



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS
OF HAWAII

Common Cause Hawaii: 307A Kamani Street • Honolulu, HI 96813 • (808) 275-6275

League of Women Voters of Hawaii: 40 South Hotel Street, Room 314 * Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 (808) 531-7448

Contact: Ann Shaver, President
League of Women Voters of Hawaii
(808) 696-4186
voters@lwv-hawaii.com

April 22, 2016

For immediate release:

HELP HAWAII VOTE

Two Voting Reform Measures Enter Final Stages of Legislative Session

Hawaii's 2016 Legislature is poised to take two tremendous steps forward in helping Hawaii vote.

During conference committee work in the next few weeks, minor differences between the House and Senate on an "Automatic Voter Registration" bill (House Bill 401 HD2 SD1) are expected to be resolved. A new law would provide that any person eligible to vote who applies for a new or renewed driver's license, driver instruction permit or state identification card will be automatically registered to vote if not already registered (unless the applicant declines to register to vote). Carmille Lim, Executive Director of Common Cause Hawaii explained, "'Automatic Voter Registration' can unlock access to voting for an estimated 300 thousand Hawaii citizens who are eligible to vote but unregistered. Streamlining the voter registration process for all eligible voters is a step toward increasing voter participation in our state."

Also expected from conference is a "Voting-by-Mail" bill, which blends House and Senate opinions on House Bill 1653 HD1 SD1. Over the 2018-2020 period, the Office of Elections would implement voting-by-mail, building on the already popular absentee and permanent absentee voting programs. "This new election approach builds on other successful efforts to modernize the way we vote in Hawaii," said Ann Shaver, League of Women Voters President. Online voter registration (2015), late voter registration (2016) and same day voter registration (2018) are all compatible with voting-by-mail. Should Automatic Voter Registration and Voting-by-Mail pass, Hawaii would become a "model" state for voting rights nationwide."

On April 11, 2016 the League of Women Voters of Hawaii and Common Cause Hawaii met with State Office of Elections, Honolulu County and Kauai County voting officials; **these parties support both reforms. Common Cause Hawaii and the League of Women Voters of Hawaii have no differences with the Office of Elections concerning the important features of either bill, and now defer to this office for any questions which conference committee members have about bill language and organization.**

###

Common Cause Hawaii is a state chapter of the national Common Cause organization. Common Cause is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to protecting and improving Hawaii's political process and holding government accountable to the public interest. For more information, hi.commoncause.org

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii is a non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information, visit www.lwv-hawaii.com