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State lawmaker pays fine to resolve ethics investigation

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By Rick Daysog, Reporter [CONNECT](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Back January, state Sen. Maile Shimabukuro was among several lawmakers who introduced a bill that would have gutted the state's gift law.

Now, she's in political hot water for allegedly accepting improper perks from lobbyists.

On Friday, she agreed to pay \$739 to resolve a state Ethics Commission investigation into alleged gifts, which included an overnight stay for her and her family at the Aulani Disney Resort and Spa in February and a luau at the Paradise Cove in Ko Olina.

"This is the kind of influence that the disclosure laws are designed to prevent or at least cause lawmakers or officials to think twice before accepting something from lobbyists," said Ian Lind, blogger, former investigative reporter and former director of Common Cause Hawaii.

The gifts were paid for by a lobbyist for the law firm Alston Hunt Floyd and Ing and were first reported to the Ethics Commission by Shimabukuro herself, who wanted to know how to report them on her lawmakers' disclosure forms.

Even though Shimabukuro reported the gifts and did not admit wrongdoing, the commission said a reasonable person could infer that they were given to her to influence her or reward her for actions.

"She was being upfront about it ... The problem is she shouldn't have accepted it in the first place," said Lind.

Shimabukuro who has served her Waianae district since 2003 -- first as a House member and now in the Senate -- could not be reached for comment.

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