

## THE BEAT

# Kouchi Delays Public Records Request

The Associated Press says the response from the Hawaii Senate president “could hold up similar requests for years.”

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MARCH 19, 2016 • By Chad Blair   

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In the latest battle between the media trying to obtain public records and politicians seeking to deny them, the Associated Press [has this story](#) involving Hawaii state Senate President Ron Kouchi.

“A top Hawaii lawmaker is delaying a public records request because of a dispute that could hold up similar requests for years,” the AP writes. “The outcome will likely determine whether legislators can withhold emails, calendars and other information from the public, which watchdog groups see as crucial to government accountability.”



*Senate President Ronald Kouchi.*

The matter began when the nonprofit [Center for Food Safety](#) asked for copies of communications “between several senators, representatives and the agriculture industry on pesticides and genetically engineered crops, sensitive topics in Hawaii.”

The requests were denied, so the group is appealing the case to the state [Office of Information Practices](#).

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### **About the Author**



CIVIL BEAT STAFF

**Chad Blair** [Twitter](#) [Email](#) [RSS](#)

Chad Blair is a reporter for Civil Beat. You can reach him by email at [cblair@civilbeat.com](mailto:cblair@civilbeat.com) or follow him on Twitter at [@chadblairCB](https://twitter.com/chadblairCB).

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**Patricia Blair** · University of Nebraska-Lincoln

The face of bad government, Kouchi!

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**John Kawamoto**

The people should have access to all communication issued by legislators, who are presumably working "for the people."

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**Bryant Paul** · Star of the Sea College

Have been trying to get records that are public from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Aquatics Division for nearly 4 years. Not a chance. These guys run the government under the TEPCO (Tokyo Electric and Power) theory. What nuclear melt down? Say or show the public nothing. Don't even try. Don't vote. The entire government acts like it is a power unto itself. Beyond criticism or public view. Corruption at the Airport and Harbors Division is a way of life. Petty bureaucrats live in fear and will not speak.

Like · Reply · 1 · Mar 20, 2016 8:10am



**Bryant Paul** · Star of the Sea College

On a similar point. These agencies take recycled new reporters and make them "spokepersons". Professional spin masters. Don't believe a word the government says and throw the politicians that come to your door seeking re-election out. When they knock on my door.... I knock on their sense of values.

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**Natalie Iwasa, Community Advocate**

"Because they essentially said the individual legislators are exempt from the public records law, that just impacts way too many records on a wholesale basis," Black said in an interview. "I couldn't just let it pass."

Thank you, Brian Black, and the Civil Beat Law Center (no relation to Civil Beat the news outlet) for getting involved in this issue.

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