

ACT 14

S.B. NO. 179

A Bill for an Act Relating to Advisory Committees.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 11-10.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“~~[[§11-10.5]]~~ **Statewide ~~[voters with special]~~ elections accessibility needs advisory committee.** (a) There is established a statewide ~~[voters with special]~~ elections accessibility needs advisory committee within the office of elections for administrative purposes. The purpose of the advisory committee is to ensure equal and independent access to voter registration, casting of ballots, and all other office of elections services.

(b) The advisory committee shall consist of five members appointed by the governor based on recommendations from organizations within the State that are comprised of a majority of officers and members who are persons with ~~[physical]~~ disabilities including visual impairment. Each member shall identify as a voter with ~~[special]~~ accessibility needs arising from ~~[physical]~~ disabilities including visual and hearing impairments that require an accommodation to vote.

The terms of advisory committee members shall be four years; provided that initial terms shall be one, two, three, or four years to ensure staggered rotation of members.

(c) The advisory committee shall meet at least annually to review election procedures, services, and technology and access to information, and shall make recommendations to the office of elections on at least an annual basis. The advisory committee may meet and subsequently make recommendations at additional times as determined by a majority of the members.”

SECTION 2. Section 11-10.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“~~[[§11-10.6]]~~ **County [voters with special] elections accessibility needs advisory committees.** (a) Each county shall establish a county [voters with special] elections accessibility needs advisory committee. The purpose of the advisory committee shall be to ensure equal and independent access to voter registration, casting of ballots, and all other county elections division services.

(b) Each advisory committee shall consist of five members appointed by the mayor of each respective county based on recommendations from organizations within the county that are comprised of a majority of officers and members who are persons with ~~[physical]~~ disabilities including visual impairment. Each member shall identify as a voter with ~~[special]~~ accessibility needs arising from ~~[physical]~~ disabilities including visual and hearing impairments which require an accommodation to vote. The terms of advisory committee members shall be four years; provided that initial terms shall be one, two, three, or four years to ensure staggered rotation of members.

(c) Each advisory committee shall meet at least annually to review election procedures, services, and technology and access to information, and shall make recommendations to the office of elections on at least an annual basis. The advisory committees may meet and subsequently make recommendations at additional times as determined by a majority of the members.”

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 19, 2023.)