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Hawaii News

Isle electors join call for CIA report release

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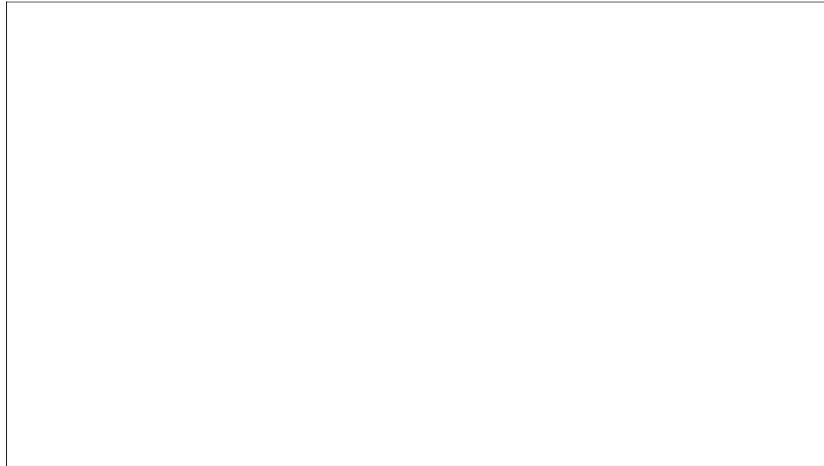
Hawaii Democrat and Electoral College elector John Bickel, pictured in his classroom at 'Iolani High School on Wednesday, plans to vote for Hillary Clinton in Monday's Electoral College vote. He says the public has the right to know whether Russia interfered with the presidential election.

Hawaii's four Democratic electors have joined a movement asking for information about possible Russian hacking during the presidential election, calling on President Barack Obama to release a CIA report on the topic.

"The information contained in the report is essential to carrying out our constitutional obligation of casting our vote in an election that is free from tampering from outside entities," the electors said, according to a statement released late Tuesday by one of Hawaii's electors, John Bickel.

Bickel told the Associated Press the electors and the public have the right to know whether Russia was meddling with the election.

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"I don't know what's in those CIA briefs, but I think there may be something that goes into us making our decision," he added.

The move follows a letter sent Monday by 10 electors requesting information about ongoing investigations on ties between Trump and "Russian government interference in the election." One Texas Republican who said he will not vote for Trump joined nine Democrats who sent that letter. Since then, dozens more electors from New Hampshire to California have signed the letter.

Aside from Bickel, the Hawaii letter was signed by electors Janice Bond of Lihue, Marie "Dolly" Strazar of Hilo and David Mulinix of Kaneohe.

In interviews with the Associated Press, Bickel, Strazar and Mulinix said they plan to vote for Hillary Clinton. But Bond, who voted for Bernie Sanders in the state's presidential caucus, did not disclose how she plans to vote.

Clinton won Hawaii, so the state's electors are required by law to vote for her when they cast their votes Monday. However, the law does not stipulate any penalties if electors do not follow those rules, according to Nedielyn Bueno, spokeswoman for the Office of Elections.

Mulinix, who joined the Democratic Party to help get Sanders elected, said last week he plans to reluctantly vote for Clinton because of the state law requirement. He said he doubted that any movement by electors to send someone other than President-elect Donald Trump to the White House would succeed.

"Republicans are pretty, you know, they are in lockstep. They all go over the cliff together," Mulinix said. "They don't break ranks. So I think that Donald Trump is going to be the guy. So anything that any elector does now, it's going to be a statement."

Like several other Hawaii electors, Mulinix said he wants to do away with the Electoral College.

"Right now, if all the electors got together and held a conference, and said 'You know what, we're going to vote for Donald Duck,' they can just do that," Mulinix said.

"Completely usurp the will of the people. And that is just so wrong."

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