



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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TESTIMONY OF THE  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2499  
RELATING TO VACANCIES

February 13, 2026

Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2499. This bill clarifies and updates timelines related to a state senate vacancy to ensure compliance with federal and state election requirements.

This bill aligns vacancy processes with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and its state counterpart, which require ballots to be transmitted to military and overseas voters at least 45 days prior to an election (52 USC § 20302; HRS § 15D-9). Meeting this requirement involves significant preparation, including ballot design, proofing, printing, and programming voting systems to ensure accuracy. This bill also accounts for challenges and objections that may arise after candidate filing deadlines or primary election results, further impacting the timeline for producing the ballot.

Our election laws for the regularly scheduled contests account for these factors, however, state senate vacancy elections do not. For example, under HRS § 17-3, a vacancy in the state senate may trigger an election in as few as 50 days, leaving insufficient time for ballot preparation and transmission. While it may seem that only the ballots associated with the state senate seat are impacted, in actuality, it is the programming of the entire election database to ensure ballots statewide are created to be counted accurately. Senate Bill No. 2499 addresses this issue by aligning provisions to existing requirements and processes to ensure compliance.

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2499.



Committee on Judiciary  
Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Friday, February 13, 2026, 9:00 AM  
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference  
SB 2499 – RELATING TO VACANCIES

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB 2499.**

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii (LWV) supports SB 2499 which would conform the date in which a vacancy occurs with the Office of Elections' operational requirements of administering elections. It is our understanding that this change is needed to ensure the timing does not violate federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) timelines. Further, we understand this measure is needed to align timelines to meet ballot deadlines and does not intend to change how state senator vacancies are filled.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.