

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:30:11 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in ****STRONG SUPPORT**** of SB2466 Relating to the Chief Elections Officer

Aloha Chair(s) and Members of the Committees,

My name is Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM, Chairman of the Ohana Unity Party, representing the Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands. As a dedicated advocate for fair elections, political sovereignty, grassroots empowerment, and the protection of independent institutions that serve our lāhui without undue interference,

I submit this testimony in ****STRONG SUPPORT**** of SB2466. This targeted bill amends HRS §11-7.5 to strengthen the independence of the Chief Election Officer by specifying that, once they pass the standard state probationary period, they may only be terminated ****for cause**** by the Elections Commission. This provision—added to the Commission's duties on employment (§11-7.5(4)) and performance hearings/reappointment (§11-7.5(6))—safeguards the role from arbitrary or politically motivated removal, ensuring continuity and nonpartisan administration of our elections.

In Hawai‘i, where electoral processes directly impact Native Hawaiian representation, sovereignty movements, and community self-determination, protecting the Chief Election Officer from capricious dismissal is essential to maintaining public confidence and preventing manipulation of our democratic mechanisms. Here are numbered, compelling reasons why the Committees should support and advance SB2466:

1. ****Promotes Independence and Stability in Election Administration**** The Chief Election Officer oversees critical functions like voter registration, ballot integrity, and election certification. Allowing termination only "for cause" after probation prevents sudden, politically driven changes that could disrupt operations or erode trust—especially in a small state where personal connections can influence decisions.
2. ****Prevents Arbitrary or Partisan Interference**** Without this protection, the position risks becoming vulnerable to pressure from elected officials or shifting majorities. "For cause" termination (e.g., misconduct, neglect, or incompetence) ensures decisions are merit-based, not retaliatory, aligning with pono governance and shielding the role from abuse.

3. ****Enhances Public Trust in Hawai'i's Electoral System**** Voters—particularly in communities historically disenfranchised—need assurance that election leadership is stable and impartial. This bill reinforces that the Chief Election Officer serves the public, not transient political interests, fostering greater participation and confidence in our processes.

4. ****Supports Grassroots and Sovereignty-Focused Participation**** For parties and movements like the Ohana Unity Party that challenge the status quo and advocate for Native Hawaiian rights and self-governance, a protected, independent election administrator helps ensure fair ballot access, accurate counting, and equitable treatment—without fear of reprisal against officials upholding the rules.

5. ****Advances Self-Sovereignty and Democratic Resilience**** By insulating a key nonpartisan office from arbitrary removal, SB2466 empowers Hawai'i to maintain control over its own electoral integrity amid external pressures. This small but meaningful reform strengthens local institutions, reduces colonial-style vulnerabilities, and builds toward true self-determination for our people. SB2466 is a narrow, procedural improvement with no fiscal impact noted. It has advanced through the Senate and is progressing in the House (e.g., scheduled or pending in LAB around mid-March 2026). It complements related election reforms by prioritizing competence and continuity.

I urge the Committees to pass SB2466 unanimously and forward it swiftly. Protecting the independence of our Chief Election Officer is a vital step toward fair, sovereign, and pono elections for all of Hawai'i's people. Mahalo nui loa for your kuleana in safeguarding the integrity of our democratic processes.

Sincerely, Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.
Ohana Unity Party, Chairman www.Ohanaunityparty.com Presidentbillionaire@gmail.com



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR
SB 2466 Relating to the Chief Elections Officer
March 17, 2026, at 9:30 AM, State Capitol CR 309 and Videoconference

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in OPPOSITION to SB 2466.

The Elections Commission complies with HRS §11-7.5 by providing oversight of election administration. They are responsible for investigating misconduct and ensuring compliance with state and federal law.

The current statute appropriately addresses the requirement for holding the Chief Election Officer accountable to execute elections in accordance with state and federal laws.

HRS §11-1.6 Appointment of the chief election officer; requirements; term; restrictions; salary; reappointment; removal. (g) The chief election officer is an at-will employee. The elections commission shall provide written notification of any removal and state the reason for the removal.

Recent Elections Commission PIG (Permitted Interaction Group) reports found HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Hawaii State Plan violations and missing chain of custody records in all four counties. The HAVA violation has been in place since 2004. This could impact federal funding that Hawaii receives from HAVA. These reasons would justify the consideration for the removal of the Chief Elections Officer.

SB 2466 creates a one-year probationary period and allows termination for cause. If terminated for cause, the Chief Election Officer can appeal, leaving the role vacant while an Acting CEO steps in. This situation would significantly disrupt elections.

The existing At-will termination process helps the Elections Commission quickly convene, review candidates, and promptly select a highly qualified individual for the position.

Please vote NO on SB 2466 to maintain accountability for the Chief Election Officer.

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



House Committee on Labor
Chair Jackson Sayama, Vice Chair Mike Lee
March 17, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309 at 9:30 a.m.
SB2466 – RELATING TO THE CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER

TESTIMONY

Amy Monk, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

To; Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and Labor Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii SUPPORTS SB 2466

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii **strongly supports SB2466**. SB2466 specifies that the Chief Election Officer who passes the probationary period may only be terminated for cause.

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii believes in free and fair elections unhampered by harassment or intimidation. In recent years we have seen election workers subjected to harassment and intimidation. We recall that in 2020, two Georgia election workers were falsely accused of election fraud; their lives were threatened forcing them to go into hiding. Many states have seen attempts to cast doubt on election results using false claims of election fraud, often resulting in harassment of election workers.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) reports that 39 states and Washington, D.C., have laws specifically addressing protections for election officials and poll workers. Thirty-five states criminalized intimidation or interference with election workers. Twenty-four of these states and Washington, D.C., enacted or updated their laws since the Georgia 2020 election.

Though this bill does not protect Hawaii election workers from intimidation, this bill would extend standard civil service protections to the Chief Elections Officer at a time when election officers are subject to extreme politicization.

Please pass this bill.

The League requests that the measure take effect upon passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2466,

Amy Monk

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-2466

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:13:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joie Yonamine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Mike Lee, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB2466 both as an individual and as a member of the Indivisible Hawaii State Network (IHSN). This bill protects the critical position of Chief Election Officer from being terminated without cause.

With the current climate of disinformation and partisan efforts to undermine election integrity, it is crucial that we take steps to protect election officials who have met the state standard probationary period. This bill will work to ensure that our elections are overseen and protected by competent and ethical officials.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Joie Yonamine

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:16:36 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Huycke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2466.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:35:29 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Troy MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2466

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 8:01:18 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

In support.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 8:30:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Jackson Sayama and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully oppose SB2466.

This measure would restrict the Elections Commission’s ability to remove the Chief Elections Officer by requiring termination “only for cause” after the probationary period. While stability in leadership is important, accountability must remain the priority when it comes to the administration of our elections.

Hawai‘i receives federal funding to administer elections, and with that funding comes clear federal requirements and expectations. When those standards are not met, the Elections Commission must retain the flexibility to act in the best interest of the public and the integrity of our elections system.

Creating additional barriers to removing the Chief Elections Officer weakens oversight and reduces accountability in one of the most critical functions of government.

Public trust in our elections depends on transparency, strong oversight, and full compliance with both state and federal requirements. The State should not adopt policies that could shield election leadership from accountability or risk undermining compliance with the federal standards tied to election funding.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to defer SB2466.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Teri Kia Savaiinaea

Wai‘anae resident

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 6:16:37 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2466.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 10:05:39 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you. I am a member of Indivisible Windward.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 12:40:22 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Anti-democratic forces are engaged in efforts to suppress the vote and interfere in our elections.

This is something we witnessed here in Hawai'i when the Elections Commission voted to ask the Legislature to consider returning Hawai'i to one-day, in-person voting, getting rid of mail-in voting altogether.

It is frankly terrifying to think that extreme MAGA members of the Election Commission are making deliberate efforts to restrict voting options and fabricating doubt in our elections.

I love mail-in voting, I do not want my vote suppressed over completely unfounded fears related to the security of mail-in voting and misinformation about election fraud.

I have watch and testified at several Election Commission meetings, where MAGA has dragged the meetings into over 6 hours of nonsense.

I do support getting ballot counts at each submittal source and investigating any material differences.

I was an election observer in 2024 for the first time at the Hilo tallying location, and was impressed with the entire operation.

We need SB 2466 to constrain the MAGA Elections Commission takeover of Hawaii's voting process. Please support this bill.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 1:56:04 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaulani Coleman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 1:29:32 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly SUPPORT SB2466.

Mahalo,

Kanani Kai

Member Indivisible Hawaii

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 7:38:42 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Belinda Pate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for reading my testimony.

We endure a process to hire election officers for good reasons.

Suddenly firing them, without cause, is in line with a punitive and unreasonable narrative that infects our institutions right now. Let Hawaii resist unreasonable actions that favor the ruling party.

Please do not fire elected officials without cause.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 8:22:18 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denize Machit	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill Specifies that the Chief Elections Officer who passes the standard state probationary period may only be terminated for cause. This bill is meant to constrain the Elections Commission in calling for the removal of Chief Elections Officer Scott Nago, as was done by a 3-member panel in August 2025. We must protect ourselves from populists takeovers. Please support this bill.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 9:14:31 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Bonk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please help protect free and fair election integrity by passing this bill.

Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR
Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Chair
Rep. Mike Lee, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 9:30 am
Via Videoconference and Conference Room 309

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2466, RELATING TO THE CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER.

Aloha Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, 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 **strong support of SB 2466**, Relating to the Chief Election Officer, which specifies that the Chief Election officer who passes the standard state probationary period may only be terminated for cause.

As Marc Elias, noted elections and voting rights attorney has noted in Democracy Docket, anti-democratic forces are engaged in efforts to suppress the vote and interfere in our elections. This is something we witnessed here in Hawai'i when the Elections Commission voted to ask the Legislature to consider returning Hawai'i to one-day, in-person voting, getting rid of mail-in voting altogether, and narrowly rejected a proposal to fire the chief election officer, Scott Nago.¹ It is frankly terrifying to think that extreme members of the Election Commission are making deliberate efforts to restrict voting options and fabricating doubt in our elections. I, myself, relied on mail-in voting in the 2024 election because I was on the mainland dealing with family matters at the time of the election. I do not want my vote suppressed over completely unfounded fears related to the security of mail-in voting and misinformation about election fraud.

SB 2466 is intended to constrain the Elections Commission's authority to fire Scott Nago, the current Chief Election Officer, as was recommended by a three-member panel last August. The goal of anti-democratic forces is to subvert faith in our elections as a means of suppressing the vote and allowing election outcomes to be contested. For excellent resources on the overall subject of subverting elections as a tenant of the authoritarian playbook, I direct you to Democracy Docket and to Protect Democracy.

In the context of Hawaii elections, there were allegations of vote count discrepancy brought forward by certain members of the Elections Commission. A 220-page report from Election Commissioners Osterkamp, McAdam and Kahiolani Papalimu determined however that "a purported discrepancy of more than 19,000 ballots²" between Hawai'i County and the state in the 2024 general election was unfounded. The report stated, "we find a complete lack of credible evidence to support the claim of a significant ballot discrepancy."

The report added, "When we encourage voters to pursue conspiracies or to believe that government workers are hiding ballots or creating new ones, we significantly damage the system on which our democracy depends." We must be ever-vigilant against outside influences attempting to hijack state control over elections, subvert the will of the voters, and create doubt over the security of our elections. It is, again, a noted antidemocratic strategy to sow doubt about elections as a means of suppressing the vote and undermining democracy. I **support SB 2466** as a necessary measure to protect the role of the Chief Election Officer from unfounded attacks and ensure he may only be terminated for cause.

Mahalo for supporting efforts to protect our elections,

Christine Andrews, JD
Wailuku, Maui

¹ Chad Blair, Honolulu Civil Beat, "Elections Commission Wants State Auditor To Examine Hawai'i's 2024 Vote," Oct. 1, 2025. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/10/elections-commission-wants-state-auditor-to-examine-hawai%CA%BBis-2024-vote/>

² State of Hawaii Elections Commission, Permitted Interaction Group Report on Purported Big Island Ballot Discrepancy, Sept. 29, 2025, <https://elections.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025-10-01-EC-Supplemental-Meeting-Packet.pdf>

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 6:29:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tammy M DeBernardi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to protect election integrity.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 8:49:43 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Justice, M.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a resident of Kapolei and a member of Indivisible Hawai'i. I am writing to provide strong support for SB2466. This bill Specifies that the Chief Elections Officer who passes the standard state probationary period may only be terminated for cause. This bill is meant to constrain the Elections Commission in calling for the removal of Chief Elections Officer Scott Nago, as was done by a 3-member panel in August 2025.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Robert L. Justice, M.D.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 11:40:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Chief Elections Officer should only be terminated for cause. The Elections Commission should not use this office for political maneuvering.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 11:42:45 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brodie Lockard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2466.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 2:55:15 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Calvin Black	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a member of Indivisible. Thank you for supporting this bill.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:17:06 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bridget Llanes	Indivisible Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

SB2466 protects the stability of Hawai‘i’s election system by ensuring the Chief Election Officer position who passes the standard state probationary period may only be terminated for cause.

Elections require constant oversight and strict compliance with legal deadlines. This bill states clearly that the Chief Election Officer may not be terminated without cause, a necessary fail safe so that our elections may proceed in a way that maintains integrity, fairness, and strict adherence to our election processes.

Mahalo,

Bridget Llanes, Waianae

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:18:22 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of SB2466. I think codifying this statute into state law is a good idea. Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:20:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doug Pasnik	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Written Testimony in Opposition to SB2466

This measure raises structural concerns within Hawai‘i’s public employment framework and should be carefully reconsidered before advancing.

Under current law, the Chief Election Officer (CEO) is appointed by the Elections Commission and employed “without regard to chapter 76” pursuant to HRS §11-7.5, placing the position outside the civil service system established under HRS Chapter 76. Consistent with that structure, HRS §11-1.6(g) expressly provides that “the chief election officer is an at-will employee,” and authorizes the Elections Commission to remove the officer with written notification stating the reason for removal. This framework allows the Commission to exercise direct oversight and maintain accountability for the administration of statewide elections.

Legislative history reinforces this approach. The Legislature repealed HRS §11-2.5 through Act 57 (Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2004) as part of a broader reorganization of Chapter 11 that consolidated oversight authority in the Elections Commission. Following that reorganization, the Commission’s appointment and removal authority became the primary statutory mechanism for executive accountability within the election system.

SB2466 would now introduce two civil-service concepts—a “standard state probationary period” and a requirement that the CEO may only be terminated for cause—into a position that statute explicitly places outside Chapter 76 and that current law defines as at-will employment. From a labor and personnel administration perspective, this proposal raises several structural concerns.

First, the bill imports civil-service employment concepts into a position that is expressly exempt from the civil service system. Civil-service protections normally operate within a defined administrative framework that includes classification rules, probationary standards, disciplinary procedures, and administrative appeals. None of those supporting mechanisms are incorporated in this measure.

Second, the bill would create a hybrid employment structure that does not clearly fit within Hawai‘i’s established personnel system. The measure does not define what probationary period applies to a position outside Chapter 76, what standards constitute “cause,” or what procedures govern termination decisions.

Third, the proposal could unintentionally alter the governance role of the Hawai‘i Elections Commission. Under established administrative law principles, the authority to appoint an executive officer generally includes the authority to remove that officer unless the Legislature clearly establishes a different removal structure. By imposing a for-cause limitation without defining procedures for investigation, findings, or review, the bill risks converting the Commission from a governance body into a quasi-judicial employment tribunal without providing the procedural framework necessary for that role.

Finally, the bill introduces an additional drafting concern. It references a “standard state probationary period,” but Hawai‘i law does not define a single statewide probationary period applicable outside Chapter 76. Referencing an undefined personnel concept creates an implementation gap that could require agencies or courts to supply missing rules not provided in the statute.

In effect, SB2466 would replace a clearly defined at-will governance structure with a partially defined employment regime that lacks the administrative framework necessary to support it. Creating a statutory for-cause employment protection without defining the governing personnel procedures is a well-recognized source of administrative ambiguity and litigation risk in public employment law.

For these reasons, the Committee should carefully consider whether this proposal is consistent with Hawai‘i’s established personnel and governance framework. As written, the bill introduces structural inconsistencies into the State’s employment system and therefore should not advance.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:48:27 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Chair Tarnas 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 SB-2466.

SB-2466 would change the law so that, after the standard probationary period, the Chief Election Officer may only be terminated "for cause." In practice, this language makes it significantly harder to remove the top election official, even when there has been a serious loss of trust or widespread concern about how elections are being run.

From a veteran that values accountability, checks and balances, and the integrity of our elections, this bill is a step in the wrong direction.

SB-2466 reduces accountability. The Chief Election Officer is entrusted with one of the most critical responsibilities in our democracy: running free, fair, and transparent elections. If that officer loses the confidence of the public, or of the Elections Commission, it should not require a long legal battle over what counts as "cause" in order to make a change. The higher and vaguer you set the threshold for removal, the more you protect the bureaucracy instead of protecting voters.

This bill risks tying the hands of the State Elections Commission in moments when swift action may be necessary. Recent years have shown that even the appearance of bias, carelessness, or mismanagement in election administration can deeply divide the public. If clear problems arise, the State Elections Commission must be able to act decisively to restore trust. Requiring a litigable "for cause" standard after probation invites court fights and delay, leaving a controversial official in place during highly sensitive election cycles.

SB-2466 shifts power away from the people's representatives toward unelected officials. Hawai'i already has multiple layers of boards and commissions that are difficult for ordinary voters to influence. Creating stronger job protections for the Chief Election Officer without adding stronger performance standards, independent audits, or legislative oversight moves us further

toward government by insulated administrators instead of government that is responsive to citizens.

This bill is one-sided. It strengthens the job security of the Chief Election Officer but does not provide any new tools for transparency, independent auditing, or public participation. If the Legislature believes stability in this position is important, that conversation must be paired with stronger mechanisms for detecting errors, preventing partisan behavior, and quickly correcting problems, not simply making it harder to remove the official at the center of the system.

Finally, in an era when many citizens already question whether election systems are neutral and trustworthy, SB-2466 sends the wrong message. Instead of signaling that Hawai'i is serious about robust oversight and accountability, this proposal looks like a move to shield the top election official from consequences. That will only deepen skepticism and division across the political spectrum.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to defer indefinitely SB-2466.

Brett Kulbis
U.S. Navy Retired

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 7:44:21 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ralph Cushnie	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am against proposals that would make it more difficult for the Hawai'i Elections Commission to remove the Chief Elections Officer.

The Chief Elections Officer serves at the pleasure of the Elections Commission for a reason. The Commission is charged under HRS §11-7.5 with oversight of election administration, including the responsibility to investigate misconduct and ensure compliance with state and federal law. Weakening that oversight by making removal more difficult would reduce accountability at a time when serious compliance issues already exist.

First, Hawai'i does not currently have a HAVA State Plan that complies with federal requirements. The Help America Vote Act requires states to maintain an approved and updated state plan governing election administration and the use of federal funds. Hawai'i has been operating under an outdated plan that has not been properly updated through the required public process, raising serious compliance concerns.

Second, multiple Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) reports submitted to the Elections Commission identified serious ballot accounting discrepancies. These reports documented instances where the number of mail ballots recorded in the Statewide Voter Registration System increased after counties reported completing their ballot collections. In several cases, more ballots were counted than envelopes documented as received. These findings raise fundamental concerns about basic inventory control and the chain-of-custody requirements established under Hawai'i Administrative Rules.

Third, the certification of the 2024 General Election did not follow the procedures required under HRS §11-155. Election results must be certified based on verifiable records demonstrating the number of ballots cast and counted. When basic records such as collection logs, envelope counts, and transfer documentation cannot be reconciled, the statutory certification process is compromised.

Finally, there is an uncomfortable reality that should be acknowledged. The Legislature is now considering insulating the Chief Elections Officer from removal at the same time serious questions are being raised about election administration. The elephant in the room is that some lawmakers may view retaining the current system as politically beneficial. If the official

responsible for administering elections cannot be held accountable for documented compliance failures, the public will reasonably question whether the goal of these proposals is oversight—or self-preservation.

Public confidence in elections depends on transparency, verifiable records, and real accountability. Rather than making removal more difficult, the Legislature should ensure that election officials comply with federal law, maintain proper chain-of-custody documentation, and operate under meaningful oversight by the Elections Commission.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject any proposal that weakens the Elections Commission's authority to hold the Chief Elections Officer accountable.

Sincerely,

Ralph Cushnie

Elections Commissioner

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 9:26:42 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Hutchison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

Thank you!

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 11:37:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peggy Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing as an individual and member of Indivisible in strong support of SB2466. We must fortify all aspects of our elections processes, given the current threats to, and questions around, election integrity. Requiring that the chief elections officer may only be removed for cause is one of the many necessary steps to keep our democracy intact here in Hawaii. Mahalo.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:32:59 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB2466. Mahalo.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 10:02:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Teare	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for supporting this bill. I'm a member of East Hawaii Indivisible.

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 3:36:51 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Segal Matsunaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a grandmother living in Waimea on Hawaii Island, I support this measure

SB-2466

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 4:22:29 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Gregory	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I stand in strong opposition to this bill.

As written, this measure introduces ambiguity by expanding the interpretation of “cause,” creating room for subjective application rather than reinforcing clear accountability. At a time when public trust in our elections system is already strained, this bill moves us in the wrong direction.

The concerns I am raising are not theoretical. They are based on public record, documented proceedings, and Elections Commission meetings that I have personally attended since 2024.

Under Hawai‘i Revised Statutes §11-2.5, the Chief Election Officer is appointed by and accountable to the Elections Commission. This means the authority to oversee, evaluate, and remove the Chief Election Officer for cause already exists in law.

Scott Nago reports to the Elections Commission, not the other way around.

If that authority is already clearly defined, there is no need to introduce vague or expanded language around “cause.” The issue before us is not a lack of statutory authority. The issue is a lack of enforcement and accountability.

There are ongoing concerns regarding the lack of chain-of-custody documentation for ballots and the failure to consistently produce or verify accurate voter rolls. Members of the public have reported ballots being sent to deceased individuals, outdated or invalid addresses, and instances where multiple ballots have been issued under the same name.

Additionally, Scott Nago on behalf of the People of Hawai‘i and the Office of Elections has received over \$30 million in federal funding, which carries with it expectations of accountability, reporting, and compliance with federal election standards.

A recent performance audit identified a discrepancy of 19,042 ballots on Hawai‘i Island between ballot return data reported through USPS systems and the totals reported by the Chief Election Officer. When these discrepancies were raised during public meetings, clear reconciliation was not provided.

In July of last year, through a UIPA request under Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 92F, an email was obtained from Chair Curtis to Chief Election Officer Scott Nago. In that communication, specific county clerks were named and instructed to "sit tight" in response to what was described as public concern.

At the same time, members of the public were actively participating in meetings, raising legitimate questions about election integrity, ballot accountability, and transparency.

While this legislative body is not bound by the Sunshine Law in the same manner as boards and commissions, the Elections Commission is subject to Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 92. That law exists to ensure open deliberation, transparent decision-making, and public visibility into how decisions are made.

Under §11-2.5, the Chief Election Officer operates under the authority of that Commission. Any coordination between the Commission and the Chief Election Officer must not circumvent the intent or spirit of open-meeting requirements.

When communications occur outside of public meetings that appear to guide outcomes, it raises serious concerns about whether decisions are being shaped outside of public view.

The issue before us is not defining "cause." The issue is whether existing laws, federal standards, and transparency requirements are being enforced.

This bill does not resolve those concerns. Instead, it risks creating more ambiguity in a system that already lacks clarity and public confidence.

Rather than passing this bill, I urge the committee to require full chain-of-custody documentation, mandate regular voter roll audits, ensure compliance with federal election standards tied to funding, and require transparent reconciliation of ballot counts.

As someone who has sat through multiple Elections Commission meetings lasting several hours, I can attest that these issues are not due to lack of time or capability. They are due to a lack of accountability and enforcement.

The people of Hawai'i deserve better. Each of you has taken an oath to uphold the law and serve the people.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to reject this bill as written.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tara Malia Gregory