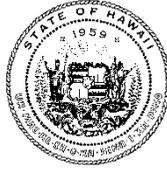


JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



BONNIE KAHAKUI
ADMINISTRATOR

DAYNA OMIYA
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

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TESTIMONY
OF
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ADMINISTRATOR
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT
FEBRUARY 18, 2026, 2:00 PM

HOUSE BILL 2469
RELATING TO A REGULAR SESSION REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Chair Holt, Vice Chair Quinlan, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 2469, which establishes a Regular Session Review Working Group, requires a report, and appropriate moneys.

The State Procurement Office (SPO) acknowledges the intent of the bill to convene a working group to determine the framework for a continuous legislative session. However, the SPO respectfully opposes the language in the bill under Section 2, Page 9, lines 8-9; Section 3, Page 10, lines 7-9; and Section 4, Page 10, lines 17-18, which state that contracting services using funds appropriated for this purpose shall be exempt from the requirements of Chapter 103D – Hawaii Public Procurement Code, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

The SPO recommends revisions to require that contracts are subject to HRS Chapter the Hawaii Procurement Code.

- **Section 2, Page 9, lines 5-9:**

"(f) The co-chairs of the regular session review working group may contract the services of a qualified facilitator to facilitate its meetings if the co-chairs deem it appropriate. Any contract subject to this subsection shall be [~~exempt from~~] subject to chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes."

- **Section 3, Page 10, lines 3-9:**

"SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to facilitate meetings of the regular session review working group; provided that the contracting of services using funds appropriated under this section shall be ~~[exempt from]~~ subject to chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes."

- **Section 4, Page 10, lines 12-18:**

"SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to facilitate meetings of the regular session review working group; provided that the contracting of services using funds appropriated under this section shall be ~~[exempt from]~~ subject to chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes."

The SPO testifies that service contracts that support the regular session review working group should comply with chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to ensure fair, open competition and to prevent favoritism, collusion, or fraud in awarding of contracts. This also ensures oversight, accountability, and transparency in the procurement and contracting process which is vital to good government.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi
Director

Shawn K. Nakama
First Assistant

Research 808-587-0666
Revisor 808-587-0670



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 446
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Comments

HB2469

RELATING TO A REGULAR SESSION REVIEW WORKING GROUP

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 and Via Videoconference

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. 2469, Relating to a Regular Session Review Working Group**.

The purpose of H.B. No. 2469 is to establish a Regular Session Review Working Group to consider the suggestions proposed by the Bureau's report, *Sine Die Another Day: Should Hawaii's Legislative Sessions Be Longer?*, which the Bureau submitted to the Legislature in response to House Concurrent Resolution No. 138, H.D. 1, S.D.1 (2024) (H.C.R. No. 138). More specifically, H.B. No. 2469:

- (1) Establishes the Regular Session Review Working Group to determine the essential timing and effective framework for a lengthened legislative session calendar for election and non-election years;
- (2) Establishes the membership of the Working Group, which includes two Co-Chairs, one of whom shall be a Senator selected by the President of the Senate and the other of whom shall be a Representative selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

- (3) Requires the Working Group to:
 - (A) Study the feasibility of transitioning the Hawaii State Legislature's regular session from one that meets from mid-January to early May to one that is lengthened, which means any regular session that is of significantly longer duration than Hawaii's typical January-to-May regular session;
 - (B) Analyze the financial impacts and necessary costs to operate lengthened regular sessions, including staffing requirements, changes to legislative services, operational costs, office space needs, and impacts on legislation;
 - (C) Analyze and recommend any constitutional, statutory, and legislative rule changes necessary to implement lengthened regular sessions;
 - (D) Examine other states that have lengthened sessions, as deemed appropriate by the Working Group; and
 - (E) Consider the findings and suggestions made by the Bureau in its H.C.R. No. 138 report;
- (4) Requires the Working Group to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2028;
- (5) Requires the Bureau to finalize the Working Group's report and draft any proposed legislation; provided that the Working Group submits a draft report to the Bureau no later than October 31, 2027; and
- (6) Appropriates \$100,000 to each the Senate and the House of Representatives to facilitate Working Group meetings, and provides that the contracting of services using appropriated funds shall be exempt from the Procurement Code.

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

The Bureau believes that the services required of the Bureau under H.B. No. 2469 are manageable, provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other 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.

Thank you again for your consideration.



FEBRUARY 18, 2026

HOUSE BILL 2469

CURRENT REFERRAL: LMG

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Kris Coffield,
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David Negaard,
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Director

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Director

Beatrice DeRego,
Director

Corey Rosenlee,
Director

Amy Zhao,
*Policy and Partnerships
Strategist*

POSITION: SUPPORT

Imua Alliance supports HB 2469, which establishes a Regular Session Review Working Group to determine the essential timing and effective framework for a lengthened legislative calendar for election and non-election years; requires a report to the legislature; and requires report finalization and drafting assistance from the Legislative Reference Bureau.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai‘i-based organization dedicated to ending all forms of exploitation, including corporate interference in our democracy.

Compressed sessions limit legislative effectiveness. Hawai‘i’s current system condenses thousands of bills, hearings, stakeholder consultations, and budgetary deliberations into approximately five months each year (January–May). According to reports from national legislative studies, condensed sessions contribute to rushed policy deliberation, reduced stakeholder engagement, and increased work outside of committee hearings, often in informal or remote settings that are less accessible to the public. As noted by the National Conference of State Legislatures, in its 2021 study “Session Length and Effectiveness”, states with continuous or extended sessions consistently report higher rates of public testimony, deeper committee engagement, and more thoughtful deliberation on complex policy topics.

Comparative data illustrates real benefits. Oregon and Washington operate longer legislative cycles (biennial with extended meeting periods or biennial with annual interim sessions) and have documented that expanded committee availability leads to earlier bill drafts, improved technical review, and better incorporation of public input. According to the Oregon Legislative Policy and Research Office, longer sessions improve policy analysis and reduce last-minute amendments that can undermine transparency and oversight.

Year-round continuity supports public participation and transparency. A hallmark of democratic governance is sustained engagement between policymakers and the communities they represent. Continuous session structures help ensure that public testimony is heard in real time and not

compressed into limited hearing windows. They also allow for incremental review of fiscal impacts and mid-course corrections that are challenging in a heavily compressed schedule. Testimony provided early in the session can meaningfully shape legislation, rather than being an afterthought in a late-March or April hearing rush, and impactful measures can be given more time for public vetting, rather than being scrapped without justification because of time and scheduling constraints.

Continuity fosters better policy outcomes and institutional memory. A continuous session would allow committees and working groups to build longer timelines for complex interagency coordination. According to legislative scholars, the ability to work year-round significantly reduces the policy “whiplash” experienced when statutes must be drafted, vetted, amended, and passed in just a few months. Longer cycles also help reduce staff burnout and improve legislative research quality, increasing the legislature’s capacity to address emergent issues—such as housing affordability, climate resilience, artificial intelligence, or health equity—without procedural strain.

Economic and administrative benefits are tied to better governance. While Hawai‘i’s compact session may appear cost-efficient on its face, rushed timelines increase administrative costs in other ways: last-minute budget adjustments, implementation delays, and reactive policymaking can lead to inefficiencies and unanticipated fiscal risks. Longer or continuous sessions, balanced with appropriate cost containment, promote proactive budgeting and better alignment with executive and agency planning cycles.

For these reasons, Imua Alliance urges the legislature to adopt this measure to evaluate the impacts of transitioning toward a legislative structure that prioritizes thoughtful deliberation and more meaningful public engagement.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance

HB-2469

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 10:58:26 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brett Kulbis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Brett Kulbis, I'm a 26yr retired Navy Veteran, who took a solemn oath to defend the Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic, and that oath didn't expire when I retired. I live in Ewa Beach.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE BILL HB-2469.

HB-2469 establishes a "Regular Session Review Working Group" to explore moving Hawai'i from its current mid-January to early-May legislative calendar to a significantly lengthened regular session and appropriates \$200,000 for that effort. While this bill is framed as a neutral "study," in practice it is the first step toward a more permanent, professionalized, and expensive legislature that grows government rather than restrains it.

First, the bill is an unnecessary use of taxpayer money. The Legislative Reference Bureau has already completed a detailed study (**SINE DIE ANOTHER DAY: Should Hawai'i's Legislative Sessions Be Longer?**) on extended and continuous legislative sessions and provided that report to the Legislature. HB-2469 now proposes to spend an additional \$100,000 each for the House and Senate to form yet another body to discuss the same issue. At a time when Hawai'i families are struggling with the high cost of living, housing, and taxes, directing scarce general fund dollars to study how lawmakers can stay in session longer sends exactly the wrong message about priorities.

Second, lengthening the legislative session invites bigger, more intrusive government. The current constitutional framework caps regular sessions at no more than 60 session days, and Hawai'i's calendar already generally aligns with other states. Expanding the session would almost certainly increase staffing, operational costs, and the volume of legislation considered, including new regulations, mandates, and taxes. Rather than creating more opportunities to pass laws, the Legislature should focus on using its existing timeframe more efficiently and on limiting the size and scope of government.

Third, HB-2469 weakens transparency and public trust. The bill explicitly exempts the Regular Session Review Working Group from part I of chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, the state's Sunshine Law. That means critical discussions about changing the length and structure of legislative sessions could occur behind closed doors, without the public oversight that should

accompany any proposal affecting how long lawmakers are in power each year. Decisions about the people's access to their government should be made in the open, not in exempt working groups.

Fourth, the composition and powers of the working group tilt strongly toward insiders. Members include legislators, fiscal committee chairs, the attorney general, comptroller, chief election officer, and chief clerks, with a few invited organizations. Ordinary citizens, small business owners, taxpayers, and minority viewpoints have no guaranteed seat at the table. Yet this group is tasked with recommending constitutional, statutory, and rule changes and with drafting proposed legislation to lengthen sessions. That is too much authority placed in a body that is both insider-dominated and exempt from open-meeting requirements.

Finally, HB-2469 moves Hawai'i further away from the citizen-legislator ideal. Longer or continuous sessions favor professional political insiders and make it harder for average residents, who must maintain jobs and family responsibilities, to serve or keep up with the Legislature's work. A shorter, defined session helps concentrate legislative activity, promotes fiscal discipline, and keeps lawmakers closer to the people they serve.

For these reasons, unnecessary spending, expansion of government, reduced transparency, insider control, and harm to the citizen-legislator model, I respectfully urge you to defer indefinitely HB-2469.

Respectfully,

Brett Kulbis

HB-2469

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 11:05:53 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this as testimony in opposition to this measure. All it does is postpone action. The working group has two years to prepare a report, and then no action can be taken until 2029. If a constitutional amendment is required, that further pushes it back. With all that is going on in the state, the nation, and the world this needs to move forward, rapidly, not at a purposeful snail's face which means nothing will ever happen.

Lynne Matusow