

Member**Newsletter**

Special Winter 2018 Edition

Mahalo for your continued support!

**Because of you, students
are empowering their peers
to have their voices heard!**

OUTREACH & EDUCATION**Youth Voter Registration Project**

Thanks to your support, Common Cause Hawaii led an effort to encourage more youth civic engagement with Kanu Hawaii and the Kapiolani Community College and University of Hawaii Manoa Service Learning Centers.

Students registered over 250 voters and held a “Get Out The Vote” campus event to remind voters to get to the polls.



Students found creative ways to attract new voters

The peer-to-peer voter registration programs at KCC and UH Manoa train student civic ambassadors on how to register people to vote. Through this program, ambassadors register their fellow classmates at campus events and class visits.

Civil Café: New for 2018, we held a panel discussion series in partnership with Honolulu Civil Beat throughout the legislative session. The panel included legislators and representatives from Common Cause and Civil Beat—discussing legislation and answering your questions. You can watch the recordings on [our website](#).

Find recordings and photos from our events at: <https://www.commoncause.org/hawaii/about-us/past-events/>

2018 Election

Because Hawaii has the lowest voter turnout in the nation, and does not have a Voter Guide, the Common Cause Hawaii Team worked to educate voters on 2018 issues.

Hawaiipowerballot.com. This web-based application allows voters to input their address and then view their sample ballot. Voters can click on candidates to connect to their websites, social media pages, and candidate questionnaires. Voters can also find information on constitutional and charter amendment questions. CCHI volunteers researched and curated candidate information, and coders Jason Axelson, Royce Jones, and Aaron Fujimoto created and managed the application and website. This was the third election season that Hawaiipowerballot.com has been a community resource.

Constitutional Convention—Citizen’s Jury.

Every 10 years, the question of whether to hold a state constitutional convention appears on the November ballot. To educate the public about this question, CCHI, in partnership with the University of Hawaii Public Policy Center, Accord3.0 Network, William S. Richardson School of Law, and the Collaborative Leaders Network, sponsored a [“Citizens Jury.”](#) If you have feedback regarding this pilot program, we would love to hear from you!

Election Day Volunteers.

A huge **THANK YOU** to our members across the state who helped staff polling sites across the state and at Oahu’s Control Center!!! Thanks to you, elections in Hawaii ran smoothly, with only minor technical glitches, and voters were able to make their voices heard.

MEMBER SURVEY

We are currently planning for 2019 (and beyond) and need your feedback. Please take 5 minutes and take our short survey (it’s only 13 questions). With so many issues to tackle, and seemingly a new one every day, your input helps us determine our priorities and activities for the upcoming year in Hawaii. Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCHI2018> to take our CCHI member survey.



CCHI Volunteers David Bohn (L) and Joseph Heaukulani with CCHI Director Corie Tanida after 13 hours at the Control Center.

Mahalo for your continued support!

Protest to Protect Mueller. When President Trump dismissed Attorney General Jeff Sessions and appointed Matthew Whitaker as Acting Attorney General, hundreds of people across the state, along with thousands across the country mobilized within 24 hours to protect Robert Mueller’s investigation. Whittaker has frequently criticized the investigation and mused about cutting Mueller’s budget. The people spoke loudly and clearly—that we want and deserve an independent investigation to get the truth and accountability.



Over 200 people rallied at the Federal Building on Oahu in support of Mueller

For more information on our legislative priorities please visit our website:
<https://www.commoncause.org/hawaii/legislative-priorities/>

ADVOCACY

Ethics

We know that democracy works best when everyone participates, and everyone’s voice is heard. But legislators have regularly cut people out of conversations with deceptive practices like [“gut and replace.”](#) Gut and replace is when lawmakers wait until the last minute, then strip a bill of its original contents, stuff the bill with something completely different, and then push it through without the required public or legislative review.

Because these terrible practices have been going on for years with no signs of stopping, we took the unprecedented step of [suing the State of Hawaii](#) to end the practice of gut and replace, and to ensure that everyone, especially our lawmakers, respect and abide by our State Constitution. Learn more about [our complaint here.](#)

One of the most important tools that helps us identify potential conflicts of interest are financial disclosure statements for elected officials, certain state employees, and board and commission members. This year, legislators attempted to redact financial disclosures of powerful boards and commissions such as the Board of Land and Natural Resources and Public Utilities Commission, claiming this would help fill vacancies. With your support, we strongly opposed, and while it came down to the wire, these bills were defeated ([SB2609](#)).

MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY

Please consider supporting our work in the community with a contribution. Donate now and take the opportunity to double your impact! Thanks to a generous Common Cause Hawaii donor, your donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar throughout December! Please make checks payable to Common Cause Hawaii and send them to: 307A Kamani St. Honolulu, HI 96813. Or donate online: hi.commoncause.org.

Voting

Vote By Mail (VBM): After years of discussion and advocating for VBM, legislators took action and established a pilot program for Kauai County in 2020! [HB1401](#) (2017) was signed by Governor Ige and is now Act 182. While we were advocating for a statewide VBM program, we believe this is a promising first step in modernizing our elections.

Mahalo to everyone who called, submitted testimony, and wrote letters to editor. Progress on this issue would not have happened without you. Next on our list? We will monitor the pilot program and assist where we are able. In the meantime, [Automatic Voter Registration](#) remains a priority. Currently elections and transportation officials are working on a secure transfer system to share voter registration information. We will update you as progress is made and more information becomes available.



Campaign Finance

On June 25, 2018 Governor Ige released his “Intent to Veto” list. Included was [SB2992](#), which would have weakened campaign finance disclosure laws. If enacted, signs and banners, in support or opposition of a candidate, would no longer be required to have the “paid for by” disclaimer on them. The public would no longer be able to identify the sources of these campaign materials without having to do additional research. We believe that in this post *Citizens United* world, coupled with the “fake news” phenomenon, it is more important than ever to identify sources of campaign materials, including signs and banners, and are glad this bill was vetoed.

Transparency

Office of Information Practices: As highlighted by the Civil Beat Law Center for Public Integrity, there are [serious delays](#) at the Office of Information Practices (OIP), with decisions taking an average of two years to be made. While we are disappointed in the failure of [SB3092](#), which would have required OIP to resolve all public complaints within 6 months, we are grateful that OIP’s budget request was approved. Mahalo to those who supported OIP’s request. We will continue to advocate for more resources for OIP and continue conversations with community stakeholders, including the public, the media, and government agencies, as we look for ways to resolve these issues.

Reminders

For more frequent updates:

- Join our email list to get national and local updates: hi.commoncause.org
- Like us on Facebook @CommonCauseHawaii
- Follow us on Twitter @CommonCauseHI
- Donate online: hi.commoncause.org.

Be a part of the Action Alert List and have your voice heard at the State Legislature! Email hawaii@commoncause.org and let us know!

Do you have questions, comments, or concerns? We want to hear from you. Call us at (808) 275-6275 or email us at hawaii@commoncause.org

Mahalo for your continued support!
