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LIHUE — A Kauai County Council committee will consider a bill today aimed at closing a loophole that has allowed lobbyists appearing before the governing body to operate unchecked.

“It hasn’t allowed any shortcomings, but it’s just making sure that we have a lobbying measure in place,” Council Chair Jay Furfaro, the bill’s introducer, said. “I think also we wanted to be consistent with all the other counties.”

Other local governments, including Maui and Hawaii Counties as well as the City and County of Honolulu, have lobbying laws that require lobbyists to register with respective county or state offices but no such law exists on Kauai County’s books.

Having this measure on Kauai, Furfaro explained, would allow the county to see who is hiring the lobbyists appearing before them and ensure they have been certified. Bill 2497 would require lobbyists to register with the county Board of Ethics and identify themselves as lobbyists before testifying before the County Council or any county agency.

Although the bill was introduced to the council on Aug. 28, it has been deferred three times by the Committee of the Whole.

A lobbyist, according to a draft version of the bill, is defined as any individual who is paid to engage or is engaged in lobbying or lobbying activities for more than five hours in any month or spends more than \$750 in six months.

Under the current bill, a person who also accepts membership dues, contributions, fees or salaries and devotes a portion of the funds or work time to lobbying activities will be considered to be engaged in lobbying activities.

Every lobbyist would be required to file a biennial registration form, containing contact information and lobbying subjects, with the Board of Ethics within five days of becoming a lobbyist.

The ordinance, however, would exempt individuals who represent themselves; federal, state or county employees acting within their official duties; media companies; attorneys in an advisory capacity; and certain experts and consultants.

Lobbyists would also be required to file a statement of expenditures, listing dollar amounts received and contact information for financial contributors, with the Board of Ethics twice a year on July 31 and Jan. 31.

“The public needs to know where the money is coming from,” said Carmille Lim, executive director at the Hawaii office of Common Cause, a nonprofit open government advocacy group, who supports the proposed bill. “When you have something like this in place, it allows people to see that, be active participants in the government process and increases people’s trust in government.”

Bill 2497 will be considered by the Committee of the Whole during the county council’s public meeting

beginning at 9 a.m. in the Historic County Building's Council Chambers.

- Darin Moriki, county government reporter, can be reached at 245-0428 or dmoriki@thegardenisland.com. Follow him on Twitter at [@darinmoriki](https://twitter.com/darinmoriki).

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Well this is excellent. What is taking so long? And where will it go?

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- **[Tiki808](#) posted at 11:15 am on Wed, Jan 8, 2014.**

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Here is their chance to make a better community for Kaua'i. They are lobbying for more money and for the people of Kaua'i. Look out for your chosen candidates and see what they will do for you. Bernard Carvalho Jr. as your mayor and Ross Kagawa, both of the candidates are representations of what British colonies used to call commonwealth. For the good of the people. Check to see if they're pulling through for you in government. A term English used, for the commonwealth or common good of the people. Should be an interesting year.

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- **[ChuckL](#) posted at 11:11 am on Wed, Jan 8, 2014.**

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I hope this passes. I believe the Bill 2491 debate would have been very different if this was in place. I'm interested in what the punishment would be if someone lobbies without registering.

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