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

March 17, 2026

Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, 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.

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

SB-2499

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 4:26:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/17/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine L. Andrews, J.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for supporting this measure.

SB-2499

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 9:59:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/17/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I support this bill for its clarity. Mahalo for your consideration.