



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
elections.hawaii.gov

SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

**TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1525
RELATING TO THE ELECTIONS**

February 3, 2026

Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1525. This bill appropriates funds to: (1) the counties for more voter service centers for in-person voting; (2) the Office of Elections to print and mail the digital voter information guide to all registered voters; and (3) the Office of Elections to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

As it relates to Section 2 of the bill regarding the appropriation of funds to print and mail the digital voter information guide to all registered voters, we estimate it to cost \$2,074,913 for the 2026 General Election. This includes costs to print and mail the digital voter guide in 5 language versions – English, Hawaiian, Chinese, Ilocano, Tagalog as well as mailing services and postage:

Printing	685,617
<u>Mailing and Postage</u>	<u>1,389,296</u>
Total	<u>\$2,074,913</u>

We acknowledge there are benefits of adding funding to better inform and support the electorate. This is based on our response to House Concurrent Resolution 87 provided ahead of the 2024 Legislative Session. We would note that our estimates have been updated to assume over 868,000 active registered voters for the 2026 General Election. Additionally, we respectfully ask that this bill be related to the conduct of the 2026 General Election only, as funding would not be available through this measure in time for the 2026 Primary Election.

The scope of distribution of the digital voter information guide determines the costs and can be adapted. For example, distribution to households using estimates by the U.S. Census without regard to whether an active registered voter resides at the address, would be \$1,371,183 for the 2026 General Election. In contrast, distribution to households with an active registered voter would adjust to \$984,093 for the 2026 General Election.

As it relates to Section 3 of the bill to appropriate funds to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation, we would estimate this to cost \$178,000. This request includes:

Production	28,000
Ad Flight	150,000
Total	<u>\$178,000</u>

Similarly, given timelines, it would only be feasible to produce and run ads for the 2026 General Election. The appropriation could be adjusted to increase or decrease the amount of advertising to saturate the market. The estimate of \$150,000 is for a single advertising flight.

As reference, in the 2024 Elections we expended approximately \$441,000 on advertising to include a combination of television, radio, online, out-of-home, and newspaper from June through November, to provide voter registration and voting information during an election cycle.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1525.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4800
TTY: (808) 241-5116



LYNDON M. YOSHIOKA
Deputy County Clerk

Facsimile: (808) 241-6207
E-mail: elections@kauai.gov

**ELECTIONS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**
4386 RICE STREET, SUITE 101
LĪHUʻE, KAUAI, HAWAII 96766-1819

February 3, 2026

**TESTIMONY OF JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUAI
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1525
RELATING TO ELECTIONS**

Chair Au Belatti and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on House Bill No. 1525. This Bill appropriates funds to the counties to establish more voter service centers for in-person voting; for the Office of Elections to print and mail the digital voter information guide to all registered voters; and for the Office of Elections to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

Our office takes no position on this measure but notes that 9 out of 10 voters on Kauaʻi who chose to cast a ballot during the 2024 General Election chose to vote via a mail ballot. Voting by mail is a convenient, accessible, and secure method of voting that is used by the majority of voters throughout the state.

If additional voter service centers (VSC) are mandated, we would need to establish two (2) more VSCs to equitably distribute services to north/east and south/west Kauaʻi at an estimated cost of \$310,000 per election year. This is a conservative estimate, which represents a 20% increase over the Elections Division's proposed budget for fiscal year 2027 and will only increase over time.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on House Bill No. 1525.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk



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TESTIMONY
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN
AFFAIRS
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1525
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

February 3, 2026

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee on
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1525. The following
comments focus on the proposal to open additional Voter Service Centers
(VSCs).

Hawai'i's transition to vote-by-mail, with in-person VSCs serving as the
primary point for same-day voter interaction, has created operational
requirements that differ significantly from the former polling place model. Any
evaluation of VSC expansion must account for these differences and the
operational realities that drive county election officials' decisions regarding
existing VSC capacity and scale statewide.

Traditional polling places operated for one day, served voters within a fixed
geographic area, and managed a single ballot type. In contrast, VSCs
operate over multiple days, serve any voter within the county, and must
process voters across numerous districts and ballot types. This eliminates the
natural workload distribution previously provided by precinct boundaries and
substantially increases demands on staffing, systems, and management
oversight.

VSC staff must complete weeks of hands-on training because they work
directly in the Statewide Voter Registration Database performing critical
functions that support election integrity and voter access. These functions
include eligibility verification, same-day voter registration, record updates,
district assignment verification, ballot issuance across multiple ballot types,
replacement ballot processing, turnout recording, and assisting voters
requiring language or accessibility services. Errors in these processes are not
good.

The primary constraint on expanding VSC capacity is not funding, but the
availability of qualified personnel who can be hired as full-time workers,
trained, and retained. The City staffs VSCs through a contracted temporary
staffing agencies that recruit workers with the required technical skills.
Because VSCs operate across multiple days, maintaining service continuity
requires full-time staffing throughout the voting period. Staffing agencies

continue to report difficulty filling positions, particularly those requiring direct interaction with the voter registration database and real-time voter processing.

For the 2026 elections, the City plans to contract with two temporary staffing agencies to expand the labor pool and improve recruitment of qualified personnel, particularly as part of efforts to significantly increase staffing in critical processing roles to reduce wait times and meet service demand.

Expanding the number of Voter Service Centers without a corresponding increase in qualified, fully trained staff may not produce the intended results. Understaffed or under-resourced VSCs are likely to experience slower processing times and increased error risk. Expansion without sufficient staffing and facility capacity may disperse existing staffing and management resources rather than increase effective operational capacity, potentially replicating or worsening current challenges.

In addition to staffing, the availability of suitable facilities constitutes a significant operational constraint. Traditional polling places operated for a single day, which permitted the use of school facilities. In contrast, Voter Service Centers operate over multiple consecutive days, thereby substantially limiting the pool of viable locations. A candidate VSC facility must be secure, accessible, and available for multiple days; provide adequate floor space and parking; accommodate voter circulation and queue management; and, critically, support secure network connectivity to the Statewide Voter Registration Database.

The City recognizes that long voter lines can delay the release of election results. Under current law, a delay at any single VSC, whether at an existing location or an expansion site, will cause a delay in the release of results for the entire State, regardless of the overall success of counties in processing voter lines. The Committee may wish to consider whether statutory adjustments relating to the release of election results would more directly and effectively address this issue. Most states release results at a fixed time after polls close, even when isolated delays occur.

Voter Service Centers represent a resource-intensive component of Hawai'i's election system. The City appreciates the Committee's willingness to provide assistance; however, additional funding alone does not eliminate the range of challenges counties face in establishing and operating existing VSCs, let alone supporting any proposed expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



MOANA M. LUTEY, ESQ.
County Clerk
Ke Kākau `Ōlelo Kalana



RICHELLE M. THOMSON, ESQ.
Deputy County Clerk
Ke Hope Kākau `Ōlelo Kalana

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK
KE KE'ENA O KE KĀKAU `ŌLELO KALANA
COUNTY OF MAUI
KALANA O MAUI
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February 2, 2026

TESTIMONY
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HOUSE BILL NO. 1525
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1525, specifically on the proposal to open additional Voter Service Centers ("VSCs") on election day.

As County Clerks, we are tasked with handling the logistics of staffing and selection of voting locations in each of our respective counties. For the County of Maui, we have the added difficulty of conducting voting on the three inhabited islands that make up our county. If HB 1525 passes, we are concerned about the impact on the upcoming elections.

Hawaii's legislators recognized that the vast majority of voters preferred to vote by mail (87% in the 2018 General Election), and responded by passing Act 136 in 2019. Since Hawaii became a vote by mail state in 2020, the mail-in voter turnout continues to be exponentially higher than in-person voting.

Election Year	Maui County Registered Voters	% of Registered Voters Voting In-person
2020	107,930	4.2%
2022	114,841	2.0%
2024	115,009	5.1%

VSCs are open in each of the counties for ten business days *in advance* of each election and on election day. H.R.S. §11-109. In Maui County, there are two VSCs on the island of Maui (Lahaina and Wailuku), one on Lana'i and one on Molokai. To address the needs of voters in the remote area of Hana, we

provide an additional VSC prior to election day.

The Hawaii Legislature's decision to move from the polling place model to permanent vote by mail responded to the decades long trend away from in-person voting.¹ Vote by mail effectively serves the vast majority of voters, offers workers, the home-bound, and others with accessible opportunities to exercise their right to vote comfortably from their own home. Ballot dropboxes distributed throughout the county make it easy for voters to deposit their ballot envelope, and ballot-tracking allows voters to track their ballot from mailing to receipt.

Funding additional VSCs to operate specifically on election day addresses only a portion of the logistical issues. To staff VSCs, we contract with two temporary agency companies to provide us with staff beginning in January of each election year. After months of training, we divide up our staff to cover different components required to run a VSC. Unfortunately, recruiting staff (whether through the temp agencies or direct county hires) has proved difficult.

Our concern with HB 1525 is that we will not be able to staff additional VSCs on election day unless we spread our already limited human resources to an absolute bare minimum. This means that every VSC would be understaffed on election day, and could detract rather than assist our efficient provision of services to the voting public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

¹ Implementing Elections by Mail, 2019 report to the Hawaii Legislature at <https://elections.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/Report-to-Legislature-20191104.pdf> (page 4)



**House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports: HB1525
Tuesday February 2nd, at 2 pm; Conference Room 325**

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

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action strongly supports HB1525, which appropriates funding to expand voter service centers, ensure statewide distribution of the voter information guide, and support voter outreach and engagement efforts.

A healthy democracy depends on meaningful access to voting and accurate information. While Hawai'i has made important progress in expanding vote by mail, in-person voter service centers remain essential for many residents. This includes rural and neighbor island residents, elders, people with disabilities, language barriers, houseless voters, and those with limited or unreliable internet access. Expanding and adequately funding voter service centers helps ensure that no community is left behind.

HB1525 also recognizes the importance of providing voters with clear, accessible, and unbiased election information. Mailing the voter information guide to all registered voters helps close information gaps and supports informed participation. Voters should not be required to rely solely on online access to understand candidates, ballot measures, and election procedures.

Currently not all voter service centers are open on election day, which leads to confusion and frustration. Voters often need to utilize these centers last minute due to failed signature verifications and their ballots not being accepted, and notification arriving after the window to remain the ballot is gone.

In addition, funding voter outreach and engagement is critical to increasing participation and strengthening public trust in the electoral process. Specifically we hope that the BallotTrax software is highly promoted to voters. Civic participation does not occur automatically. Outreach efforts are necessary to ensure voters understand their options, deadlines, and rights, particularly in communities that have been historically underrepresented in elections.

HAPA is committed to advancing a democracy that is transparent, inclusive, and accountable to the people. HB1525 takes concrete steps toward that goal by investing in the infrastructure and outreach needed to support broad voter participation across the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to support HB1525.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

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

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



Protect Democracy

Move Forward

www.indivisiblehawaii.org

info@indivisiblehawaii.org

To: Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee

Hearing Date/Time: 02-03-26 2:00 PM

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 235

Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1525

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

On behalf of Indivisible Hawai'i, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor-island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first-time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people have had to wait hours in line to vote or drive more than an hour to reach their closest voter service center. Because of these challenges, election results cannot be released in a timely manner and the public has to wait an unduly long time to learn the outcome of the election.

In addition, a robust outreach program will encourage voter participation and increase civic engagement. HB1525 will ensure that every registered voter can easily vote and that vote is counted.

Sincerely,

Marlene Thom

Indivisible Hawai'i Good Government & Secure Elections Team

The mission of the 14-chapter Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network (IHSN) is to protect Hawai'i and democracy by defending civil rights, communities and values, most importantly, Hawai'i's Constitutionally protected spirit of Aloha. In October 2025, IHSN with other partners turned out over 22,000 residents on all major islands to say No Dictators! and to stand up for democracy. This call-to-action was part of Indivisible national's mobilization of more than 7 million across the country as the voice of the people, committed to election integrity and to evolving as a place of equity, opportunity and peace.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 8:11:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support HB1525.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 8:48:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Thank you

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 9:37:00 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Weidemann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Voting is so important to democracy additional funding for service centers is needed.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 3:45:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill.

Mahalo.

Kanani Kai

Member Hawaii Indivisible.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 9:22:16 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Kanehailua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1525 because it is essential for citizens to be able to easily access voter service centers and exercise their right to vote freely and fairly. Thank you for your consideration.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 9:26:04 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathan Leo Braulick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo,

Nathan Leo Braulick

96826

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 9:30:24 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this measure

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 11:52:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support funding for additional voter service centers

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 12:05:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support HB1525.

My (deceased) father used to moan and complain about taxes, but he didn't vote. As a child, I always wondered why he didn't DO something about it instead of just complaining!

I am personally ashamed of how few voters participate in the democratic process in Hawaii. Please pass this bill which has the potential to increase voter participation.

Thank you.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 12:48:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for hearing this measure.

Younghee Overly,

a member of Indivisible Hawai'i.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 1:43:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committeemembers,

Despite the switch to mail-in voting, many citizens continue to vote in person. We should make that task logistically easier for them. Let's fund more voter service centers.

I urge the committee to **SUPPORT** this bill!

HB-1525

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 3:45:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Thank you, Martha Nakajima, Honolulu, member of Indivisible

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:55:57 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JANE TOLLEFSRUD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support all activities that promote accessibility for free and fair voting. LOVE the ideas of more service centers for in-person voting, the printing of an information guide, and an outreach campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

Thank you for doing this important work!

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:05:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you -- I am a member of Indivisible Windward.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:15:16 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margery Ziffrin Marlowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is important that ALL citizens have access to voting. Please vote for this bill

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:55:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB1525. I feel we really need more in-person Voting Service Centers and I am glad that the Legislature is proposing to allocate more funds to support this. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:18:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
DeWaine Tollefsrud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha all, mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony in favor if HB1525. Now more than ever we need to support the integrity of our elections. We can not afford to be hobbled by lack of support for our essential elections infrastructure.

DeWaine Tollefsrud

Kea'au, HI 96749

Eileen Cain
720 Mahi'ai St., Apt. E
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826-5635
eileencaïn808@gmail.com
February 1, 2026

Dear Representative Tarnas, Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Testimony in Favor of HB1525, Relating to Elections

Passing this bill would make it as easy as possible for people of voting age in the islands to vote.

- Mailing out information to voters about the elections would show that government officials care about getting out the vote. It would tell voters that upcoming elections are important and their participation is important.
- Additional voter service centers would make it more likely that people would find it convenient to go and vote.
- Please fund any plan by the Office of Elections to reach out to voters and engage them.

Please vote yes on HB1525.

Mahalo,

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

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:57:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Thank you for supporting this bill to encourage and enable more of our fellow citizens to vote.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:34:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Van Horne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The vote is especially important this year. There must be adequate places for voters to register, to obtain information and to submit ballots.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:11:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Hutchison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you!

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:37:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diann Karin Lynn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for further discussion. Maximizing voter access and participation is key to the democratic process.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:02:24 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT this bill. Growing evidence has revealed that "mail in" voting can easily compromised. In order to have confidence in the voting result, the system must be impervious to cheating.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:12:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Bonk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:18:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dwight T. Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a registered voter living in Honolulu, and am a member of IndivisibleHawai'i. I support this bill because I am strongly in favor of any legislation that will encourage greater voter participation in Hawai'i.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:36:16 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Weltin	Kaʻu Voices-An Indivisible Chapter	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

As someone disabled, I need the opportunity to have access to service centers with expanded access. I understand this requires additional funding, but I can't think of a better use of state funds, than expanding access to voting services. Please support this bill.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Weltin as an individual and on behalf of Kaʻū Voices-An Indivisible Chapter and member of the Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network (IHSN)

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:36:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support this bill.

Thank you, Jane Aquino, Indivisible Hawaii. Hawaii J20

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:53:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,
Emily Gambino

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:02:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please to the right thing and advance this good government initiative. - Dan Freund (Kapaa)

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:12:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am a strong supporter of HB1525. I have been saddened and alarmed to see the actions at the national level to erode voting rights. I am glad to see our State legislature standing up to assert the primacy of state's rights in ensuring the legitimacy and fairness of our voting system.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all
votes are counted.

Mahalo

Pam Elders

Laupahoehoe, HI 96764

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:34:08 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

As a kupuna and lifelong Hawaii resident , I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are important to reduce barriers to voter participation.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will help ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Winternitz, Kula

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:03:25 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Stacey Alapai, Maui

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:09:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in Strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center. This may or may not change with the current system as it is in place. Our hale worked for OE at one point so we can say that it will be important to ensure that funds to cover these costs be added as well as some kind of way to keep the office of OE accountable. Finding people to work, ensure equipment is ready takes time and an efficient system and strong, positive leadership are essential.

With funding and accountabiilty HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:22:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1525!

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:54:13 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

We should be encouraging people to vote and engage in the democratic process, not reducing access.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:23:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB1525. In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first-time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center. Please help make it as easy and convenient as possible for people to vote!

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

Testimony submitted by James Gashel

House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs (JHA) Committee

Thirty-third legislature, 2026 regular session
February 3, 2026, 2:00 pm, hearing on HB1525

Good afternoon chair Tarnas, vice chair Poepoe, and members. I am James Gashel, supporting HB1525 and requesting an amendment, which I'll explain. I should note that I am vice chair of the Statewide Election Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. I'm appearing on my own since there's not been time to convene the committee before this hearing.

HB1525 is to appropriate funds to the counties to open additional voter service centers for in-person voting on election day, for the Office of Elections to print and mail the Voter Information Guide, and for the office of elections to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

The Statewide Election Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee and comparable county level committees are established and appointed under sections 11-10.5 and 11-10.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, passed in 2021. Our primary goal is to promote greater participation in voting by persons with access needs who may otherwise be overlooked. This is particularly important and uniquely challenging in our vote by mail state, which we fully support.

The federal Help America Vote Act, says voters with disabilities, such as blindness, have the right to vote privately and independently. We've made this possible in Hawaii by implementing several completely accessible independent voting options, with no need to have an assistant to help you to mark your ballot, but voters need to know they have these options.

It's particularly important for the Office of Elections to spread the word about accessible, independent voting for persons with disabilities. Therefore, speaking on behalf of the election accessibility needs community, I suggest adding the phrase: "including awareness and training to promote accessible voting options," to be inserted as appropriate in section 3 of the bill.

Mahalo for your consideration of the need to support voter education and outreach efforts and to help make 2026 the most fully accessible elections ever.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:07:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

02/02/2026

Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1525

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

My name is Alicia Hedlesky, a resident of Moloa'a, Kauai and a member of Indivisible Hawaii. I am writing to strongly support HB1525, which would make voting more accessible and painless for those casting their ballots and recording them. Funds spent improving the election process are well spent, and will ensure more Hawaiian voices are heard.

Thank you for your consideration and time on this important issue,

Alicia Hedlesky

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 2 pm

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 325

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT - HB 1525, RELATING TO ELECTIONS.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, Rep. Cochran from Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews and I am a long-time resident of Wailuku, Maui. I write to you today in **support of HB 1525, Relating to Elections**. This bill appropriates funds to the counties for more voter service centers for in-person voting; the Office of Elections to print and mail the digital voter information guide to all registered voters; and the Office of Elections to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

I have been an attorney licensed in the State of Hawai'i for over 25 years. I have taken an oath to defend the Constitution and to uphold rule of law. I am deeply troubled by what I have seen over the course of the past year, egregious violations of the Constitution that the courts are standing against. A Minnesota judge recently said in a court ruling that Immigration and Customs Enforcement had violated 96 court orders in Minnesota alone in January, more than most federal agencies have since their creation¹. The attacks on democratic principles by the federal executive branch are unprecedented.

Mark Elias, noted voting and elections attorney, has stated in a post to Democracy Docket:

The Republican Party is a party of vote suppressors and election deniers. This is no longer a flaw in some members of the GOP; it is the defining feature of the MAGA takeover. Undermining free and fair elections is the central tenet of Trumpism in 2025, and it will be the leading strategy of the GOP in 2026 and beyond....

For the next 11 months, we must approach each day with these questions: What can we do to protect free and fair elections? How can we counter what the GOP is doing? How can we advance the voting rights of every eligible citizen and ensure their ballots are accurately counted and elections properly certified?²

As an attorney and concerned citizen, I request that you **support HB1525** as one mechanism by which we can protect the right to vote and access to that right.

Mahalo nui for taking the threat to democracy and the right to vote seriously,

Christine L. Andrews, J.D.

¹<https://www.npr.org/2026/01/31/nx-s1-5693175/judge-says-immigration-and-customs-enforcement-has-violated-96-court-orders-this-month-in-minn>

² <https://newsletters.democracymarket.com/-the-greatest-threat-to-democracy>

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:54:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Stover	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:21:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Singer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

These service centers must be accessible and free of outside interference.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Dr. Steven Singer, Hawaii Kai

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 3:30:31 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Addie Berliner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank You for supporting this Bill!

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 3:38:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MARILYN JOHNSON	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill because it supports voting, which is a corner stone of democracy.

This is the next step, now that the Voter Online "Pamphlet" is required by law. Anything we can do to engage and educate more citizens about voting responsibly is a win for everyone.

Marilyn Johnson, Pahoa

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:51:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:52:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Personalized testimony is the most impactful way to influence lawmakers, please use this as a guide to draft your own words

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

kimdonghyeon

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:58:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Mahalo,

Kencho Gurung, Hilo

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:29:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB1525 and urge you to pass it.

In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted.

Thank you

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:59:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in support of HB1525 as both an individual and as a member of Indivisible Hawaii. For a healthy democracy, there needs to be a high level of participation. Expanding the number of in-person service centers is essential for ensuring everyone has the opportunity to have a say in the democratic process.

Thank you,

Kiana Lee, Honolulu

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:12:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB1525. In-person voter service centers are essential, especially for kūpuna, neighbor island and rural residents, people with disabilities, first time voters, and anyone who needs to address ballot discrepancies.

Over the past two elections, people had to wait hours in line to vote or drive over an hour to reach their closest voter service center.

HB1525 will ensure every vote is cast and all votes are counted. Mahalo.

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:09:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

thank you for supporting this bill

HB-1525

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:30:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of HB1525. I offer this testimony as a board member of the Hawai‘i Workers Center and a member of the Honolulu Tenants Union.

This bill would appropriate funding to expand voter service centers, ensure statewide distribution of the voter information guide, and strengthen voter outreach and engagement efforts.

Expanding the number of voter service centers and increasing their hours would make it easier for people to register, vote, and receive assistance—particularly for working families, kūpuna, and residents in rural communities. These are practical, common-sense investments that remove barriers to participation in our democratic process.

Funding the voter information guide is equally important. Providing clear, accessible, and unbiased election information helps voters make informed choices and builds public trust in our elections. Outreach and engagement efforts ensure that these resources are widely known and actually used, so that eligible voters understand where, when, and how to participate.

Strong democracy depends on broad and equitable access to the ballot. HB1525 supports that goal by improving voter services and ensuring that all communities have the tools they need to engage in our elections.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support HB1525.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Honolulu Tenants Union