

JAN 28 2026

## SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE TO ESTABLISH AN INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE  
PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 21, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, TO  
INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF A 2022 CASH OR CHECK PAYMENT  
FROM AN UNKNOWN INDIVIDUAL TO AN "INFLUENTIAL LEGISLATOR"  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF INFLUENCING AN EXISTING POLITICAL  
CAMPAIGN, AND TO EXAMINE POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS OF STATE LAW,  
STATE ETHICS CODE, AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE PROVISIONS.

1 WHEREAS, a document filed in the United States District  
2 Court for the District of Hawai'i by the United States  
3 Attorney's Office reported that in 2022 former State  
4 Representative Ty Cullen, acting in cooperation with federal  
5 law-enforcement authorities, made an undercover recording of an  
6 unknown individual providing "an influential legislator" with  
7 approximately \$35,000 in cash or checks intended to influence  
8 "an existing campaign"; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, to date, no federal criminal charges have been  
11 filed against the "influential legislator," whose identity  
12 remains undisclosed and who may still be serving as a member of  
13 the Hawai'i State Legislature; and  
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15 WHEREAS, following mounting public pressure, in January  
16 2026 it was announced the state has initiated an investigation  
17 for which federal authorities will be sharing evidence; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, due to a five-year statute of limitations, the  
20 state only has until January 2027 to pursue charges; and  
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22 WHEREAS, allegations suggesting that an elected legislator  
23 may have accepted a substantial cash payment intended to  
24 influence an election or campaign strike at the core of  
25 democratic accountability and, if left unexamined, risk eroding  
26 public confidence in state government; and  
27

28 WHEREAS, transparency, oversight, and public inquiry are  
29 essential components of ethical governance and



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1 are necessary to preserve public trust and ensure adherence to  
2 the rule of law; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, Chapter 21, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, authorizes  
5 either house of the Legislature to establish investigative  
6 committees vested with the power to issue subpoenas, administer  
7 oaths, compel the production of documents, and hold individuals  
8 in contempt for failure to comply; and

9  
10 WHEREAS, as this matter affects a member of the legislative  
11 body, it is imperative that the Legislature take responsibility  
12 for the actions of one of its own and pursue its own  
13 investigation concurrently; now, therefore,

14  
15 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
16 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,  
17 that the Senate establishes an Investigative Committee pursuant  
18 to Chapter 21, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, to:

- 19  
20 (1) Investigate the alleged 2022 transaction  
21 involving the delivery of \$35,000 in cash or  
22 checks from an unknown individual to an  
23 unidentified "influential legislator";  
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- 25 (2) Determine whether any state criminal statutes,  
26 campaign finance laws, ethics rules, or other  
27 legal provisions were violated by any individual  
28 involved;  
29
- 30 (3) Examine the adequacy of existing laws, rules, and  
31 enforcement mechanisms intended to prevent  
32 corruption, bribery, improper influence, or  
33 misuse of campaign funds;  
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- 35 (4) Receive testimony, compel the attendance of  
36 witnesses, require the production of records and  
37 documents, and conduct public hearings in  
38 accordance with Chapter 21;  
39
- 40 (5) Prepare findings and recommendations, including  
41 legislative proposals to strengthen anti-  
42 corruption safeguards, increase transparency, and



1 improve ethical oversight within state  
2 government; and  
3

4 (6) Refer any evidence of potential criminal, civil,  
5 or administrative violations to the Attorney  
6 General, the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission, the  
7 Campaign Spending Commission, or any other  
8 appropriate authority; and  
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the Senate  
11 shall appoint the members of the investigative committee,  
12 designate the chairperson, and authorize the committee to employ  
13 staff, legal counsel, or other resources necessary to carry out  
14 its duties; and  
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
17 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the Senate, the  
18 Attorney General, the State Ethics Commission, the Campaign  
19 Spending Commission, and the United States Attorney for the  
20 District of Hawai'i.  
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OFFERED BY:

