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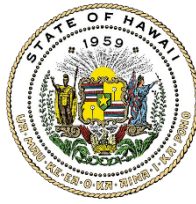
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**March 30, 2026**

**HB 2094, HD1, SD1: RELATING TO JURY DUTY:**

**Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:**

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) **supports** HB 2094 HD1 SD1 which increases compensation for jurors and prospective jurors who are summoned to serve. While the increase provided by this bill is modest, it is nonetheless an important and meaningful step toward ensuring that jury service remains accessible and that jury pools reflect a fair cross-section of our community.

Jury service is a cornerstone of our justice system. Both the United States and Hawai'i Constitutions guarantee the right to a trial by an impartial jury drawn from a representative cross-section of the community. That promise is undermined when economic realities effectively exclude working people, low-income individuals, caregivers, and hourly wage earners from serving. When juror compensation fails to keep pace with the real costs of participation, such as lost wages, transportation, or childcare, jury service can become a financial hardship rather than a shared civic responsibility.

From the perspective of the OPD, representative juries are essential to fair trials. Our clients' constitutional rights depend not only on the presence of a jury, but on a jury that reflects the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the community. When financial barriers discourage participation, juries are more likely to be drawn from a narrower segment of the population, which can undermine confidence in verdicts and in the justice system itself.

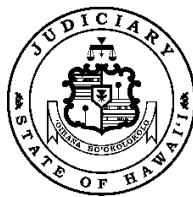
We acknowledge that the increase in juror compensation proposed by this measure will not, on its own, eliminate all barriers to jury service. However, even a nominal increase matters. For many individuals, particularly those living paycheck to

paycheck, small increases can make the difference between being able to serve and needing to seek excusal due to hardship. This bill sends an important message that the State values jurors' time and recognizes the real costs associated with fulfilling this civic duty.

Moreover, improving juror compensation promotes efficiencies within the judicial system. By reducing hardship-based excusals and improving juror turnout, the courts can more effectively assemble jury panels and avoid delays that strain already limited judicial resources.

For these reasons, the Office of the Public Defender **supports** HB 2094 HD1 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i*  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'okolokolo, Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i*

**Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026 Regular Session**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 10:03 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

By

Dean T. Hiraki  
Deputy Chief Court Administrator, Third Circuit

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**Bill No. and Title:** House Bill No. 2094, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, Relating to Jury Duty.

**Purpose:** Increases the amount each juror or prospective juror is paid for each day of actual attendance at court. Appropriates moneys. Effective March 22, 2075.

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary strongly supports this bill, which is part of the Judiciary's 2026 legislative package. This bill proposes to increase juror compensation from a fixed flat rate of \$30 to \$50 per day.

Juror compensation was last increased in 1989 from \$20 to \$30 per day. Since that time, the cost of living in the State of Hawai'i has drastically increased. While juror compensation is not meant to serve as a substitute for wages, raising the daily rate would provide some relief for those who serve this important civic duty.

By comparison, jurors who serve in the United States District Court, receive \$50 per day. The National Center for State Courts recommends that at the very least, state courts should review compensation rates in relation to the prevailing federal rate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Jury Studies, National Center for State Courts, Juror Compensation in the United States, (April 2022).



House Bill No. 2094, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, Relating to Jury Duty  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 10:03 AM  
Page 2

An increase in juror compensation helps ensure a diverse jury pool by allowing people from varying socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in the judicial system. It further acknowledges the sacrifice our citizenry makes to serve on a jury and shows the state's appreciation for such service.

The increase would require commensurate annual funding by the Legislature. We therefore also ask that the requested appropriate amount be supported by the Legislature and that any additional funding not supplant the Judiciary's other existing funding and budget requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2094, H.D. 1, S.D. 1.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO HO'OPI'I  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
LOIO HO'OPI'I



THOMAS J. BRADY  
FIRST DEPUTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
HOPE MUA LOIO HO'OPI'I

**THE HONORABLE DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawai'i**

April 1, 2026

**REGARDING H.B. 2094, H.D.1, S.D.1 — RELATING TO JURY DUTY.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in **support** of H.B. 2094, H.D.1, S.D.1.

H.B. 2094, H.D.1, S.D.1 addresses a quiet but serious threat to the fairness and integrity of our justice system: the growing financial burden placed on ordinary citizens who answer the call for jury service. Our court system relies on jurors to decide matters that profoundly affect people's lives: whether a victim receives justice, whether a defendant is held accountable, whether the values of our community are upheld. Jurors are not passive observers. They listen carefully to difficult evidence, deliberate thoughtfully, and shoulder the moral weight of decisions no one else can make for them. This system only works when juries reflect the full diversity of our community.

Jury compensation in Hawai'i simply does not reflect today's economic reality. For many working people, that amount does not even come close to covering lost wages, childcare costs, or even basic transportation. As a result, certain people experience disproportionate hardship from jury service: hourly workers, caregivers, young workers, and those living paycheck to paycheck. Although the courts can grant relief from jury service for manifest hardship, this reality skews jury pools and undermines public confidence in verdicts. Justice should not depend on whether someone can afford to serve.

For prosecutors, this matters deeply. When juries are unrepresentative, both victims and defendants suffer. Both victims and defendants deserve verdicts delivered by juries that truly reflect the community. When financial barriers narrow who can serve, the legitimacy of outcomes is called into question. That harms everyone involved in the justice system.

This bill takes a modest, responsible step toward fixing that problem by increasing daily juror compensation. It does not overpay jurors or turn jury service into a financial windfall—but simply acknowledges that civic duty should not come at an unreasonable personal cost. The appropriation recognizes that if we value juries as a cornerstone of our judiciary, we must be willing to invest in them.

We regularly tell jurors that their service is essential and appreciated. This bill makes the message real. The Department respectfully urges this Committee to pass H.B. 2094, H.D.1, S.D.1 and strengthen the foundation of justice in Hawaii by ensuring jury service is accessible to all.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



March 30, 2026

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

**Re: H.B. 2094: Relating to Jury Duty**

**Hearing: Wednesday, April 1, 2026, 10:03 AM, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and the Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Hawaii Women Lawyers is a lawyer's trade organization that aims to improve the lives and careers of women in all aspects of the legal profession, influence the future of the legal profession, and enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunities for all.

**Hawaii Women Lawyers submits testimony in strong support of H.B. 2094: Relating to Jury Duty.**

This bill proposes to increase the juror compensation from a fixed flat rate of \$30 to \$50 per day of actual attendance in court. In 2023, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that women in Hawaii who were full-time wage and salary workers had median usual weekly earnings of \$902. Increasing jury compensation to \$50 per day would result in a weekly compensation of \$250. Juror compensation acknowledges the sacrifice Hawaii citizens make when serving and is an appreciation of that service. Increasing juror compensation will better allow individuals and families to plan to take on any additional financial burdens as a result of service, such as childcare.

**For the above reasons, we strongly support H.B. 2094: Relating to Jury Duty.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.



# West Hawai'i Bar Association

P.O. Box 351 • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i • 96745

westhawaiiibar@gmail.com

March 31, 2026

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means  
The Senate  
33<sup>rd</sup> Legislature, State of Hawai'i

via: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>

**Re: SUPPORT FOR AND COMMENTS ON HB2094, HD1 SD1  
RELATING TO JURY DUTY**

DATE: Wednesday, April 1, 2026  
TIME: 10:03 a.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Dear Honorable Committee leadership and members,

The Executive Board of the West Hawai'i Bar Association (WHBA) supports the proposed increase in juror compensation to \$50.00 per day as proposed in SD1. We ask the Committee please to consider, however, amending the mileage reimbursement rate from the present 33 cents/mile to 72.5 cents/mile, the prevailing standard mileage rate the State pays to state employees when they use their vehicles for government purposes. See Hawaii State Dept. of Accounting and General Services Comptroller's Memorandum 2026-01 (January 12, 2026), *available at:* <https://ags.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Comptrollers-Memorandum-No.-2026-01-2026-Standard-Mileage-Rate-Announced-by-Internal-Revenue.pdf>. Also see HAR § 3-10-13.

The WHBA represents approximately 115 attorneys serving the West side of the Island of Hawai'i. Circuit courts are located in Hilo and Kailua-Kona. Citizens can be called to serve on a jury if they reside within 70 miles of either courthouse. Other than the 11 states and counties that have statutes requiring private sector employers to pay all or a portion of regular pay to their employees when called to serve on a jury, see, *Employees' Rights for Jury Duty Leave By State*, *available at:* <https://www.paycor.com/resource-center/articles/employees-rights-for-jury-duty-leave/>, the rate of \$50/day to be paid by the governing jurisdiction to the juror, appears standard. However, whereas the price of gas and wear and tear on a vehicle having to

travel upwards of 140 miles a day likely will eviscerate the value of increasing juror pay by the proposed \$20/day if the mileage reimbursement remains at 33 cents.

Finally, please restore the effective date as proposed in the original HB2094 to July 1, 2026.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Very Truly Yours,



Rachel L. Thompson, Esq.  
President, West Hawai'i Bar Association

**HB-2094-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 3:28:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| David Ball          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support this legislation.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

**HB-2094-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:13:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Diane Ware          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Chairs and Committee Members,

I reported to jury duty this past year. Please pass this bill. \$30 a day for jury duty considering inflation alone is ridiculous. Most food and meals have almost doubled since 2019.

Mahalo Diane Ware Volcano

**HB-2094-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:52:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Glen Kagamida       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!! MAHALO!

**LATE**

**HB-2094-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:13:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Karen Lucero        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I appreciate the opportunity to offer strong support for HB2049 HD3 SD1 to ensure funding for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB2049 HD3 SD1 and help move this important measure forward.