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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
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State Capitol, Room 446
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Written Comments

HB2180 **RELATING TO VOTING BOARDS**

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the House Committee on Legislative Management

Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 430

Chair Sean Quinlan and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon, Chair Quinlan and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi, and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau (Bureau). Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on H.B. No. 2180, Relating to Voting Boards.

The purpose of this measure is to require the Legislative Reference Bureau to study the feasibility of implementing electronic voting boards for the Senate and House of Representatives chambers of the Hawaii State Capitol.

Specifically, the measure requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a feasibility study that includes the costs associated with the implementation of an electronic voting board in both chambers of the Legislature, and requires the study to examine:

- (1) The type of electronic voting board technology available;
- (2) The costs associated with installing, operating, and maintaining equipment in both chambers;
- (3) The feasibility of retrofitting existing technology installed in the chambers; and
- (4) The amount of time needed to implement an electronic voting board system.

The measure also requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than December 1, 2026.

The Bureau takes no position on the merits of this measure but submits the following comments for your consideration.

Electronic voting boards, also known as electronic roll call systems, allow legislators to vote yes or no, typically by pressing a button. The system instantly tallies the votes and displays each legislator's name and vote on a large screen or board in the chamber.

In 2018, the Vermont Legislative Research Service of the University of Vermont conducted a study similar to the one requested by this measure. The report included two case studies of the electronic voting roll call systems installed in the New Hampshire and Illinois legislatures:

- The New Hampshire electronic roll call system was installed in the chamber of the 400-member House of Representatives by the International Roll Call System company in 2016 at an approximate cost of \$500,000, with an annual cost of about \$10,000.
- The Illinois electronic voting systems included installation of systems in both the 118-member House of Representatives chamber and the 59-member Senate chamber in 2007. In-house information technology staff installed both systems. Total estimated installation costs were between \$500,000 and \$1,500,000, software development costs were between \$400,000 and \$800,000, and annual maintenance ranged between \$50,000 and \$150,000.

Early estimates for the Vermont system ranged between \$475,000 and \$700,000.

Based on our cursory research, it appears that there are only four manufacturers of legislative voting systems. Accordingly, instead of studying this issue, it may be a better use of government resources to first have each chamber of the Legislature determine if it desires to use such a voting system, specify the requested features, and then publish a request for information to allow the potential vendors to submit proposals.

However, should the Committee desire to require the Bureau to conduct this study, the Bureau believes that the services requested of the Bureau under the measure could be manageable if both legislative chambers agree to provide to the Bureau any necessary information to conduct the study (e.g., provide specific information on if the respective chamber is interested in utilizing such a system, what each chamber deems as necessary inclusions in such a system, what other inclusions each chamber deems to be useful, but not necessary

inclusions in such system, etc.), and provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting studies, writing or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or any combination of these for the Legislature or for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

HB-2180

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 7:13:29 PM

Testimony for LMG on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERI SAVAIINAEA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Holt and Members of the Committee,

I support HB2180.

Requiring the LRB to study the feasibility of an electronic voting board is a prudent step. The Legislature should fully assess cost, security, and transparency before implementation.

This study ensures informed, fiscally responsible decision-making. I respectfully urge passage of HB2180.

Mahalo,
Teri Kia Savaiinaea

HB-2180

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 10:23:42 AM

Testimony for LMG on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

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Submitted on: 2/17/2026 12:41:36 PM

Testimony for LMG on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lanette Bourg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this HB. It makes sense. Thank you.

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Submitted on: 2/17/2026 12:41:54 PM

Testimony for LMG on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Duffy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support of this measure directing the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a feasibility study on electronic voting boards for both chambers of the Hawai‘i State Legislature.

This bill is a thoughtful, prudent step toward modernization and transparency. It does not mandate installation or expenditure. It simply asks for a careful evaluation of cost, technology options, and implementation timelines before any decision is made. That is responsible governance.

Nearly two-thirds of state legislatures across the country utilize electronic voting systems. The Wisconsin State Assembly has successfully operated an electronic voting board for over a century, improving efficiency and public accountability. Many other states have upgraded their systems over the last several decades, recognizing the value of real-time transparency

Hawai‘i residents deserve easy access to real-time legislative information. While voting journals are eventually published, a visible electronic display enhances clarity and public trust during live proceedings. Transparency should not be delayed when technology allows it to be immediate.

Stongly support.

HB-2180

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 1:47:47 PM

Testimony for LMG on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna P. Van Osdol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee:

I support this bill which would examine types of electronic voting board technology available; discusses costs involved with bringing a system to fruition including maintenance costs, current and future, due to technology changing rapidly; whether existing equipment can be retrofitted; and implementation timeline.

Thank you, again, for your time and consideration. Again, I support this measure.