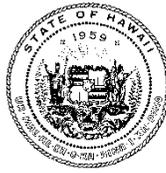


KRISTIN E. IZUMI-NITAO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, ROOM 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

LATE

February 12, 2026

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director
Campaign Spending Commission **KI**

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 2447, Relating to Campaign Finance.**
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Friday, February 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission (“Commission”) supports this bill with comments.

This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-412(g) by changing the commencement of the statute of limitations period from the date of violation or date of filing of the report to the discovery of the offense by the Commission, and by removing the five-year statute of limitations period. This bill further amends HRS §701-108 to include prosecution under HRS §11-412, with the statute of limitations commencing upon discovery of the offense by the Commission.

While the Commission supports the intent of this bill to provide additional time to investigate potential violations, we are concerned that the proposed amendments may have unintended consequences. Specifically, Section 1 of the bill removes the five-year statute of limitations for commencing prosecution under HRS §11-412(g) and instead applies the statute of limitations in HRS §701-108, as reflected in Section 2 of the bill. Conforming HRS §11-412 to HRS §701-108 would reduce the current five-year statute of limitations for class C felonies and misdemeanors—which comprise most campaign finance law violations—to three years and two years, respectively. To address this concern, we respectfully request that the Commission be provided five years from the date of discovery to commence prosecution of any campaign finance law violation.

The Commission requests that this committee pass this measure with amendments.

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 2:43:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhodes, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Honorable Members of Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i we do support SB2447 which starts the statute of limitations for criminal campaign finance violations when the offense is discovered by the Campaign Spending Commission, rather than when the violation occurred or was reported. This allows the statute of limitations to start at the time of discovery, which could be years after to crime was committed. This is good governance.

We ask that you supp SB2447.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo



FEBRUARY 11, 2026

SENATE BILL 2447

CURRENT REFERRAL: JDC

808-679-7454
kris@imuaalliance.org
www.imuaalliance.org
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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 2447, relating to campaign finance, which provides that the period of limitations for criminal prosecutions under campaign finance laws commences upon discovery of the offense by the Campaign Spending Commission, rather than being limited to five years from the violation date or report filing date.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending all forms of exploitation, including electoral abuse. Public trust in government is foundational to our democracy. When people believe that their institutions operate transparently, ethically, and in the public interest, they are more likely to engage in civic life and participate in elections. Conversely, ethical lapses erode trust and, in turn, reduce civic participation.

Recent events have highlighted the need for stronger accountability measures. In late 2025 and early 2026, media reporting revealed that a federal corruption inquiry involving former legislators included an allegation that approximately \$35,000 was paid to an influential state lawmaker in 2022. The reporting has prompted widespread public concern, including petitions from hundreds of community members calling for a full legislative investigation and renewed accountability safeguards.

Multiple outlets have noted that the matter was investigated by federal authorities without a parallel public legislative review or robust public process, leaving many in the community questioning whether current ethical and disclosure systems are sufficient. The Hawai'i Attorney General's office is currently investigating the matter at the best of the community and legislative leaders, who have called for a hasty and thorough inquiry.

This scandal and the community response it has generated underscore the urgent need to strengthen transparency, disclosure, and conflict-of-interest rules for public officials. This measure will allow the Campaign

Spending Commission ample time to investigate the potential \$35,000 campaign finance violation, which would otherwise be on the cusp of lapsing beyond the commission's statute of limitations given the inability of the commission to access information critical to examine the allegations to their fullest extent.

The alleged \$35,000 payment to an influential Hawai'i politician has also exposed a troubling gap in state-level accountability. As has been publicly discussed, the Hawai'i Campaign Spending Commission was unable to pursue enforcement action in part because the alleged conduct fell outside the Commission's current statute of limitations, leaving serious questions unanswered and undermining public confidence in our systems of electoral and government integrity.

This measure is ultimately about deciding who our state government represents: we, the people, or those who pay bribes behind closed doors to exploit our democracy. When the law prevents oversight bodies from even examining credible allegations of improper influence, the problem is not merely individual misconduct. It is a structural failure. This bill responds directly to this gap by strengthening transparency and accountability mechanisms, so that future allegations of this magnitude cannot evade scrutiny simply due to timing technicalities.

Passing this bill is essential to restoring communal trust and ensuring Hawai'i's campaign finance laws can respond meaningfully when the public most needs them.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance



Committee on Judiciary Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard
Friday, February 6, 9 am]
Room 016 and videoconference
SB2447– RELATING TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE

TESTIMONY

Beppie Shapiro, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB2447, which would modify the “statute of limitations” for campaign finance violations to state “The applicable period of limitations for a criminal prosecution under HRS Sections 11-412, and 701-108, shall not commence until discovery of the offense by the commission.”

Discovery of offense may be delayed considerably because candidates can revise submitted reports long after the originals were submitted, among other circumstances.

SB2447 would allow the CSC to respond appropriately when these circumstances arise, thus ensuring that those who violate CSC requirements bear some consequences, even if those consequences are delayed.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



**Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports SB 2447
Friday, February 13th, 9 AM in Conference Room 016 & Videoconference**

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

HAPA strongly supports SB2447, which closes a critical loophole in Hawai'i's campaign finance laws by clarifying that the statute of limitations for criminal violations begins when the offense is discovered by the Campaign Spending Commission, not before.

Campaign finance violations are often concealed and may involve falsified reporting or complicated financial arrangements that are not immediately noticed. When the statute of limitations expires before violations are discovered, enforcement becomes impossible, and misconduct is unchecked.

SB2447 strengthens oversight, promotes fairness, and helps restore public trust in Hawai'i's elections. We urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for your support and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick'.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:00:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of SB 2447 this legislative session. This would change the statute of limitations to prosecute campaign financing violations and provide the time for prosecutions to be secured.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2447.

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:02:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support. Thank you

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 1:25:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:15:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:21:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tanya Aynessazian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure.

Tanya Yamanaka Aynessazian

Hawaii Island

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:31:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am testifying in strong support of SB2447, a straightforward and essential fix to our campaign finance enforcement laws. This bill ensures that secrecy does not become a shield for misconduct by starting the statute of limitations for criminal campaign finance violations when the offense is actually **discovered** by the Campaign Spending Commission, not when it occurred or was first reported.

Campaign finance violations are, by their very nature, often hidden. Illicit contributions, unreported expenditures, and coordinated spending are intentionally obscured from public view. Under current law, the clock begins ticking on the statute of limitations at the time of the violation—meaning that if the offense is successfully concealed for a few years, it effectively becomes immune from prosecution. This creates a perverse incentive: hide your misconduct well, and you will never be held accountable.

SB2447 closes this loophole. By starting the limitations period upon discovery by the Commission, the bill ensures that the sophistication of a concealment effort does not determine whether justice can be pursued. It rewards transparency and punishes deception, exactly as campaign finance law should.

This reform is not radical; it is common sense. Statutes of limitations that begin upon discovery are standard in fraud cases and other offenses where concealment is inherent to the violation. Our campaign finance laws should meet this same basic standard.

Public confidence in our elections depends on the belief that the rules apply to everyone and that violations will be pursued. SB2447 ensures that those who break the law cannot simply wait out the clock. I urge you to pass this bill and strengthen the integrity of our democratic process.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:41:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony today in strong support of SB2447.

Campaign finance laws only work if they can actually be enforced. Too often, violations are hidden through complex or misleading reporting and are not discovered until years later. When the statute of limitations expires before misconduct is uncovered, accountability disappears, and there are no consequences for bad actors.

Public trust in the process is important, and this would work to strengthen that trust. Without it, we are lost. Campaign finance laws must be enforced when they are found to have been violated.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share testimony,

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:17:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

What a great bill. This puts more teeth in honesty in government. Ty Cullen and Kalani English shamed the legislature, and \$35,000 in a brown bag continues that. Please pass this bill.

Lynne Matusow

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 1:54:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of SB2447 because I believe it will strengthen our campaign finance laws. Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 3:36:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

Please support SB2447. Campaign finance laws only work if they can actually be enforced. Too often, violations are hidden through complex or misleading reporting and are not discovered until years later. When the statute of limitations expires before misconduct is uncovered, accountability disappears, and there are no consequences for bad actors.

Mahalo for your attention.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Sen. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Sen. Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT - SB 2447, RELATING TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE.

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

My name is Christine Andrews and I am a long-time resident of Wailuku, Maui. I write to you today in support of SB 2447, relating to campaign finance, which provides that the period of limitations for criminal prosecutions under campaign finance laws commences upon discovery of the offense by the Campaign Spending Commission, rather than being limited to five years from the violation date or report filing date.

I am sure the members of the Committee are aware of the New York Times article, “Inside the Late-Night Parties Where Hawaii Politicians Raked In Money,” published in January, 2024, with the tagline, “[a]fter the state passed a law barring government contractors from donating to politicians, fund-raising parties showed just how completely the reform effort failed”¹. As a resident of Maui, at a time when my Lahaina neighbors were depending on the kindness of donations pouring in from around the world to help with recovery from the wildfire, an article highlighting apparent corruption in Hawaii to a national audience is something that needs remedy.

As an attorney licensed in the state of Hawai‘i for over 25 years, it seems clear to me that this change in the start of the statute of limitations for prosecutions under campaign finance law to commence upon the discovery of the offense is in the public interest. The change provided for by SB 2447 will serve to discourage violations of the law as well as the unethical conduct surrounding keeping such violations secret. Hopefully, it will encourage persons with knowledge of offenses to come forward rather than wait for the statute of limitations to run out.

If passed, this bill should enhance public trust in our elected officials and restore faith in government. Based upon the foregoing, I request that you **vote in support of SB 2447**.

Mahalo nui for your efforts to improve upon Hawai‘i’s dark reputation for corruption.

Christine Andrews, J.D.
Wailuku, Maui

¹ Blaze Lovell, Eric Sagara & Irene Casado Sanchez. Inside the Late-Night Parties Where Hawaii Politicians Raked In Money. New York Times; January 17, 2024.

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:41:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am in strong support of SB2447

Campaign finance laws only work if they can actually be enforced. Too often, violations are hidden through complex or misleading reporting and are not discovered until years later. When the statute of limitations expires before misconduct is uncovered, accountability disappears, and there are no consequences for bad actors.

Mahalo,

kimdonghyeon

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:57:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Petricci	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Robert Petricci

In support of SB2447

I support extending the statute of limitations on campaign contribution/finance violations. you should as well, IMO.

Mahalo

Robert Petricci

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:14:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this legislation.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

LATE

SB-2447

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:39:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/13/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this bill.