



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 *KI*
Campaign Spending Commission

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 2454, Relating to Campaign Contributions.**
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”) provides comments on Section 1 of this bill and opposes Section 2 of this bill.

Hawaii campaign finance laws exist to provide transparency to the public relating to candidates, candidate committees, and noncandidate committees. Section 1 of this bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §11-351(a) by providing a candidate or an individual authorized to receive contributions on behalf of a candidate or noncandidate committee to deposit a monetary contribution or other campaign funds within seven (7) days of receipt of the contribution. The Commission notes this amendment aligns with the Commission’s Hawaii Administrative Rule (“HAR”) §3-160-30(b) which requires monetary contributions to be deposited within seven (7) days of receipt.

The Commission opposes Section 2 of this bill because the amendment is confusing and unnecessary. Specifically, Section 2 amends HRS §11-365 by requiring lobbyist contributions received before the specified period to be deposited within seven (7) days of receipt or before the specified period, whichever is sooner. On the one hand, if the amendment means that an elected official, candidate, candidate committee, or other individual required to file an organizational report pursuant to HRS §11-321 is required to deposit a lobbyist contribution within seven (7) days of receipt as long as it is outside the prohibited period (i.e., during regular or special legislative session and five (5) calendar days before and after a legislative session), then the Commission believes that is what the current statute (and campaign finance law) provides, and

thus, the amendment is unnecessary. If, however, this amendment means that as long as a lobbyist contribution is received outside the prohibited period, it must be deposited into the elected official's, candidate's, candidate committee's, or other individual required to file an organizational report pursuant to HRS §11-321's bank account within seven (7) days of receipt even if that means the deposit occurs within the prohibited period. This interpretation is one which the Commission opposes because it undermines the original prohibited period stated in the law.

The Commission requests the Committee hold this bill or amend for clarity.

SB-2454

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 7:18:28 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabriela Schneider	Testifying for League of Women Voters Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The League of Women Voters supports SB2454, which strengthens campaign finance transparency and accountability by replacing the vague “promptly” deposit requirement with a clear seven-day deadline, extending that obligation to individuals authorized to receive contributions on behalf of candidates, and establishing a formal enforcement referral from the ethics commission to the campaign spending commission for prohibited lobbyist contributions. These reforms are consistent with the League’s position that campaign finance regulations should ensure transparency and the public’s right to know who is using money to influence elections and its support for enhanced enforcement of campaign finance laws.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HAWAII

P.O. Box 235026 ♦ Honolulu, HI 96823

Voicemail 808.377.6727 ♦ my.lwv.org/hawaii ♦ voters@lwvhi.org

SB-2454

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 1:26:01 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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