THE BEAT

Hawaii Gets A D+ For Integrity

Despite the grade from Center for Public Integrity, the state got the fourth-highest ranking in the country.

NOVEMBER 9, 2015 • By Marina Riker

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Hawaii earned a grade of D+ when it comes to integrity, but that was still the fourth-highest rating in the country, according to the recently released State Integrity Investigation.

The Center for Public Integrity graded the states based on the laws and systems they have in place to deter corruption. Hawaii received a C grade in 2012.

Despite the nearly grade, Hawaii still received fourth-best report card in the nation with a score of 69. Only Alaska, California and Connecticut did better.

The center, winner of the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting, gave Hawaii Cs in ethics enforcement agencies and public access to information, ranking us second in the nation for those two categories.

The Aloha State got its highest grade, a B, in internal auditing due to the fact that its auditor is constitutionally protected against political interference and can work without fear of retribution.

Meanwhile, free rounds of golf from lobbyists and "Frankenstein" bills – that come out of legislative committees or conference sessions bearing very little resemblance to the bills that went in – were part of the reason Hawaii got Fs for judicial accountability and lobbying disclosure.

Krzysztof Urbanowicz/Flickr

State employees reported receiving more free golf tournament entries despite the Ethics Commission's advice against accepting golf gifts.

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Marina Riker is an intern for Civil Beat.

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Ed Wagner

I'd give Hawaii F on all accounts as a city and state that is as crooked and as corrupt as the ace of spades is black!

It is as bad here as it was in Chicago in the days of the notorious gangster, Al Capone!

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Boyd Ready · Secretary at Hawaii Republican Party

If our voters wish to improve the 'Frankenstein' bill problem (closed-door surprise major decisions influenced by unelected lobbyists)....all they have to do is elect more opposition party representatives. In the House, 17 are enough to call a bill out of committee for a vote on the floor, and so interrupting the closed-door process and shining daylight on who is for or against a bill. Support an opposition candidate in your District next year!

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