio. These changes will make it a real alternative to relying on wealthy donors and special interests to fund campaigns.

Expanding public financing will allow more grassroots candidates—those without deep-pocketed backers—to run competitive campaigns. It will free elected officials from the constant pressure of fundraising and instead allow them to focus on what truly matters: delivering for their constituents.

This bill does not radically upend our system; instead, it improves an existing, underutilized program. Incumbents will still be able to compete, and the overall partisan makeup of the legislature will not significantly shift. What will change is who has influence—moving power away from big donors and lobbyists and back to the people.



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The people of Hawai'i are tired of a system where wealthy donors call the shots. Expanding public financing won't fix everything overnight, but it is a necessary step toward a government that truly represents the people—not just those who can afford to bankroll campaigns.

Mahalo nui loa for your leadership and commitment to restoring trust in our democracy. Together, we can move toward a brighter future for Hawai'i.

Additional Comments:

We support this bill as written, however, the Campaign Spending Commission correctly pointed out in previous testimony that the average annual cost for this program would be greater than the cost of the SB51 comprehensive public financing program. In addition to large increases in the top of the ticket, Governor and Lieutenant Governor's races, this discrepancy is largely driven by SB345's significantly higher costs for the Maui County and Kauai County Council Seats, as well as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs races.

SB51 uses a formula that is based off of actual expenditures in races to calculate expenditure caps, whereas SB345's formula is based off of district population, which does not account for the fact that Maui and Kauai County have at-large Council seats, and that OHA races are statewide.

Legislators interested in correcting this could create a new category Section 2. "At-large county council seats" and choosing a lower multiplier or providing this category with a smaller percentage of the expenditure limit that is matched (e.g. At-large Council Seats only get 35% matched). The overall expenditure limit for the Governor and Lieutenant Governor's races could also be increased by less than 20% to cut costs.

Finally, in the spirit of increasing participation in public financing programs while saving money overall, legislators could lower the percentage matched across all races to 35%, but consider a higher increase in the expenditure limit (a 30% increase instead of 20%) and this would still result in savings from SB345's current baseline of 43% in average annual costs.

SB 345 at a 20% increase in expenditure limits and up to 67% matched

Office	Estimated Participants per seat	Average registered voters in District	expenditure maximum multiplier	expenditure limit	% of cap	Max match per election	Primary & General combined	Cost for all seats	Frequency (Elections per 10 years)	Average Annual Cost	Annual Cost per resident
Gov	1	839,618	\$3.00	\$2,518,854.00	67.0%	\$1,687,632.18	\$3,375,264.36	\$3,375,264.36	2.5	\$843,816.09	\$0.58
LG	1	839,618	\$1.68	\$1,410,558.24	67.0%	\$945,074.02	\$1,890,148.04	\$1,890,148.04	2.5	\$472,537.01	\$0.33
State Senator	25	33,585	\$1.68	\$56,422.33	67.0%	\$37,802.96	\$75,605.92	\$1,890,148.04	3	\$567,044.41	\$0.39
State Rep	51	16,880	\$1.68	\$28,358.40	67.0%	\$19,000.13	\$38,000.26	\$1,938,013.06	5	\$969,006.53	\$0.67
HI Mayor	1	131,358	\$2.40	\$315,259.20	67.0%	\$211,223.66	\$422,447.33	\$422,447.33	2.5	\$105,611.83	\$0.07
HI Attorney	1	131,358	\$1.68	\$220,681.44	67.0%	\$147,856.56	\$295,713.13	\$295,713.13	2.5	\$73,928.28	\$0.05
HI Council	9	14,595	\$1.68	\$24,520.16	67.0%	\$16,428.51	\$32,857.01	\$295,713.13	5	\$147,856.56	\$0.10
HNL Mayor	1	548,261	\$2.40	\$1,315,826.40	67.0%	\$881,603.69	\$1,763,207.38	\$1,763,207.38	2.5	\$440,801.84	\$0.30
HNL Attorney	1	548,261	\$1.68	\$921,078.48	67.0%	\$617,122.58	\$1,234,245.16	\$1,234,245.16	2.5	\$308,561.29	\$0.21
HNL Council	9	60,918	\$1.68	\$102,342.24	67.0%	\$68,569.30	\$137,138.60	\$1,234,247.41	2.5	\$308,561.85	\$0.21
Maui Mayor	1	91,138	\$2.40	\$218,731.20	67.0%	\$146,549.90	\$293,099.81	\$293,099.81	2.5	\$73,274.95	\$0.05
Maui Council	9	91,138	\$1.68	\$153,111.84	67.0%	\$102,584.93	\$205,169.87	\$1,846,528.79	5	\$923,264.40	\$0.64
Kauai Mayor	1	46,980	\$2.40	\$112,752.00	67.0%	\$75,543.84	\$151,087.68	\$151,087.68	2.5	\$37,771.92	\$0.03
Kauai Attorney	1	46,980	\$1.68	\$78,926.40	67.0%	\$52,880.69	\$105,761.38	\$105,761.38	2.5	\$26,440.34	\$0.02
Kauai Council	7	46,980	\$1.68	\$78,926.40	67.0%	\$52,880.69	\$105,761.38	\$740,329.63	5	\$370,164.82	\$0.26
OHA	9	839,618	\$0.24	\$201,508.32	67.0%	\$135,010.57	\$270,021.15	\$2,430,190.34	2.5	\$607,547.58	\$0.42
Total	128	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$5,197,764.22	\$10,395,528.45	\$19,906,144.67	N/A	\$6,276,189.72	\$4.34

SB 345 at a 30% increase in expenditure limits and up to 35% matched

Office	Estimated Participants per seat	Average registered voters in District	expenditure maximum multiplier	expenditure limit	% of cap	Max match per election	Primary & General combined	Cost for all seats	Frequency (Elections per 10 years)	Average Annual Cost	Annual Cost per resident
Gov	1	839,618	\$3.25	\$2,728,758.50	35.0%	\$955,065.48	\$1,910,130.95	\$1,910,130.95	2.5	\$477,532.74	\$0.33
LG	1	839,618	\$1.82	\$1,528,104.76	35.0%	\$534,836.67	\$1,069,673.33	\$1,069,673.33	2.5	\$267,418.33	\$0.18
State Senator	25	33,585	\$1.82	\$61,124.19	35.0%	\$21,393.47	\$42,786.93	\$1,069,673.33	3	\$320,902.00	\$0.22
State Rep	51	16,880	\$1.82	\$30,721.60	35.0%	\$10,752.56	\$21,505.12	\$1,096,761.12	5	\$548,380.56	\$0.38
HI Mayor	1	131,358	\$2.60	\$341,530.80	35.0%	\$119,535.78	\$239,071.56	\$239,071.56	2.5	\$59,767.89	\$0.04
HI Attorney	1	131,358	\$1.82	\$239,071.56	35.0%	\$83,675.05	\$167,350.09	\$167,350.09	2.5	\$41,837.52	\$0.03
HI Council	9	14,595	\$1.82	\$26,563.51	35.0%	\$9,297.23	\$18,594.45	\$167,350.09	5	\$83,675.05	\$0.06
HNL Mayor	1	548,261	\$2.60	\$1,425,478.60	35.0%	\$498,917.51	\$997,835.02	\$997,835.02	2.5	\$249,458.76	\$0.17
HNL Attorney	1	548,261	\$1.82	\$997,835.02	35.0%	\$349,242.26	\$698,484.51	\$698,484.51	2.5	\$174,621.13	\$0.12
HNL Council	9	60,918	\$1.82	\$110,870.76	35.0%	\$38,804.77	\$77,609.53	\$698,485.79	2.5	\$174,621.45	\$0.12
Maui Mayor	1	91,138	\$2.60	\$236,958.80	35.0%	\$82,935.58	\$165,871.16	\$165,871.16	2.5	\$41,467.79	\$0.03
Maui Council	9	91,138	\$1.82	\$165,871.16	35.0%	\$58,054.91	\$116,109.81	\$1,044,988.31	5	\$522,494.15	\$0.36
Kauai Mayor	1	46,980	\$2.60	\$122,148.00	35.0%	\$42,751.80	\$85,503.60	\$85,503.60	2.5	\$21,375.90	\$0.01
Kauai Attorney	1	46,980	\$1.82	\$85,503.60	35.0%	\$29,926.26	\$59,852.52	\$59,852.52	2.5	\$14,963.13	\$0.01
Kauai Council	7	46,980	\$1.82	\$85,503.60	35.0%	\$29,926.26	\$59,852.52	\$418,967.64	5	\$209,483.82	\$0.14
OHA	9	839,618	\$0.26	\$218,300.68	35.0%	\$76,405.24	\$152,810.48	\$1,375,294.28	2.5	\$343,823.57	\$0.24
Total	128	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,941,520.80	\$5,883,041.60	\$11,265,293.31	N/A	\$3,551,823.78	\$2.46

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:29:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Cordery	Aloha Freedom Coalition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I appose SB345! This bill if passed infringes on my rights of who I chose to support as a candidate! This goes against the 1st amendment!



Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Wednesday, March 12, 2025
2:00PM Auditorium

RE: **SB345** Expansion of Public Financing - **Support**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 450 small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity. As small business owners who believe we can strengthen Hawaii's economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment, we are submitting testimony in support of SB345, which seeks to fix the fundamental issue with Hawai'i's Partial Public Financing Program.

Current expenditure limits on public financing are insufficient for candidates to run competitive, winning campaigns. By raising the expenditure limits and increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available, SB345 ensures that candidates—particularly those with limited wealth or access to large donors—can run effective campaigns without relying on private donations.

Under the current system, the expenditure limit for an average State House Race, when opting into public financing, is around \$23,000. However, the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This discrepancy creates a significant handicap for candidates who choose to use public funding, as they are not able to compete on an equal footing with those who can raise funds privately. SB 345 fixes this by increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting the expenditure limits to better align with the actual costs of running a campaign.

Reforming the partial public funding system will create a more level playing field and encourage a wider, more diverse pool of candidates. It will reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and help amplify the voices of everyday citizens. This is crucial for fostering a political environment where voter engagement and public service are prioritized over big money contributions. Passing SB345 will allow more residents, regardless of their financial background, have the opportunity to run for office and make their voices heard.

We ask that the Committee support this bill to ensure a more inclusive, fair, and representative political system for Hawai'i. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Hawaii Legislative Council Members

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Hanalei

Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
Hilo/Kona

Dr. Andrew Johnson
Niko Niko
Family Dentistry
Honolulu

Robert H. Pahia
Hawaii Taro Farm
Wailuku

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
Honolulu

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Kihei

L. Malu Shizue Miki
Abundant Life
Natural Foods
Hilo

Tanya Aynessazian
Principal Contractor

Chamber of
Sustainable Commerce
808.445.7606
P.O. Box 22394
Honolulu, HI 96823

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:02:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Camron Hurt	Common Cause Hawaii	Support	In Person

Comments:

The Hawaii Legislature convened a commission to work on identifying issues surrounding corruption and good government. Since the commission the legislature has moved on most of the recommendations out of the commission except for campaign financing. Campaign financing is far from an “issue” and its more of a responsibility, as it is enshrined in our state’s constitution. Thus, we must be vigilant in making sure that we are maintaining the upkeep of that responsibility. With inflation on the rise, an ever more competitive job market, the evolution of social media and AI figures from 1995 simply won’t cut it anymore. In the absence of a fully funded program this is the superior option for a partial funding. This will allow individuals to run using the partial system and be competitive.

We would humbly request that there be appropriation of\$ 200,000 so that the campaign spending commission can create two more full-time positions.

Thank you sincerely,
Cam Hurt

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 3:04:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)	Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully supports SB 345 SD 1.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 11:28:35 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the JHA committee,

My name is Will Caron. I live in Kahalu‘u on O‘ahu's windward side. I am testifying in strong support of SB345 SD1, which raises the cap on the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates for the Hawai‘i Partial Public Financing Program.

While SB51 is a stronger bill that does more to reclaim our democracy from the powerful big monied interests that have captured our elections and, therefore, our public policy for their own gain, SB345 is also a solid step in the right direction. Both bills should be advanced for now.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 11:31:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I SUPPORT!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 3:32:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mina H Ellison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Sincerely,

Mina Ellison

Ke‘ei, Kona Hema, Hawai‘i

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 3:52:50 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 3:53:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

The funding limits have remained unchanged for two decades. In that time, Hawai‘i’s cost of living has grown faster than the national average, impacting the true value of campaign funds. Updating the limits helps campaigns keep pace with rising expenses, such as printing, venue rentals, and advertising. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Mahalo, Barbara Best, Wailuku

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:02:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert H. Pahia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill will help level the " playing field " and encourage more participation in seeking public office

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:05:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please support SB345 to minimize the amount of money in our politics. Increase the amount for those using public funding.

The partial public financing program has been part of our electoral process since 1978. This program aligns with our constitution's directive to provide public funding for election campaigns.

The funding limits have remained unchanged for two decades. In that time, Hawai'i's cost of living has grown faster than the national average, impacting the true value of campaign funds. Updating the limits helps campaigns keep pace with rising expenses

Do all you can to keep money out of our politics!.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:16:45 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:37:31 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:46:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 4:48:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jayven Okuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha ‘o Jayven ko‘u inoa, i support this bill!Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:03:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:05:04 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this measure as a way toward reducing campaign corruption. Please pass!

Judith White

Kapaa

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:22:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:35:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee Members,

Please pass SB345 SD1. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Mahalo.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:45:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process and allowing legislators to represent their constituents' interests.

Thank you

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 5:50:32 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis O'Shea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hope you will support this bill.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 6:08:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Deets	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 6:26:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.Eliel,Kapaa

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:02:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. I am a huge supporter of publically funded elections and have been since 2007. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:24:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel R Freund	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee Members,

Others will give you lists of the benefits of partial public funding. All those benefits are lost if the legislature stands by and lets inflation make the program meaningless. Please don't let that happen.

- Dan Freund, Kapaa

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 7:54:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:10:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:52:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Our voting system is so inequitable that it dysfunctional and grossly unfair. Anything we can do to level the playing field is a step in right direction, though there is even more that need doing. Please pass this bill as a start. Mahalo

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 10:04:00 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator s..

please support SB345

This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Now more than ever.. please consider the importance of supporting SB 345

Mahalo,

pamela burrell, Kalihiwai, Kaua'i, 96754

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 10:39:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

To: Judicial Chair Tarnas and Committee Members
From: Brodie Lockard, Common Cause Hawaii Board Member
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 2:00 pm

In strong support of SB345

Dear Chair Tarnas and Committee Members—

I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 345, which would strengthen Hawaii's public campaign financing system and help reduce the influence of money in our elections.

Hawai'i's political system is broken. The heavy reliance on campaign contributions from wealthy donors and special interests has led to a system where 2 in 3 people believe elected officials are more focused on the interests of their donors than the needs of their communities. As a result, good policies are often blocked while harmful ones move forward. This dynamic erodes public trust and encourages corruption. SB 345 is a critical step toward fixing this broken system by allowing candidates to run competitive campaigns without being dependent on special interest money.

By raising the cap on the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates for the Hawai'i Partial Public Financing Program, SB 345 will help to break the link between private money and electoral success. This will create a fairer and more honest system where elected officials are accountable to their constituents rather than big donors. Importantly, similar programs in other states show that public financing does not lead to higher incumbent turnover or drastic shifts in political makeup, but it does change who holds influence in government—ensuring that everyday people, not just the wealthy few, have a voice.

Partial Public Financing has been in Hawaii for many years, but its amounts have been inadequate for a long time. SB 345 would increase the matching fund ratio from \$1 for each \$1 of qualifying contributions raised by a candidate to \$2 for each \$1 of qualifying contributions raised in excess of the minimum qualifying contributions that a candidate must raise to participate in the Program. It would give the Program a fighting chance.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass SB 345. This bill will help to restore trust in our democracy, empower candidates to focus on their communities rather than fundraising, and ensure that our government truly serves the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brodie Lockard
Common Cause Hawaii Board Member

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:08:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peleke Flores	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:58:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members!

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai'i's Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai'i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

R A Culbertson

Honokaa

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:03:04 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

<p>I support SB345. Hawai‘i needs elections that are not bought by large corporations or wealthy individuals.</p>

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:04:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Take \$ out of politics: let's elect the smartest most able person, not the one with the most wealthy connections.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:06:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I write to you in support of SB345. SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:06:25 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Keala Fung from Honolulu and i strongly SUPPORT SB 345. SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates.

By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Keala Fung, Honolulu

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:06:29 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

We would prefer that our state would have fully public funded elections as addressed in SB51. This bill is also an excellent choice.

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

Sincerely,

Robert and Marion McHenry

Princeville, Kauai

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:13:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dita Škalic	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:14:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealohi Hanohano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:19:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:31:18 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

super-pacs and unions have too much influence on our elections - and people don't run due to the exhorbitant costs to compete with the big bucks people - lets give everyone a chance to be on our ballots.. Mahalo...

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:33:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joelle Seashell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Corrupt. Strongly opposed.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:54:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lora Santiago	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My voice matters. I strongly OPPOSE SB345.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:56:04 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruben Ongos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS BILL!!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:57:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurence Limasa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:00:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kakou. SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard. Mahalo for helping.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:01:47 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emerson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I thought we killed this bill already. Fix our pot holes and sidewalks. Add walk lights. This is corrupt as it gets. Not my money to feed you pilauticians.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:03:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

To the Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of this measure which will offer a measurable improvement in our financing of elections. Such funding is a crucial investment in our democracy at a time it which is is being sorely tested, both nationally and locally. Please offer your support to these good government efforts.

With aloha,

Dave Ball, Waialae-Kahala

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:10:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorinda Ohelo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:12:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill !

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:15:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candice Applegate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs this bill. Please vote to support it.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:17:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill !

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:25:30 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Priscilla Stuckey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Members of the Committee,

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process. We need to place the wishes of our voters ahead of big money.

Mahalo,

Priscilla Stuckey

Kihei, HI

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee,

Strong support of Senate Bill 51.

SB 51 will break the link between private money and electoral success. 3 in 4 voters support a clean elections program. Public campaign financing can lead to a more ethical and representative government that prioritizes the needs of constituents. Connecticut, Maine, and Hawaii County Council have proven that full publicly financed elections can be successful and cost-effective. Public financing for campaigns works for all residents and not just the wealthy few.

Pass SB51 now.

Keith Neal
Waimea

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:29:55 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Dedely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill !

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:44:56 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joan Heller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Joan Heller

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:47:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Scott S

Honolulu, HI

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:54:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Pass SB 345 now. SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:55:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Giles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly Oppose SB345,

Paul Giles

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:55:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin D. Ganitano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB345 in which taxpayer funding of political campaigns doubles and drowns out our voices.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:13:48 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Bolger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's SB 345 addresses flaws in the current partial public financing system. The current spending limits, around \$23,000 for State House races, are significantly lower than the median (\$31,000) and average (\$37,000) primary expenditures, effectively hindering candidates who opt for public funding. SB 345 would raise these limits and increase matching funds, allowing candidates without wealthy donors to run competitive campaigns. This reform aims to diversify the candidate pool, reduce special interest influence, and prioritize voter engagement. Passing SB 345 will strengthen Hawaii's democracy.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:21:07 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in favor of SB345 SD1. I believe anything we can do to level the playing field in our elections is a win for everyone. Mahalo.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:30:15 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson Teixeira	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in strong opposition to this bill, mahalo.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:33:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noela von Wiegandt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose SB 345. This bill is cleverly disguised to drown out our voices in elections. This is election interference plain and simple. Vote NO! Thank you.

Noela von Wiegandt

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:37:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
gordon b peterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:37:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blaine De Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB345. Again I say my tax dollars should not be funding political agendas. Again U say this is another was for the state of Hawaii to mismanage and launder hard earned tax dollars.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:52:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Domingo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB345

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:05:51 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Elders	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pass SB 345. Put teeth in election reform.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:15:59 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB345. Hawaii needs to get big money out of our elections by comprehensive public financing. Thank you.

Jane E Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

Honolulu HI. 96816

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:24:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

As former chair of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (Commission), I support SB 345 SD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCING.

This bill has been recommended by the Commission because it "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." Commission December 1, 2022 Final Report at page 32.

Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:27:09 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai'i's Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai'i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Diane Ware, Ka'u Moku 96785

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:30:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Ann V Saffery

Honolulu, HI

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:32:13 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Littleton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB345

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:32:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Miles Kushima	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose bill sb345. Never shall I allow any tax money to be used in political races. We have a corrupt system as is. In person, voter i.d., proof of citizenship, on paper ballots!

Mahalo,

Miles K.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:55:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:56:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bad bill.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:01:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sally Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose. This bill is not in the best interest of the people of Hawaii.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:09:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Bodien	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:09:51 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cari Sasaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB345. This is wasteful. Hawaii needs taxpayer money for an untold number of things more than for more robust political campaigns. Do not throw our hard earned money away on this nonsense!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:22:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I strongly support SB345.

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. **I urge you to pass SB 345** to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Carla Allison - Honolulu

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:28:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Kamau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB345 SD1. Mahalo.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:11:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MaryAnn Wagner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.**MaryAnn Wagner**

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:17:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bart Burford	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

<p>Please recognize my vehement opposition to this bill</p> <p>PONO Patriot</p>

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:24:10 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Nichols	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose Senate Bill No. 345 because I believe it represents an inefficient use of public resources and an unnecessary expansion of an already functional system. As a taxpayer in Hawaii, I have concerns about increasing the financial burden on our state by raising the maximum public funding cap to 67% of new, higher expenditure limits—such as \$3 per voter for governor and \$1.68 for state representatives—while also doubling the matching rate to \$2 for every \$1 of qualifying contributions beyond the minimum. While I understand the intent to reduce the influence of large private donors, I’m not convinced this significant increase in public funding is the most effective solution, particularly when it could allocate substantial sums to candidates who may not face competitive races. The bill appropriates unspecified amounts from general revenues for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, and I would prefer to see those funds directed toward critical priorities like infrastructure improvements or housing affordability, which more directly benefit Hawaii’s residents.

Additionally, I view this legislation as an inefficient use of legislative and administrative effort. The partial public financing program has operated since 1978, and while I acknowledge the funding caps haven’t been updated in two decades, I question whether this overhaul is necessary without clear data showing the current system fails to meet its goals. The bill’s effective date of April 23, 2057, appears inconsistent with appropriations starting in 2025, suggesting either a drafting error requiring further time to correct or an indication that immediate action isn’t essential. This ambiguity, combined with the added workload for the Campaign Spending Commission to manage increased matching funds and reporting, strikes me as an unproductive use of resources. I also worry that some candidates might exploit the system by meeting the minimum contribution threshold to access larger public payouts without needing them, which could undermine the program’s purpose. I believe lawmakers’ time would be better spent refining existing campaign finance rules or addressing pressing economic challenges rather than expanding a program that may not deliver proportional benefits. In my view, rejecting this bill preserves fiscal responsibility and focuses our efforts where they’re most needed.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:25:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB 345, which would significantly strengthen Hawai'i's Partial Public Financing Program.

Our current system inadvertently handicaps candidates who choose public financing. The expenditure limit for State House races (approximately \$23,000) falls well below the actual cost of competitive campaigns, where median spending reaches \$31,000 and average spending exceeds \$37,000. This gap transforms what should be a democratic equalizer into a competitive disadvantage.

SB 345 directly addresses this problem by:

1. Raising expenditure limits to realistic levels that reflect the actual cost of running winning campaigns
2. Increasing the maximum matching funds available to candidates

These adjustments will ensure that candidates without personal wealth or access to large donors can mount truly competitive campaigns. Public financing should be a pathway to victory for qualified candidates—not a barrier.

By passing SB 345, you will:

- Foster a more diverse candidate pool that better represents all Hawai'i residents
- Reduce the outsized influence of wealthy donors and special interests
- Shift campaign focus from fundraising to voter engagement
- Strengthen our democratic institutions by making elections more accessible

I urge you to pass SB 345 and create a public financing system that truly empowers candidates to run on ideas rather than access to wealth.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Maki Morinoue

Holualoa

Hawai'i

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:40:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:43:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Campaign finance reform is the reform to make other reforms possible. Although this is not as comprehensive as I personally would like, it is a step in the right direction.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:53:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Umiamaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB345, which proposes to increase taxpayer funding for political campaigns. This bill not only undermines the individual voice and vote of citizens but also raises serious concerns about the use of public funds in elections.

The U.S. Constitution and Hawaii state laws provide several protections for citizens regarding the use of taxpayer funds in elections:

- 1. First Amendment Rights:** The Supreme Court has ruled that limitations on campaign expenditures impose "direct and substantial restraints on the quantity of political speech". Increasing public funding for campaigns could potentially drown out individual voices, infringing on free speech rights.
- 2. Unauthorized Use of Public Funds:** Hawaii Code R. § 3-162-5 explicitly prohibits the use of public funds for various campaign-related activities, including promoting or assisting other candidates or committees. This law aims to prevent the misuse of taxpayer money for political purposes.
- 3. Voter Fairness:** The Hawaii Supreme Court has ruled against the unlawful use of public funds in political campaigning. In a case involving the Honolulu prosecutor, the court stated that using taxpayer dollars to fund one side of public debate is not allowed.
- 4. Voluntary Participation:** The current Hawaii Election Campaign Fund operates on a voluntary basis, where taxpayers can choose to allocate \$3 from state funds to the campaign fund. SB345 would potentially remove this element of choice, forcing all taxpayers to contribute regardless of their wishes.
- 5. Constitutional Protections:** Article II, Section 5 of the Hawaii State Constitution established a campaign fund for "partial public financing of campaigns". Doubling

taxpayer funding could exceed the intended scope of this provision.

Increasing public funding for political campaigns risks drowning out individual voices and undermining the integrity of our electoral process. It is crucial to maintain a balance that respects the rights of citizens to have a say in how their tax dollars are used, especially in matters related to elections.

I urge you to oppose SB345 and protect the voice and vote of every citizen in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Deborah Umiamaka

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 12:59:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terry Murakami	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:01:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:13:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Cabjuan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose this bill

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:29:04 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Mitsumori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members,

I'm writing in SUPPORT of SB345 SD1, which strengthens our state's partial public campaign financing system by increasing the matching funds available to candidates and ensuring adequate funding for the program.

This bill also ensures that the Campaign Spending Commission has the resources necessary to administer and oversee the program effectively.

By improving upon an existing but underutilized program, SB345 SD1 can meaningfully move power away from big donors and lobbyists and back to the people.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB345 SD1,

Michele Mitsumori

Hilo

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:29:23 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. PATRICIA Mullen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Dr Patricia Mullen

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:34:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kencho Gurung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:38:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Strongly support!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:56:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sierra Mcveigh	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose SB345

-Sierra Mcveigh

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:02:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pam Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB345. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2 to 1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. This bill is a significant step toward reducing the influence of big money in our election process.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:14:12 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Our present Crisis for Democracy could be avoided if we had Concerned Individuals running for government offices instead of only the rich people who can afford it. We need government that can relate to ALL the citizens. **SB 345** would go a long way to assure that we could focus on an Individual's values and ideas, instead of his wallet if we **could increase Partial Public Funding** for candidates. This bill, plus other fair-minded supports would offer a democratic support for democracy.

For your constituents, for your family, for all our grandchildren, please vote for this bill!

Dr. Patricia Fallbeck

1341 Kapiolani Blvd. #18-B

Honolulu, HI, 96814

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:15:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheryl Summers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai'i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:23:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alika Valdez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:42:00 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:45:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanara Caey Richmond	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB345. Chanara Richmond, HD42

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 2:55:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 3:22:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Kaawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:02:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Langham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to fund campaigns with taxpayer dollars, making elections more fair.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:21:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Huycke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB345.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 4:43:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lesha Mathes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. We do not need to raise funding for political candidates. They can do their own fund raising! This is ridiculous.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:36:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Strongly Oppose

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:36:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB345 SD1. Please support SB345 SD1.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:40:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Lum, ‘Ewa Beach

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:00:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoe Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:14:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james wallace	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB345 SD1.No tax payer funding for political campaigns.Waste of tax payer money like the Rail.Biggest Hawaii fraud in history!!!!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:48:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dayna Matsumura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:15:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louella Vidinha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose. Do not use public funding for campaign, etc, let alone doubling it ?

No.

Louella Vidinha

Hawaii resident

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:20:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and **I am writing in strong support of SB 345**, which would address a fundamental flaw in Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising expenditure limits and increasing the cap on matching funds.

Currently, the system is not working as intended. The expenditure limit for candidates who opt into partial public financing is around \$23,000 for an average State House race, while the median and average expenditures for State House primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This means that candidates who rely on public financing are at a major disadvantage, making the system more of a handicap than a support. SB 345 would correct this issue by ensuring that publicly financed candidates can run competitive, winning campaigns without being forced to seek large private donations.

This reform is critical for fostering a more diverse and representative political system in Hawai‘i. By raising the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 will empower candidates from all backgrounds—including those with limited personal wealth or access to wealthy donors—to step forward and serve their communities. A stronger public financing system will also reduce the influence of special interests and big money in politics, ensuring that elected officials are accountable to the people, not just to large donors.

Our democracy should reflect the voices of all Hawai‘i residents, not just those with deep pockets. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions, encourage fair and competitive elections, and prioritize voter engagement over big money influence.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Executive Committee Member

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

Kanaka Maoli/Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:35:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Big money from corporate interests is not beneficial for Hawai'i.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 8:52:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheri Matsumura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:24:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Lindbergh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 345 for Clean Elections in Hawaii.

Thank you

Julia Lindbergh

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:39:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamra Hayden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system. Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:34:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zac Nosugref	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:52:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiare Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

****TESTIMONY IN OPPOSING S.B. NO. 345, S.D. 1****

Aloha e nā kānaka o ke kenika,

My name is Tiare Smith, a Native Hawaiian whose life has been woven into the fabric of Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu, for 45 years. From the shores of my childhood to the present day, I have cherished the right to shape our democracy through voice and action, a right rooted in the struggles and aspirations of our people. It is with this reverence for individual agency that I submit my opposition to Senate Bill 345 (SB345). By doubling taxpayer funding for political campaigns—raising matching funds to 67% of expenditure limits and increasing the match ratio to \$2 per \$1—this measure precipitously amplifies state influence at the expense of personal expression. Such an expansion is antithetical to the democratic ethos, threatens to disenfranchise grassroots voices, and undermines the safety, efficacy, and equity of our electoral system.

I. Doubling Public Funding Threatens Electoral Safety

SB345 escalates the Hawaii Partial Public Financing Program by increasing maximum public funds from 10-15% to 67% of expenditure limits and doubling the match ratio for qualifying contributions beyond the minimum. This infusion of taxpayer dollars does not mitigate private influence as intended; rather, it risks drowning out individual voices under a deluge of state-subsidized campaigns. In Kahalu‘u, where community-driven candidates rely on modest donations to compete, this shift tilts the scales toward well-funded insiders, compromising the safety of a system meant to reflect diverse perspectives.

Elections are safest when they amplify the electorate’s will, not the state’s coffers. SB345’s overreach could entrench incumbents and stifle challengers, eroding the democratic balance essential to our security.

II. Efficacy Undermined by Skewed Priorities

The efficacy of SB345 is questionable. By prioritizing public funding over private initiative, it distorts campaign dynamics, rewarding candidates who excel at meeting bureaucratic thresholds rather than engaging voters. The increased expenditure caps (e.g., from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per voter for governor) and doubled matching funds incentivize spending over substance, potentially flooding airwaves with noise rather than fostering meaningful dialogue.

An effective system balances public support with individual effort. SB345's heavy-handed approach risks inefficacy, as candidates may chase state dollars rather than build authentic support, weakening voter trust and electoral integrity.

III. Cost-Effectiveness Sacrificed for Extravagance

SB345's fiscal implications are staggering. Doubling the match ratio and raising caps could balloon the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund's annual cost from \$2 million to \$5-\$7 million, based on historical candidate participation (e.g., 50-70 candidates per cycle). Funding this via general revenues—\$5 million appropriated for 2025-2027—diverts resources from education, housing, or cultural preservation, with no guarantee of reducing private influence. Administrative overhead for the Campaign Spending Commission could rise by \$200,000 yearly to manage increased disbursements and audits.

Contrast this with the current program's \$2 million efficiency, which supports candidates without overwhelming taxpayers. SB345's extravagance trades cost-effectiveness for an unproven experiment, burdening residents like me with higher taxes for diminished returns.

IV. Equity Jeopardized for Grassroots Voices

Equity drives my opposition. As a Native Hawaiian, I value the power of collective, community-funded efforts to elevate our candidates. SB345's flood of public funds risks drowning out these voices, favoring candidates with access to initial capital to trigger matching funds—often urban elites over rural advocates. In Kahalu'u, where small donations sustain our campaigns, this imbalance could silence Native Hawaiian priorities, perpetuating historical disenfranchisement under a veneer of fairness.

True equity amplifies the underrepresented, not the state's purse. SB345's largesse undermines this principle, tilting elections toward those already advantaged.

V. Detailed Solutions to Protect Voice and Equity

Rather than doubling public funding, I propose these cost-effective alternatives to ensure safety, efficacy, equity, and fiscal responsibility without drowning out individual voices:

1. ****Maintain Current Funding with Transparency****: Keep the \$1-for-\$1 match and 10-15% caps, adding a \$15,000 online disclosure system (annual upkeep: \$3,000) to track contributions, saving \$3-\$5 million yearly over SB345's bloat while preserving voter influence.
2. ****Targeted Small-Donor Boost****: Offer a \$1.50 match for contributions under \$250, costing \$500,000 annually, empowering grassroots voices and saving \$4.5-\$6.5 million compared to SB345's \$2 match, with no tax hike needed.
3. ****Volunteer Incentive Program****: Allocate \$50,000 yearly for tax credits (up to \$100) for campaign volunteers, amplifying community engagement at 1/100th of SB345's cost, offset by \$150,000 in reduced administrative strain.

4. ****Equity-Focused Outreach****: Invest \$30,000 annually in Native Hawaiian and rural campaign training, leveling the field without flooding funds, saving \$4.7-\$6.7 million over SB345's approach while fostering inclusion.

These solutions safeguard my voice—and yours—without drowning it in taxpayer excess.

VI. Conclusion

SB345's doubling of public campaign funding is a well-meaning but misguided overreach. It threatens the safety, efficacy, and equity of our elections, imposing exorbitant costs that drown out individual expression. I urge the Senate to reject this bill and adopt these alternatives, ensuring my voice as a Native Hawaiian of Kahalu'u—and that of every voter—remains heard, not submerged. Our democracy demands no less.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

****Tiare Smith****

Kahalu'u, O'ahu

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:20:11 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ivy Hsu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are around \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:31:25 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shani Hough	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our taxpayer funding of political campaigns doubles and drowns out our voice!

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:48:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danelle Guion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

SB 345 would fix the fundamental problem with Hawai‘i’s Partial Public Financing Program by raising the expenditure limits to ensure candidates can run winning campaigns on public financing, while also increasing the maximum amount of matching funds available to candidates. By increasing the cap on matching funds and adjusting expenditure limits, SB 345 empowers candidates with limited personal wealth or access to large donors to run competitive campaigns, and makes sure that they will still be able to run winning campaigns while receiving matching funds. The current expenditure limit when you opt-in to partial public financing for an average State House Race is around \$23,000, while the median and average expenditures for State House Race primaries are \$31,000 and \$37,000, respectively. This makes the partial public funding system a handicap for these races, not a support system.

Reforming the partial public funding system will foster a more diverse pool of candidates, reduce the influence of wealthy donors and special interests in our political process, and amplify the voices of regular citizens by prioritizing voter engagement over large-scale donations. I urge you to pass SB 345 to strengthen our democratic institutions and ensure that the voices of all Hawai‘i residents are heard.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Danielle Guion, Makakilo

SB-345-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:19:51 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Healy	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.