



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE  
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
elections.hawaii.gov

SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2239  
RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION

February 18, 2026

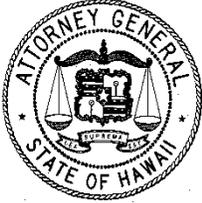
Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding Senate Bill No. 2239. We appreciate the committee's efforts to expand access to voting and strengthen civic engagement.

This bill authorizes state agencies to make applications for voter registration part of certain state agency application processes and to facilitate the sharing of associated information among certain state agencies, election personnel, and the online voter registration system.

Our office supports the intent of the bill as it increases access to voter registration. As a housekeeping matter, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to replace the reference to the "online voter registration system" with the "statewide voter registration system." Section 1, page 3, line 4 and Section 1, page 4, line 14.

We would defer to other government agencies and the county clerks regarding the further impacts on operations as well as the implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill No. 2239.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

---

**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2239, RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 18, 2026      **TIME:** 9:05 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 016

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Jung Min (Charles) Lee, Deputy Attorney General

---

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill amends section 11-15.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to authorize certain state agencies that deal with the public and collect or cross-reference reliable personal information indicating citizenship status to offer "dual-purpose applications," meaning applications for a license, permit, program, or service that may also serve as voter registration applications. The bill requires the application to contain an opt-out opportunity, authorizes electronic transmission of necessary voter-registration information to election officials and the online voter registration system, and provides that approved applications received through this process shall be treated as having a valid signature for purposes of section 11-15(c), HRS.

Although the new section 11-15.5(b) in section 1 of the bill uses permissive wording—"may provide" at page 1, line 14—with respect to state agency participation, it retains mandatory wording regarding processing of dual-purpose applications. Specifically, the new subsection (b) provides that "[d]ual-purpose applications shall not be processed until" the applicant completes the voter registration portion and indicates whether the applicant would like to register to vote, at page 2, lines 12–15. This wording could be interpreted or implemented to delay the processing of the underlying agency application—particularly for time-sensitive, federally funded public assistance

programs—based on completion of voter registration questions, creating avoidable implementation risk and potential conflict with federal and state program requirements.

The bill also raises concerns regarding the scope of information transmission and access. While subsection (b) authorizes collection and transmission of "only the information necessary" to register the applicant as a voter, at page 2, line 18, the new subsection (c) refers to transmission of the "completed dual-purpose application" at page 3, line 16, creating ambiguity as to whether the entire underlying application should be transmitted. In addition, the new subsection (d) broadly authorizes database access—including "any documents or images" at page 4, line 12—for "any other voter registration or election purposes, as determined by the director" of the respective state agency at page 4, lines 16–17. For agencies administering programs subject to federal and state confidentiality requirements, this breadth may raise privacy, security, and compliance concerns that extend beyond what is necessary to accomplish the bill's stated purpose.

Finally, section 11-15.5(c) in section 1 of the bill provides that approved voter registration applications received from participating agencies "shall be treated as having a valid signature" for purposes of section 11-15(c), at page 4, lines 1–2, including when transmitted electronically or by facsimile. Because section 11-15 contemplates an affidavit-style application, the Legislature may wish to clarify the attestation and signature method used in the voter registration portion of any dual-purpose application.

To address these concerns, the Legislature may wish to consider amendments that: (1) clarify that the "shall not be processed" wording at page 2, line 12, applies only to the transmission or handling of voter registration information and does not delay the processing, approval, or issuance of benefits under the underlying agency application; (2) amend subsection (c) to replace the reference to the "completed dual-purpose application" at page 3, line 16, with wording limiting transmission to the applicant's name, residence address, date of birth, and any other data elements enumerated in section 11-15, HRS, that are strictly necessary to register or update a voter record; (3) amend subsection (d) to remove the phrase "any other voter registration or election purposes" at page 4, lines 16–17, and instead limit database access to the specific

purposes of processing voter registration applications and maintaining the accuracy of voter registration rolls, and to add a provision prohibiting the disclosure of information obtained through dual-purpose applications for purposes unrelated to voter registration; and (4) require that the voter registration portion of any dual-purpose application include the attestations required by section 11-15 and a signature capture method sufficient to satisfy section 11-15(c).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

**DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES**  
**KA 'OIHANA LAWELawe KUPA**  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

ADMINISTRATION

925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 257 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817  
PHONE: (808) 768-3392 • FAX: (808) 768-3750 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
MEIA

KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO  
DIRECTOR  
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
HOPE PO'O



February 12, 2026

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

SUBJECT: S.B. No. 2239 - Relating To Voter Registration  
HEARING: Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 9:05 a.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) offers **comments** to S.B. No. 2239, which requires eligible applicants for instruction permits, provisional licenses, driver's licenses, and identification cards to be automatically registered or preregistered to vote unless the applicant opts out. Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu, CSD Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) administers, among other things, the motor vehicle driver licensing and state identification card programs for the island of O'ahu. While CSD appreciates the intent of the proposed legislation, we have concerns regarding its application and its legal implications.

CSD supports efforts to increase voter participation, but has concerns regarding the operational and financial impacts the proposed legislation will have on the City and County of Honolulu.

The proposed legislation would require modifications to CSD DMV's information technology system, CSD DMV forms, and CSD DMV internal policies and procedures. Specifically, amendments to Section 11-15.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), would introduce new responsibilities for CSD DMV, including but not limited to:

- Integrating automatic voter registration mechanisms into licensing and identification systems;
- Implementing changes to license renewals (Section 286-107, HRS), instruction permits (Section 286-110, HRS), and duplicate permits, provisional licenses, and licenses (Section 286-117, HRS);
- Ensuring compliance with federal and state data privacy and security requirements; and
- Conducting staff training and public outreach to support implementation and administration of the revised voter registration process.

These additional responsibilities would be true statewide, as each county is responsible for administering licensing and identification programs. Additionally, the proposed legislation may have unintended consequences for Hawai'i's current licensing processes and require further clarification on implementation timelines and funding support from the state.

Given these significant operational considerations, we respectfully request the Legislature provide clear guidance on funding, resources and the necessary time available for implementation. CSD DMV urges the Legislature to consider the impact on county operations and, should this matter move forward, requests a phased approach to implementation that will allow for a reasonable and adequate amount of time for the counties to research and assess implementation requirements, staffing, funding requirements, information technology and other resource impacts, necessary updated administrative procedures, staff training, and good public outreach.

With these considerations in mind, CSD appreciates the opportunity to comment on S.B. No. 2239.

Sincerely,

*for* Kimberly M. Hashiro  
Director

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:54:06 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands & Ohana Unity Party	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

**\*\*Testimony in Strong Support of SB2143 – Relating to the Chief Election Officer\*\***

Aloha kakou, Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM, Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I., Chairman of the Ohana Unity Party. Aloha nui loa from the heart of our islands, where we live by the guiding spirit of **\*\*aloha\*\***—love, compassion, mercy, kindness, and grace—and where **\*\*‘ohana\*\*** means we ensure every part of our government runs smoothly and accountably, protecting the integrity of our elections so every voice is heard fairly, as the ‘ōlelo no‘eau teaches: \*‘Ike aku, ‘ike mai. Kōkua aku, kōkua mai. Pēlā ka nohona ‘ohana.\* “Observe others, be observed. Help others, be helped. That is the way of family life.”

Today, I stand in full support of SB2143, urging its passage to strengthen accountability and continuity in our elections process by providing a clear, immediate interim solution for vacancies in the Chief Election Officer position. This straightforward and necessary bill amends Section 11-1.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to address vacancies in the office of Chief Election Officer (the head of the Office of Elections responsible for administering statewide elections, voter registration, ballot integrity, and compliance with election laws).

Key provisions include:

- Requiring the Elections Commission to meet **\*\*expeditiously\*\*** to select and appoint a new Chief Election Officer to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

- Designating the **\*\*Attorney General\*\*** to serve as **\*\*Interim Chief Election Officer\*\*** until the Commission makes the appointment—ensuring no gap in leadership or operations.

- Clarifying that this interim role applies notwithstanding any other law to the contrary. - Preserving existing rights, duties, penalties, and proceedings that matured before the Act's effective date. - Taking effect upon approval. Hawaii's elections are the foundation of our democracy, and the Chief Election Officer plays a critical role in maintaining public trust, ensuring fair processes, and upholding voter access across our islands. A sudden vacancy—due to resignation, removal, illness, or other reasons—could disrupt operations, delay certifications, or create uncertainty during high-stakes periods like primaries or general elections.

By mandating swift Commission action and providing the Attorney General (a constitutional officer with broad authority and independence) as a qualified interim leader, SB2143 prevents paralysis, maintains continuity, and reinforces accountability in a key nonpartisan office. This aligns with efforts to modernize election administration and build resilience in our systems—especially important in a state where voter turnout and trust in institutions matter deeply to our ‘ohana. This is a common-sense measure: it closes a potential gap without expanding powers or creating new bureaucracy, simply ensuring seamless transitions that protect the public's right to secure, accurate elections. \*\*In closing, with deepest aloha and a call to mālama our democracy by safeguarding election integrity and leadership continuity,

I respectfully ask the Committee to pass SB2143 without delay. Key reasons include:\*\* - Ensures \*\*expeditious\*\* appointment by the Elections Commission while providing the \*\*Attorney General\*\* as a reliable interim Chief Election Officer—no leadership vacuum during critical transitions. - Strengthens accountability and public trust in Hawaii's elections process, where the Chief Election Officer oversees voter registration, ballot security, and statewide compliance for hundreds of thousands of voters.

- Prevents disruptions that could affect election administration, certification, or public confidence—especially vital amid ongoing national discussions on election security and resilience. - Preserves existing frameworks while adding clear, practical safeguards for continuity—embodying \*\*kuleana\*\* in government operations.

- True embodiment of Hawaiian values: \*\*aloha\*\*, \*\*‘ohana\*\*, \*\*mālama\*\*, and \*\*kōkua aku, kōkua mai\*\*—protecting our shared democratic process, ensuring fair representation, and showing Hawaii leads with wisdom, stability, and heart.

Mahalo nui loa for your kuleana in this important work to uphold our elections. I am available for any questions and urge you to pass SB2143—let us strengthen our democracy with aloha in action.

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I. Ohana Unity Party, Chairman [www.Ohanaunityparty.com](http://www.Ohanaunityparty.com) [Presidentbillionaire@gmail.com](mailto:Presidentbillionaire@gmail.com)



SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
SB 2239 Relating to Voter Registration  
February 18, 2026, at 9:05 AM, State Capitol CR 016 and Videoconference

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in OPPOSITION to SB 2239 for the following reasons:

1. Dual-purpose applications that include automatic voter registration lack a paper trail which increases the vulnerability of election fraud.
2. Privacy Concerns: Automatic voter registration may raise concerns about data security and privacy by exposing voter information to malicious or unauthorized use.
3. It could strain resources and administrative capacities on state agencies, County Clerks, and the Office of Elections.
4. Some individuals may feel pressured to register or vote.
5. Startup Costs: While dual-purpose applications can save election officials money over time, switching from manual to automatic voter registration requires investing in certain startup costs
6. Is the County Clerk going to check for duplication of voter registration submissions? Individuals may be recipients of services from multiple state agencies such as DHS and DLIR.
7. Newly registered voters added to the database will worsen problems in the voter rolls, which already include names of deceased people and those who moved out of state, according to the Chief Elections Officer.

### **Recommended Solutions**

Implement the procedures defined in the SAVE America Act:

1. Require individuals to present an eligible photo identification document before voting.
2. Require states to obtain proof of citizenship – in person – when registering an individual to vote.
3. Require states to remove non-citizens from existing voter rolls.

Please vote NO on SB 2239. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jamie Detwiler, President, Hawaiian Islands Republican Women



**Senate Committee on Judiciary**  
**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports SB2239**  
**Wednesday February 18th, at 9:00 am; Conference Room 016**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committee,

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action supports SB2239, strengthening Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system by allowing additional state agencies to incorporate voter registration into existing application processes while maintaining voter choice and strong eligibility safeguards. When residents interact with state agencies, they already provide verified information to the State. This bill ensures our election system uses those secure processes more effectively.

SB2239 strengthens our democracy by making voter registration more seamless, accurate, and reflective of our communities. Hawai'i continues to face low voter participation, and the issue is not apathy—it is unnecessary friction in the registration process.

This approach expands access without compromising security. It does not change who is eligible to vote, does not register non-citizens, and does not eliminate the option to decline registration. Instead, it reduces administrative errors, keeps eligible voters properly registered, and improves coordination between agencies and election officials.

Across the country, automatic voter registration has increased participation, particularly among young people, working families, and communities that are often underrepresented. It also reduces paperwork, improves list maintenance, and creates efficiencies for election administrators.

Democracy works best when systems are practical, secure, and designed around people's real interactions with government. SB2239 moves Hawai'i closer to that goal by modernizing voter registration in a responsible and effective way.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge support of SB2239.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is positioned above the typed name.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 4:43:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan B Roberts Emery	Testifying for Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, I am writing on behalf of our members in Support of SB2239. This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.



FEBRUARY 18, 2026

## SENATE BILL 2239

CURRENT REFERRAL: JDC

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 SB 2239, relating to voter registration, which authorizes state agencies to make applications for voter registration part of certain state agency application processes; and facilitates the sharing of certain information among certain state agencies, election personnel, and online voter registration system.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending all forms of exploitation, which necessitates strengthening access to democracy. Government should work for the public interest, not special interests.

Our democracy belongs to we, the people. At a time when our nation is experiencing extreme political turmoil and basic civil liberties—including the right to vote—are under assault, we must take steps in Hawai'i to safeguard democratic participation. Every eligible person should be able to register to vote in a convenient and secure way that is beneficial to new voters and administrators alike. Key voter registration improvements can elevate electoral confidence, save public funds, and preserve the voice of our community in determining the course of our society's future.

In 2021, Hawai'i established automatic voter registration to increase the state's historically low voter participation rates. Yet, the automatic voter registration system established by the legislature was an opt-in system that places responsibility for registration on individual voters, thereby failing to fully include the total potential population of new voters. This undermines the full impact of our automatic voter registration program, which is desperately needed to curb low voting rates. **In the 2024 primary election, for example, our state experienced its lowest turnout in 65 years, with only 32.1 percent of registered voters filling out a ballot.**

To improve those statistics, we must enact measures that strengthen the right to vote. This measure will make registration more efficient by

---

empowering applications at public-facing state agencies—such as for Med-Quest licenses, permits, change of address forms, recertifications, or services offered by the state—to serve as “dual-purpose” voter registration applications, with the applicant being given the option to affirmatively declines (rather than being forced to affirmatively opt-in) to voter registration or preregistration.

This will effectively change our automatic voter registration system from an “opt in” to an “opt out” model, guaranteeing that the intent of the program—to maximize democratic participation by making voter registration as automatic as possible—is fully effectuated, especially in light of other forward-thinking electoral programs that the state has undertaken, like mail-in voting.

We are especially hopeful that this proposal will strengthen democratic participation by enabling survivors of gender violence and sexual exploitation to engage more fully and safely in civic life. **Survivors frequently face barriers to participation—including trauma, fear of retaliation, economic instability, and distrust of institutions—that can silence their voices in public processes.** By removing structural obstacles to voter registration, this bill helps create a more inclusive democratic space. In this way, the bill enhances Hawai'i's democratic fabric by empowering historically underrepresented voices to participate with dignity and confidence in our civic processes.

Women, racial minorities, and members of the working class fought for years to obtain the right to vote. Sadly, we are seeing draconian efforts today to roll back those rights to entrench the power of autocratic regimes. We cannot allow these authoritarian actions to go unchallenged. We have a responsibility to fortify the voting franchise for generations to come.

With aloha,

*Kris Coffield*

President, Imua Alliance

**LATE**

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 1:47:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ellen Ebata	Testifying for Kauai Indivisible	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard & Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I'm writing in strong support of SB2239.

Hawaii has long been recognized for conducting secure, fair and accessible elections. Expanding automatic voter registration through routine interactions with state agencies is a commonsense step that strengthens civic participation while maintaining the integrity of our system.

In recent years, our state's electoral process has been subjected to repeated claims of widespread fraud. These allegations are not substantiated, yet they contribute to public distrust and confusion. Additionally, there have been unrelentless calls for the removal of the Chief Election Officer, Scott Nago, as well as scrapping our mail-in ballot system. The best response to misinformation is not restriction, but transparency, accessibility and inclusive participation. SB2239 advances all three.

Automatic voter registration helps ensure that eligible residents are able to participate without unnecessary barriers. Many working people, kupuna, individuals with disabilities and residents with limited transportation options depend on streamlined systems. Policies that make registration easier - and preserve options such as mail-in ballots -protect equal access to democracy for those who might other wise be disadvantaged.

This bill strengthens and improves administrative accuracy by integrating existing state records in a responsible way. Expanding participation strengthens our democracy and affirms that every eligible voter is valued.

I respectfully urge you to support SB2239.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Ellen Ebata

Koloa, Kauai, HI





530 S KING ST RM 100  
HONOLULU HI 96813  
(808) 768-3800  
WWW.HONOLULUELECTIONS.US



TESTIMONY  
TO THE SENTATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2239  
RELATING TO VOTING

February 18, 2026

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

The Office of the City Clerk supports the intent of SB2239, which seeks to expand voter registration opportunities by allowing certain state agency transactions to serve as dual-purpose applications for voter registration. Under Hawai'i's vote-by-mail election system, voter registration has a direct and tangible relationship to voting because a ballot is mailed to every properly registered voter.

Our primary concern relates to the provision that permits state agencies to electronically transmit voter registration information.

To ensure consistency and integrity across all counties, it is important that the Office of Elections coordinate the implementation of these data transfers. Centralized coordination would help establish uniform data standards, secure transmission protocols, and consistent processing timelines, facilitating seamless integration between state agencies and county election offices. This responsibility would also be consistent with federal law, which establishes the Office of Elections as the administrator of Hawai'i's centralized Statewide Voter Registration System.

Under this framework, counties would continue their statutory responsibilities to review transmitted voter registration records, approve or reject applications, and maintain accurate voter records within the statewide system.

We respectfully recommend that SB2239 designate the State Office of Elections as the coordinating entity for the implementation of dual-purpose applications and associated data transfers. This clarification would promote a cohesive and efficient voter registration process statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**LATE**

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 10:02:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)	Testifying for Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully supports SB 2239.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)

## Testimony in Opposition to SB 2239

Chair Rhodes,

I oppose SB 2239 because Hawai'i does not currently have verifiable elections, and expanding voter registration systems or electronic processes before fixing foundational integrity failures only increases risk.

The Chief Election Officer, Scott Nago, testified that the Office of Elections is now planning for more than 868,000 active registered voters for the 2026 General Election. This number does not align with publicly acknowledged data.

In an August 14, 2020 interview with Daryl Huff on PBS Hawai'i, Mr. Nago stated there were nearly 100,000 bad registrations on the rolls out of roughly 800,000.

Since the 2020 Census, Hawai'i has experienced a net population loss of 22,447 residents. Yet during that same period, approximately 68,000 voters were added to the registration rolls—on top of those already acknowledged bad registrations. This means the voter rolls have grown substantially while the population has declined.

That significant surplus in the voter rolls creates the conditions for ballots to be added electronically, particularly because there is no independent verification of the Statewide Voter Registration System or of electronic election results.

These voter rolls have never been independently audited.

In addition, the federal government, through the United States Department of Justice, is suing to compel release of Hawai'i's voter registration list, which remains concealed despite serious concerns about inflation and accuracy.

During the 2024 General Election, the State reported more than 19,000 ballots counted than were collected by Hawai'i County. This points directly to

electronic ballot insertions occurring without a verifiable physical chain of custody.

The Hawai'i Office of Elections has never undergone a comprehensive external audit. The Hawai'i Elections Commission formally requested that the Legislature conduct an independent audit, and that request was ignored.

Before appropriating additional funds or expanding automated voter registration pipelines, these failures must be addressed.

If mail voting is going to continue, ballots should be sent as accountable mail with individual tracking, not bulk mail. Preferably, Hawai'i should prioritize precinct-based voter service centers and move away from universal mail ballots entirely.

Elections must be verifiable, not merely convenient.

Right now, Hawai'i does not have verifiable elections.

We must have verifiable elections before expanding registration systems, mail voting, or electronic infrastructure.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose SB 2239 and instead require:

- a full independent audit of the Office of Elections
- cleanup of the voter rolls
- restoration of transparent physical accountability for every ballot

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Sincerely,

Ralph Cushnie  
Elections Commissioner

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:58:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Miyata	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I respectfully oppose SB 2239 for these reasons:

- Risks voter roll inaccuracies from agency data sharing
- Raises citizenship verification questions
- Expands government involvement in elections
- Creates privacy and data-sharing concerns
- Sets precedent for broader election system changes

Mahalo for stopping this bill so we have transparency and trust in our voter registration process.

Linda



**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:54:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debra Bringman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SB2239 because it expands Hawai‘i’s voter registration system by converting numerous state agency applications into “dual-purpose” forms that automatically collect and transmit personal data for voter registration unless the applicant affirmatively opts out, raising significant concerns about privacy, data security, and unintended registrations. The bill authorizes state agencies to use applications for licenses, permits, programs, and services to simultaneously process voter registration and to electronically share sensitive information—including name, address, and citizenship-related data—across agencies, election officials, and the online voter registration system, increasing risk where security practices may differ or be insufficient. Because the automatic nature of these processes may result in registration errors or enroll individuals who do not clearly understand the opt-out requirements, voter roll accuracy and public confidence could be compromised. Given these unresolved privacy and data-handling risks, SB2239 does not provide adequate safeguards to justify expanding automatic voter registration in this manner, and I urge the committee to reject the bill.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 10:18:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kirk Powles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition to SB 2239:

Protecting Hawai‘i's Voting Integrity, California allows undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses under AB 60, primarily to reduce traffic citations for driving without a license and to improve road safety by ensuring more drivers are insured and tested.

However, California's "Motor Voter" program automatically registers eligible individuals to vote when they apply for or renew a standard driver's license or state ID—unless they opt out.

Importantly, AB 60 licenses for undocumented immigrants are excluded from this automatic registration process, and state law prohibits the DMV from forwarding their information to election officials. Undocumented immigrants remain ineligible to vote in any elections, as federal and state law restrict voting to U.S. citizens.

Despite these safeguards, critics argue that granting driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants creates pathways to other benefits and could indirectly affect civic participation—though no widespread noncitizen voting has been documented in California.

Now, Hawai‘i faces a similar proposal in SB 2239 (introduced in the 2026 legislative session).

This bill would implement automatic voter registration (or preregistration) for eligible applicants obtaining instruction permits, provisional licenses, driver's licenses, or state IDs—unless they opt out.

Hawai‘i already allows undocumented residents to obtain driver's licenses (via a 2015 law), so combining this with automatic registration raises concerns about potential risks to election integrity.

While providing driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants may seem like a practical step for public safety, linking it to automatic voter registration could open the door to unintended consequences.

Undocumented immigrants enter the state in violation of federal immigration law—rewarding that with state-issued IDs and potential access to voter rolls is inappropriate.

A driver's license is a government-issued form of identification. If automatic registration were applied without proper safeguards, it could theoretically enable ineligible individuals to end up on voter lists, allowing them to influence elections for mayor, governor, or even president.

Hawai'i should keep its elections for its citizens and legal residents only.

Do not dilute the votes of Hawai'i's people by extending voting access—intentionally or through loopholes—to those who are not lawfully present.

Oppose SB 2239

Protect Hawai'i's elections for the people who built and sustain our state.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 11:53:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cristina Holt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cristina Holt. I live on Hawai'i Island, and I strongly support SB 2239.

Voting should not require navigating unnecessary barriers.

This bill modernizes voter registration by allowing certain state agency applications to function as dual-purpose applications. If someone is already applying for a license, a permit, or a public service, and the agency already has reliable citizenship information, then it makes sense to offer voter registration as part of that process.

This is efficient government.

It reduces paperwork.

It reduces duplication.

It reduces administrative friction.

At the same time, it protects individual choice. The bill clearly allows applicants to affirmatively decline to register or update their information. No one is forced into anything.

It also protects election integrity. Information is only transmitted if the applicant chooses to register. Information is not transmitted if a person demonstrates lack of United States citizenship. County clerks still review and approve or reject registrations according to existing law.

This is not a weakening of safeguards. It is a streamlining of process.

Hawai'i already conducts elections primarily by mail. We have strong participation. SB 2239 builds on that by ensuring voter rolls are more accurate and up to date when people move or change their names.

Accurate rolls strengthen trust. Clear procedures strengthen trust. Making participation easier strengthens trust.

If we believe in democracy, we should make lawful participation as straightforward as possible.

SB 2239 does exactly that.

I urge you to advance this measure.

Mahalo for your time.

Cristina Holt  
Hawai'i Island

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 9:15:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Blaine De Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB2239

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 5:54:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Deven English	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of this bill

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:17:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel R Freund	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hope you will support this good government proposal.

- Dan Freund, Kapaa

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:52:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pamela Elders	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

I support SB 2239 because this bill strengthens our democracy by shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions. SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.

In these times when our democratic way of life is under threat, States need to take a variety of actions such as SB2239 to ensure valid voter participation in free and fair elections.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 10:24:06 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joell Edwards, a Wainiha resident and Chair of the Kaua‘i County Democrats. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity in strong support of SB2239.

This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai‘i’s automatic voter registration system. Shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions is a practical, common-sense improvement that removes unnecessary barriers for eligible voters, while fully preserving voter choice and existing eligibility requirements.

Importantly, SB2239 does not change who can vote and does not register non-citizens. It simply uses verified government records to ensure eligible residents are added to the rolls accurately and efficiently. It also allows other state agencies, when able to verify the same required information, to participate in registration — further improving accuracy and completeness.

As someone who works in civic engagement, I regularly see how confusion or missed paperwork can prevent otherwise eligible residents from participating. Modernizing this process increases the accuracy of voter rolls, reduces administrative burdens, and strengthens public confidence in our system — all without compromising election integrity.

This is a proven reform that many states have successfully implemented. Hawai‘i should continue leading with thoughtful, practical improvements that expand access while protecting the integrity of our elections.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 10:29:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.

I wish I was automatically registered to vote when I got my drivers license 27 years ago. Luckily I had parents that valued civic education and taught me how to register to vote. Not all kids have civically minded parents. We need to make this automatic!

Mahalo,

John "Fitz" Fitzpatrick,

Makawao

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 11:46:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert Nawahine Mansfield, Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

# **SB 2239**

## **Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Room 016 Videoconferencing**

**18 February 2026**

**09:05 a.m.**

**Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair, Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair, & Members**

Aloha kākou,

I, Robert Nawahine Mansfield, Jr., **urge you to fully support SB 2239.**

Processes are already in place whereby certain state agencies' application processes facilitate the sharing of information with certain state agencies, election personnel and on-line voter registration systems.

Mahalo a nui loa,

Robert Nawahine Mansfield, Jr.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 1:55:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Mitsumori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

SB2239 is a policy solution that helps our government be more efficient, accessible, and responsive to the needs of real human beings through the use of thoughtful design choices in how we register to vote.

By shifting automatic voter registration from an opt-in to an opt-out model, SB2239 aligns the default choice with the most preferences of the majority of our eligible voters.

The success of thoughtfully designed defaults is most clearly seen in retirement savings programs. In a prior life, I helped introduce a retirement savings program through automatic payroll deductions at my workplace. We started with opt-in, but employees felt overwhelmed, asked for time to "think about it," and never enrolled. We switched to opt-out, clarifying that people could make changes or withdraw at any time, and almost everyone saved. It was a simple design choice for us, yet it made a huge difference in promoting financial security for the people working to achieve our mission.

Switching to opt-out for Automatic Voter Registration is another way of encouraging investment in our future, as well as our present. At a time when so many of us are carrying daily stress and burnout, even a simple decision can feel like too much. The opt-out model makes it that much more accessible for the majority of the population to express their desire to vote.

Further, SB2239 fully preserves voter choice and eligibility requirements. I encourage you to support SB2239, which brings proven, practical reforms that strengthen our democracy without compromising election integrity.

Mahalo,  
Michele Mitsumori  
Hilo 96720

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 2:10:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Donna Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.

Mahalo,

Donna Ambrose, Kailua

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 2:18:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in favor of SB2239 because I believe it will help increase voter participation and is good for the civic culture of Hawai'i. Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 3:27:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Lu Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha.

I support this bill because it authorizes state agencies to make applications for voter registration part of certain state agency application processes. Facilitates the sharing of certain information among certain state agencies, election personnel, and online voter registration system.

Thsnk you,

Mary Lu Kelley

Koloa, Kauai

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 3:46:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.

Mahalo,

kimdonghyeon

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 6:14:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

This bill strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai'i's automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine DMV transactions, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible voters from being registered, while fully preserving voter choice and eligibility requirements.

SB2239 increases the accuracy of voter rolls, and reduces administrative burdens, all without changing who is eligible to vote or compromising election integrity.

Thank you

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 6:51:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
BARBARA Anneken-Nall	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB2239 mainly because there is no mention of citizenship verification. For the integrity of our elections we need to make sure each vot is from a US citizen and/or a Hawaii resident.

Another concern is having too many people involved in voter registration increases the risk of fraud and errors.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 5:21:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Vernelle Oku	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose SB 2239 for these reasons:

- Risks voter roll inaccuracies from agency data sharing
- Raises citizenship verification questions
- Expands government involvement in elections
- Creates privacy and data-sharing concerns
- Sets precedent for broader election system changes

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 7:52:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tara Gregory	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As the daughter of a Navy US Veteran who fought for ALL US CITIZENS the right to vote in their leaders I strongly oppose this bill.

I propose Section 1 Line 5 "each member" be changed to U.S. CITIZEN ACCORDING TO U.S. AND STATE LAW OVER THE AGE OF 18 WITH PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP.

mahalo.

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 8:38:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Claire Yamashiro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose SB 2239 for the following reasons:

- Risks voter roll inaccuracies from agency data sharing
- Raises citizenship verification questions
- Expands government involvement in elections
- Creates privacy and data-sharing concerns
- Sets precedent for broader election system changes

Mahalo for your Kokua,

Claire Yamashiro

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 8:43:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Hello Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,**

My name is **Nanea Lo**, and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2239**.

This measure strengthens our democracy by modernizing Hawai‘i’s automatic voter registration system. By shifting to an opt-out model during routine transactions with the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation, SB2239 removes unnecessary barriers that currently prevent eligible voters from being registered—while fully preserving voter choice and all existing eligibility requirements.

SB2239 also improves the accuracy of voter rolls and reduces administrative burdens for election officials, all without expanding or altering voter eligibility or compromising election integrity. Instead, it ensures that our voter registration system better reflects the reality of how residents interact with government services today.

By making voter registration more efficient, accurate, and accessible, this bill promotes participation, strengthens public trust, and supports the effective administration of elections.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS SB2239**.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai‘i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Tax Fairness Coalition Member



**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 11:41:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gaylene L Barron	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. We have to have transparency in our elections and voter procedures. Thank you for your time.

Aloha,

Gaylene Barron

**LATE**

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 11:58:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Reina Loughlin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair and Committee Members,

I oppose SB2239 for these reasons:

- Citizenship verification isn't guaranteed before getting a voter registration form
- Allows for voter roll inaccuracies
- Creates opportunities of continued skepticism and distrust in election process and system
- Privacy and data-sharing concerns

I request that SB2239 does not pass. Mahalo.

**LATE**

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 7:14:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Buck Giles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB 2239

PAUL GILES

**LATE**

**SB-2239**

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 8:08:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/18/2026 9:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Camron Hurt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings,

My name is Camron Hurt and on behalf of Common Cause Hawaii I am writing in support of this measure. We believe in our foundation that access to the ballot is one of the most critical issues every democracy must face. For our republic to be truly representative we must boost our participation in democracy. This bill is a tool to help aid that endeavor. This bill allows for application to register be made available through additional state agencies and additionally then shared with the elections office. It is important that all measures be taken to safeguard voter information and that no government agency holds on to voter information but rather it is immediately turned over. If the protection of voter information is secured, then this measure in conjunction with others could be of great benefit to voters throughout the State.