

THE BEAT

Bills: Campaigns, Ballots, Open Gov't

One measure would repeal the prohibition against “willfully” exhibiting one’s own ballot but still guard against tampering.

JANUARY 24, 2016 • By Chad Blair   

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A slew of bills concerning campaign spending, elections and open government are set for hearings in two committees Tuesday.

In the morning, Senate Judiciary and Labor [will hear measures](#) submitted by the Office of Elections and the Campaign Spending Commission.

The bills increase from \$1,000 to \$10,000 the fine for providing *false information* when registering to vote late or at an absentee polling place, increase fines assessed against people other than individuals for *campaign spending violations*, and distinguish the “dissemination, distribution, and republication” of campaign materials from other *coordinated activities*.

Another measure says that the preparation of absentee ballots for counting may include opening the return envelope in which the ballot is enclosed and the validation of signatures, “but shall not include opening the ballot envelope.”

In the afternoon, House Judiciary [has a couple of items](#) on its agenda, ones that did not make it out of the last session and so carry over to the present.

Civil Beat



Rep. Karl Rhoads chairs the House Judiciary.

One bill would [repeal the prohibition](#) against “willfully” exhibiting one’s own ballot. My read of the measure’s language is that there would still be protections against someone trying to hijack another person’s ballot.

Another measure “broadens the policies [regarding open government](#)” to include greater public participation, input, and access to documents, reports and proposals under consideration at meetings, with certain limitations.

The bill includes this laudable language:

In a democracy, the people are vested with the ultimate decision-making power. Governmental agencies exist to aid the people in the formation and conduct of public policy. Opening up the governmental processes to public scrutiny and participation is the only viable and reasonable method of protecting the public’s interest.

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Patricia Blair · University of Nebraska-Lincoln

I appreciate CB keeping the readers updated during the weekend.

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Bart Dame

Chad, the prohibition against "wifully" exhibiting one's own ballot is to reduce the possibility someone can be pressured into proving to another person how they voted. The other person might be an employer, spouse, family member or other person. The sanctity of the "secret ballot" is a kind of protection which should not be casually abandoned. I can understand people wanting to snap a picture of their ballot (or the voting screen) to post on Facebook as a public proclamation of their support (or opposition) of a candidate. But maybe it is not a bad idea if we retain the secret ballot and force people to convince others of how they voted based upon their word.

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Toni Auld Yardley · Works at Lanikini Productions, Kanakamaoli Religious Institute

POWER - BACK TO THE PEOPLE - FOR HAWAI'I'S FUTURE
 BACK - TO THE PREAMBLE OF THE STATE'S CONSTITUTION
 AND - TO THE FUTURE - OF A "POLITICAL SUBDIVISION"
 FOR THE - LIVING DESCENDANTS OF KING KAMEHAMEHA
 TO SELF-DETERMINE AND ORGANIZE A GOVERNMENT
 TO ADMINSTRATE AND MANAGE THE CROWN AND CEDED LANDS.

We, the people of Hawaii, grateful for Divine Guidance, and mindful of our Hawaiian heritage and uniqueness as an island State, dedicate our efforts to fulfill the philosophy decreed by the Hawaii State motto, "Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono."

We reserve the right to control our destiny, to nurtur... [See More](#)

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Lana Ah Lan DeSilva

Do not be distracted by their bread and circuses.

Please submit online testimony opposing HB 326 which will wreak havoc on the lives of Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians in Hawai'i. Mahalo!

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/measure_indiv.aspx...

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