

MAR 16 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION TO TAKE ALL ACTIONS
NECESSARY AND WITHIN ITS POWER TO ENSURE CANDIDATE
COMMITTEES' FULL COMPLIANCE WITH STATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE
LAWS.

1 WHEREAS, the State's Campaign Spending Commission was
2 established to maintain the integrity and transparency of the
3 process of funding election campaigns by enforcing campaign
4 finance laws, educating the public, administering public
5 campaign financing, and training campaign committees to comply
6 with applicable laws; and

7
8 WHEREAS, the Legislature has assigned the Hawaii State
9 Campaign Spending various powers and duties to enable the
10 Commission to fulfill its mission; and

11
12 WHEREAS, section 11-410, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
13 authorizes the Commission to assess fines for violations of
14 campaign finance laws; and

15
16 WHEREAS, since 2018, the Legislature has enacted thirty-one
17 measures that have amended the State's campaign financing laws;
18 and

19
20 WHEREAS, since 2018, the Commission has not audited any
21 campaign account to verify the accuracy of the campaign's
22 reports and filed documents; and

23
24 WHEREAS, the Commission's current strategic plan, adopted
25 in 2018, includes the following goals:

26
27 (1) "To provide training, education, and access to
28 committees for purposes of [increasing] compliance
29 with, and . . . awareness of, campaign finance laws
30 and rules"; and

31
32 (2) "To obtain compliance with campaign finance laws and
33 rules through enforcement actions"; and
34



1 WHEREAS, the Commission provides in-person training
2 opportunities only twice per year during election years, and
3 only during normal business hours; and
4

5 WHEREAS, ninety percent of candidate committees are managed
6 by volunteers who may not be able to attend in-person training
7 sessions during normal business hours; and
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9 WHEREAS, section 11-340, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
10 authorizes the Commission to fine a candidate committee if the
11 committee files a substantially defective or deficient report
12 and fails to correct the report within the time allowed; and
13

14 WHEREAS, the Commission has not adopted rules clearly
15 defining what constitutes a substantially defective or deficient
16 report under section 11-340, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and
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18 WHEREAS, although the Commission has taken some actions to
19 help ensure that candidate committees comply with campaign
20 finance laws, including publishing online a schedule of fines,
21 as well as guidebooks, manuals, on-demand videos, and answers to
22 frequently asked questions, the Commission needs to take
23 additional proactive measures to ensure compliance; and
24

25 WHEREAS, the Commission should also make it a priority to
26 ensure that candidates and the volunteers who assist with their
27 campaigns have the information and training necessary to comply
28 with campaign spending laws; now, therefore,
29

30 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
31 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
32 that the Campaign Spending Commission is urged to:
33

- 34 (1) Conduct automatic audits of candidate committees that
35 expend more than \$500,000 during any election period;
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37 (2) Subsidize the costs of independent audits for
38 candidate committee that want to undergo independent
39 audits;
40
41 (3) Adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised
42 Statutes, that clearly define what constitutes a



- 1 substantially defective or deficient report under
- 2 section 11-340, Hawaii Revised Statutes, so that
- 3 candidate committees have the information necessary to
- 4 submit compliant reports;
- 5
- 6 (4) Provide in-person training sessions on a more frequent
- 7 basis, and during non-business hours, to facilitate
- 8 campaign volunteers' attendance at those sessions; and
- 9
- 10 (5) Take any other actions necessary and within its power
- 11 to ensure candidate committees' full compliance with
- 12 state campaign finance laws; and
- 13

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 15 Resolution be transmitted to the Chair and Executive Director of
 16 the Campaign Finance Commission, Chairperson of the Elections
 17 Commission, and Chief Election Officer.

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OFFERED BY: 

