



## HAWAII

# Committee Advances Transparency Bills, Stalls Online Voter Registration

State strives to force more disclosure of the big money behind political campaigns.

JANUARY 25, 2012 • By Nanea Kalani  

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Hawaii political committees that can raise and spend unlimited amounts of campaign money would be required to disclose the candidates their expenditures are attacking or supporting under a proposal moving through the Legislature.

The House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday passed [House Bill 1756](#) out of committee, sending it to the Finance Committee. The bill was supported by the state Campaign Spending Commission, Common Cause Hawaii and the League of Women Voters-Hawaii.

Currently, [independent-expenditure-only](#) committees — or so-called Super PACs — only have to disclose basic information on expenditures such as the name and address of vendors. The proposed bill would require them to “include the name of the candidate who is supported or opposed by the expenditure, and whether the expenditure supports or opposes the candidate.”

The Judiciary Committee also took up a Sunshine Law bill that initially proposed shortening the advance-notice requirements for public board meetings to four days from six. The committee deleted that section of [HB 1611](#), maintaining the six-day requirement, but kept language that would allow “less than a quorum” of members to

attend other public meetings or events where issues of interest to them are being discussed, such as community events, professional-association conferences and professional-development seminars.

Currently, the law generally prohibits board members from discussing board business outside of a meeting of their own board.

Meanwhile, the House committee deferred action on a bill that would have allowed the state Office of Elections to move ahead with designing an online voter registration system.

Committee Chairman Gil Keith-Agaran said he wanted to delay decision-making on [HB 1755](#) until later in the session after he's heard other elections-related bills.

The Office of Elections had introduced the proposal, which was supported Tuesday by the American Civil Liberties Union, Common Cause Hawaii, Americans for Democratic Action, the League of Women Voters-Hawaii and others.

The bill sought \$500,000 in funds for the design phase of the project.

Gov. [Neil Abercrombie](#) last session vetoed [a bill](#) that would have required an electronic voter registration system be in place by Jan. 1, 2014. Keith-Agaran was a co-sponsor of that bill.

In his veto message to lawmakers, Abercrombie had said: "The estimated cost of implementation is \$2.5 million and no funding was provided in the bill. Electronic voter registration can be addressed as the state moves to assess and overhaul the state's technology systems."

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