



**STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 2, 2026

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

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

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

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

SUBJECT: **Testimony on H.B. No. 2050, Relating to Partial Public Financing of Elections.**
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.¹ The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to enhance Hawaii’s partial public financing program by increasing the maximum amount of public funds available for all offices by 50%² (except for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (“OHA”) which will be significantly enhanced by over 1,000%) to qualified candidates. It also makes a downward adjustment of the minimum qualifying contributions for certain offices because it appears that publicly financed candidates for those offices were having a difficult time raising the minimum qualifying contributions. Respectfully, the Commission is submitting this bill as an attempt to boost an existing program that is mandated by the State Constitution which has not changed and whose maximum dollar amounts have not changed since 1995.

This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) sections as follows:

- 1) Increases the expenditure limits for elected offices by 20%,

¹ The companion bill is S.B. No. 2528.

² The percentage of the expenditure limit, which determines the maximum amount of public funding available for each office, is increased by 50% in the bill.

- 2) HRS §11-425 by increasing the maximum amount of public funds available for all offices (except for the offices of the Mayor of the County of Kauai, Mayor of the County of Maui, and OHA trustee) by 50%. The bill also increases the maximum amount available for candidates for Mayor of the counties of Kauai and Maui by 125% by moving those offices from subsection (a) to subsection (b) and increasing the maximum amount of public funds available for a candidate for trustee of OHA from \$1,500 for the election period to 7.5% of the expenditure limit for each election established in HRS §11-423(d).
- 3) HRS §11-429(a) by increasing the amount of qualifying contributions required for a candidate for trustee of OHA from more than \$1,500 in the aggregate to more than \$5,500 in the aggregate.
- 4) HRS §11-429(a) by providing a downward adjustment of the minimum amounts of qualifying contributions for the office of prosecuting attorney for the city and county of Honolulu (from \$30,000 to \$25,000), and counties of Hawaii (from \$10,000 to \$5,000) and Kauai (from \$5,000 to \$3,000), and for the office of county council for the county of Maui (from \$5,000 to \$4,000).
- 5) HRS §11-429(b) by increasing matching fund payments from \$1 for each \$1 of qualifying contributions in excess of the minimum qualifying contribution amounts to \$2 for each \$1 of excess qualifying contributions.

For illustration, here is a comparison of the present partial public funding program in contrast to the enhanced partial public funding program set forth in this bill. For a qualified Senate candidate running opposed in District 1 in the 2026 election, the maximum amount of public funds available is \$7,269 in the primary election and another \$7,269 in the general election. In contrast, under this bill, this same candidate would receive \$10,903 in the primary election and another \$10,903 in the general election. For a qualified House candidate running opposed in District 1 in the 2026 election, the maximum amount of public funds available is \$3,562 in the primary election and another \$3,562 in the general election. In contrast, under this bill, this same candidate would receive \$5,343 in the primary election and \$5,343 in the general election.

For a qualified candidate running opposed for Kauai Mayor in the 2026 election, the maximum amount of public funds available is \$9,635 in the primary election and another \$9,635 in the general election. In contrast, under this bill, this same candidate would receive \$21,679 in the primary election and \$21,679 in the general election. For a qualified candidate running opposed for Maui Mayor in the 2026 election, the maximum amount of public funds available is \$23,002 in the primary election and another \$23,002 in the general election. In contrast, under this bill, this same candidate would receive \$51,754 in the primary election and \$51,754 in the general election. Lastly, for a qualified OHA candidate running opposed in the 2026 election,

Testimony of the Campaign Spending Commission
Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026
H.B. No. 2050, Relating to Partial Public Financing of Elections
February 2, 2026
Page 3

the maximum amount of public funds available is \$1,500 for the election period. In contrast, under this bill, this same candidate would receive \$15,496 in the primary election and \$15,496 in the general election.

Under the bill, assuming one qualified candidate for each elective office³ in the state, the maximum amount of public financing available would be \$2,339,652 in the 2026 primary election and another \$2,339,652 in the 2026 general election. As of June 30, 2025, the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund (“HECF”) balance was \$2,412,282.94. A general fund appropriation into the HECF is necessary if this bill is passed.

The Commission requests that this committee pass this bill.

³ The Commission is aware that not all elective offices appear on the ballot in an election year.



Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Chair David Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe
Tuesday, February 3 2 pm
Room 325 and Videoconference
HB2050 – Relating to Partial Public Financing of Elections

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 HB2050, which would increase the expenditure limit and the amount of partial public campaign financing available for all elective offices; adjust the minimum amount of qualifying contributions certain candidates must receive to participate in the program; increase the matching fund payments for excess qualifying contributions; and appropriate funds for the program. We also offer a suggestion for your consideration.

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 HB2050 unquestionably offer an improvement on the status quo.

In addition, 2050 cuts the number of qualifying contributions required to access public funding for several offices, making the program easier to access.

Finally, recognizing the increased costs for these changes, and for the intended increase in the number of qualifying candidates, HB2050 provides for increased funding

for Hawaii election campaign fund (HECF). This is important because under the definition of the PPFP, if the HECF runs out of money before all qualified candidates have received the anticipated payments, the program will stop making the payments, thus eroding both candidates' trust and willingness to use the program and citizens' appreciation of the PPFP.

Suggestion: Recognizing the CSC staff demands of adjusting to these changes and to the intended increase in the number of candidates initiating use of the PPFP, we suggest funding an added staff position to the CSC, which is already overloaded with important requirements for its small staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



FEBRUARY 3, 2026

HOUSE BILL 2050

CURRENT REFERRAL: JHA

808-679-7454
kris@imuaalliance.org
www.imuaalliance.org
@imuaalliance

Kris Coffield,
President

David Negaard,
Director

Mireille Ellsworth,
Director

Justin Salisbury,
Director

Eileen Roco,
Director

Beatrice DeRego,
Director

Corey Rosenlee,
Director

Amy Zhao,
Policy and Partnerships Strategist

POSITION: SUPPORT

Imua Alliance supports HB 2050, relating to partial public financing of elections, which increases the expenditure limit and the amount of partial public campaign financing available for all elective offices; adjusts the minimum amount of qualifying contributions certain candidates must receive to participate in the program; and increases the matching fund payments for excess qualifying contributions.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending all forms of exploitation, including corporate abuse of our democracy. Government should work for the public interest, not special interests.

Hawai'i has had partial public campaign financing in place for decades, rooted in the 1978 Constitutional Convention's direction to establish a campaign fund for partial public financing. Few candidates participate, however, because the current partial funding model fails to provide sufficient resources to run competitive campaigns.

Hawai'i's electoral environment is comparatively uncompetitive. An average of about 90% of incumbents were reelected over the past decade and challengers face structural disadvantages in establishing fundraising networks and building name recognition. Strengthening the match and availability of public funds, as this bill proposes, is helps give: participating candidates a realistic chance to keep pace with private financing.

Public financing programs are also associated with broader and more diverse participation in democracy, particularly when they amplify small contributions. For example, analysis of New York City's matching system found it increased both the number and diversity of residents who participate as donors, shifting candidate incentives toward engaging everyday constituents instead of concentrating time on large donors. Importantly for Hawai'i, this policy conversation is not abstract:

Hawai‘i has confronted repeated corruption scandals in recent years, and a UHERO policy brief explicitly situates public campaign financing as one reform to reduce reliance on wealthy donors and corporate interests.

Buttressing public campaign financing also has indirect, but important benefits for Hawai‘i’s clean economy and climate action goals. Hawai‘i has some of the most ambitious climate targets in the nation—codifying 50% greenhouse gas reductions by 2030 and a carbon-neutral economy by 2045—but achieving these goals depends on responsive, accountable governance, and public trust in policy decisions that affect energy, transportation, land use, and economic incentives.

Research on public financing systems finds that when candidates rely less on large special-interest money and more on broad public support, they are encouraged to engage more directly with voters and prioritize community-wide concerns over narrow donor agendas, including long-term challenges like climate resilience and clean energy transitions.

Reinforced public financing can help ensure that elected leaders are empowered to advance policies—such as investments in renewable energy, equitable EV infrastructure, and climate adaptation funding—that reflect broad public support rather than industry influence. By making Hawai‘i’s democratic process more transparent and competitive, HB 2050 supports governance that is better aligned with the state’s clean economy and climate commitments.

Strengthening partial public financing is a pragmatic democracy reform: it can make elections more competitive, expand the role of small donors, and reduce candidates’ dependency on narrow funding networks, while building on recent good government reforms to diminish the corrupting role of corporate money in local politics.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance



House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports: HB2050
Tuesday February 2nd, at 2 pm; Conference Room 235

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

HAPA strongly supports HB2050, modernizes Hawai'i's partial public campaign financing program by increasing expenditure limits, strengthening matching funds, and updating qualifying contribution thresholds for state and county elective offices

The current system no longer reflects the realities of today's political landscape and inadequate as a viable alternative to private fundraising. HB2050 addresses this problem by adjusting expenditure limits, increasing the amount of public funds available to participating candidates, and strengthening incentives to participate in the program.

Recent data underscores the need for these reforms. Since 1994, incumbents in the Hawai'i House have spent an average of nearly \$58,000 per election when adjusted for inflation, while challengers spent approximately \$16,500. This persistent imbalance has contributed to a reelection rate of roughly 90 percent for incumbents over the past decade. Public financing was intended to help level this playing field, but without updates, it cannot serve that purpose effectively.

HB2050 builds on prior reform efforts undertaken by the Legislature. In recent years, lawmakers have enacted several recommendations from the Foley Commission, including strengthening penalties for government fraud and reforming lobbying practices. However, we still have to make progress on reforms of expanding public financing and reducing candidates' dependence on large private donations. This measure helps close those gaps.

HB2050 represents a thoughtful and necessary update to Hawai'i's partial public financing system. It responds directly to inflation, campaign spending realities, and the public's desire for a more equitable and transparent electoral process. We respectfully urge you to support this measure.

Thank you for your support and consideration.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

HB-2050

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 11:18:23 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 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 & Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

As former chair of the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC), I submit this testimony in support of HB 2025 RELATING TO PARTIAL PUBLIC FINANCING OF ELECTIONS.

In proposing a bill such as HB 2025, CISC found "that publicly funded elections can help counter the repercussions of Citizens United because public funding expands the reach of many small donors and can relieve candidates of the need to rely on the support of special interest groups or large donors." December 1, 2022 CISC Report at 32.

Judge Daniel Foley (ret.)

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:01:29 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-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:03:05 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 strongly support of HB2050. It is time to get
big money out of state politics. Voters need to
believe their vote matters!

The increased expenditure cap and adjusted
matching funds to 2:1, more realistically reflects the economic realities of today and encourages
more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for
those candidates who don't accept establishment backing and more importantly, it
allows candidates to focus on reaching voters
instead of donors. Whether a politician accepts
big money can and should be an issue for voters. This bill makes that issue more important.

HB 2050 is a significant step toward enabling
more candidates to use this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Thank you,

Pam Elders

Laupahoehoe, HI 96764

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:28:40 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,

I am in strong support of HB2050 because public financing levels the playing field for candidates and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill will reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Winternitz, Kula

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:31:54 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert N Mansfield, Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB2050,

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

A democracy includes protecting and nurturing the viability of all of its citizens!

Sincerely,

Robert Nawahine Mansfield Jr, 96826

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:46:43 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nani Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I fully support expanding public funding (also eliminating corporate donations) this will level the playing field for candidates not connected to wealthy donors or corporate pacs. This will create a government more reflective of our population vs a money contest.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:01:06 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

I would like to especially highlight how important public financing is in leveling the playing field for all candidates. This allows the candidates to focus on reaching their voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:02:44 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program. By design this gives twice as much power to small donors and gives all candidates a fair chance to win without needing rich friends to do it.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Stacey Alapai, Maui

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:24:25 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, Leo Nahe, support HB 2050.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:48:09 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support an increase in the Partial Public Funding program for candidates. It has been noted that an average of only 15 candidates (out of hundreds) participate in this program every election, but the fact that the match is only a 1-1 ratio is the reason for this low number of participants. When you consider the public funding programs in other states, you find that the higher the match ratio, the larger the number of candidate participants. Another reason that I support this bill is that the expenditure limits have gone unchanged since 1995.

Mahalo,

Greg Kahn

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:52:17 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

Enabling more candidates to run encourages more diversity in the legislature and helps people feel represented. Additionally, across the country, big money has created so many problems, so this would help to reduce that inappropriate influence.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:14:17 PM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ross Isokane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support efforts to strengthen public financing as I believe it can be an effective tool to help reduce the influence wealthy special interests may exert on policy making. The current system allows those with money to have more access to elected officials. The additional funding investment in public financing, I believe, will provide returns in the form of better policy outcomes (as opposed to the current system that many in the public believe is rife with graft, wasteful spending, and pay-to-play).

I prefer other campaign finance bills that establish a comprehensive system of public financing more than this one. I urge legislative and committee members to make sure those also get a hearing. But from a pragmatic perspective, I'll take what I can get. The only thing I'll truly be unhappy about is a session that results in no meaningful changes and simply promotes the status quo.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:15:15 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 HB2050. By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure encourages more candidates to participate in the partial public funding program. Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors. This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections. PLEASE HELP KEEP BIG MONEY OUT OF POLITICS!

Mahalo for your consideration,
Marcia Kemble
Makiki

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:04:49 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:13:52 PM
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 HB2050. I believe it is a vital step in leveling the playing field for candidates and strengthening a representative democracy. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:53:54 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-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:50:54 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:51:41 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

kimdonghyeon

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

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:55:42 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

Kencho Gurung, Hilo

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

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 5:32:54 PM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

As a former candidate for county council it was nearly impossible to compete with a candidate getting large donations, these campaign matches would be huge for someone trying to enter the realm of politics and give voice to people that do not have millionaire or billionaire friends.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Mahalo,

John Fitzpatrick,

Makawao

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:27:51 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 HB2050 and urge you to pass it.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections.

Thank you

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

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:54:56 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory Misakian	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I support HB2050.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:27:13 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 HB2050.

By increasing the expenditure cap and adjusting matching funds to 2:1, this measure reflects the economic realities of today and encourages more candidates to participate in the program.

Public financing levels the playing field for candidates without establishment backing and allows campaigns to focus on reaching voters instead of donors.

This bill is a significant step toward enabling more candidates to utilize this program and reduces the influence of big money in our elections. Mahalo.

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:35:23 AM
Testimony for JHA on 2/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Tsuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings,

Any effort to expand the democratic process can and should be entertained. The issue that folks face in attempting to engage/participate in this process is largely stonewalled by their ability to finance their operations. Taxdollars should be spent on things to improve the system at all levels, please consider supporting this bill and it's capacity to improve opportunity for electoral representation across the spectrum. Thank you

HB-2050

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:28:49 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 I'm a lifelong lineal descendant of these lands. I also sit on the board of the Hawai'i Workers Center, and I submit this testimony in strong support of HB2050.

HB2050 would strengthen Hawai'i's public financing system for elections by increasing the amount of public funds available to qualifying candidates, raising the state's donation match from a 1:1 ratio to 2:1, and updating campaign expenditure limits.

These funding levels and limits have not been updated since 1995. Over the past three decades, Hawai'i's cost of living has risen faster than the national average, significantly reducing the real value of campaign resources. Candidates today face much higher costs for basic campaign needs such as printing, venue rentals, outreach, and advertising.

Updating the public financing system is essential to ensuring that everyday people—not just wealthy donors—can realistically run for office. By increasing the matching funds and adjusting spending limits to reflect today's economic realities, HB2050 helps promote fairer, more competitive elections and broader participation in our democracy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support HB2050.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Hawai'i Workers Center Board Member