



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

March 7, 2017

To: Elections Commission

From: Scott T. Nago  
Chief Election Officer

Re: Status of Operations

Currently, the Office of Elections has been tracking election related measures and working with the Counties to transition to the new statewide voter registration system.

Legislation

In 2016, the Legislature passed Act 167, SLH 2016 which removes the requirement for an applicant to provide the nine (9) digit Social Security Number to register to vote. Instead, applicants must provide their Hawaii Driver License or State Identification card number. If the applicant does not have a Hawaii Driver License or State Identification card number, the applicant may provide the last four (4) digits of his/her Social Security Number. If an applicant has neither, they may register to vote by providing an identification in line with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) which includes a current bank statement or utility bill with the applicant's name and residence address. We are preparing to implement this Act, which takes effect on January 1, 2018.

The Office of Elections submitted four (4) bills for consideration by the 29th Legislature.

1. HB291/SB459 Relating to Elections

The purpose of this bill is to implement elections by mail over three election cycles beginning with the County of Kauai in 2018, the County of Hawaii and the County of Maui in 2020, and the City and County of Honolulu in 2022.

2. HB292/SB460 Relating to Voter Registration

This bill proposes automatic voter registration by requiring applicants to affirmatively decline to register to vote when completing an application for a driver license or state identification card. This measure also requires the Department of Transportation and the examiner of drivers to transfer applicant information to the statewide voter registration system electronically.

3. HB293/SB461 Relating to Class C Felonies

This bill is a housekeeping measure to amend the monetary penalty for providing false information in an application affidavit for late voter registration from up to \$1,000 to up to \$10,000.

4. HB294/SB462 Relating to Election Documents

The purpose of this bill is to remove the requirement that a signatory to a nomination paper provide the last four (4) digits of his/her Social Security Number and the requirement that the full nine (9) digits of a voter's Social Security number be provided to withdraw a signature from a petition or nomination paper. As previously mentioned, this bill accounts for Act 167, SLH 2016, as a Social Security Number is not collected for all voters.

Only SB462, Relating to Election Documents, will cross over to the House. All other measures introduced by the Office of Elections may be considered again for the 2018 Legislative Session. Additionally, we are monitoring other election related bills as they cross over to the opposite Chamber, including elections by mail.

Elections by Mail

A companion elections by mail bill, HB1401/SB334, is crossing to each Chamber for hearing and review. The Office of Elections supports elections by mail because it is secure, accessible, and convenient for voters, and it will streamline the administration of elections.

Currently, our election model consists of two parts, absentee and election day. No excuse absentee voting was implemented to supplement election day polling places and modernize voting. In the past, absentee voting accounted for less than 20 percent of voter turnout, with the vast majority of voters continuing to vote at their polling place. However, now over half of all ballots are cast prior to election day. As such, we believe it would be more efficient to focus our resources on absentee voting, with a significantly smaller election day presence limited to voters obtaining a replacement mail ballot package, or voting on a direct recording electronic voting machine.

We acknowledge that there are concerns regarding fraud in elections by mail. We believe there are sufficient safeguards in place to ensure an honest and secure election. The Office of Elections take allegations of fraud very seriously, and encourages anyone with such knowledge to report the incident to our office immediately for follow up by the appropriate law enforcement officials.

### Statewide Voter Registration System

TotalVote was launched in August 2015 to provide for online voter registration. The new voter registration system will be used in its entirety for the 2018 Elections, including entering voter registration records and absentee processing. As such, the counties are testing the workflow and customizing the processes.

Additionally, we are working with the City and County of Honolulu, which operates the current mainframe statewide voter registration system, to transfer data from the 2016 Elections. We are on track to transition to TotalVote by June 30, 2017.

### 2018 Elections

The Office of Elections is preparing for the 2018 Election by 1) revising the voter registration application to comply with Act 167, SLH 2016; 2) establishing procedures for late registration at the polling places; and 3) evaluating and reserving polling places.

The Office of Elections is involved in the community to encourage voter registration and establish contacts for recruiting election day officials. Currently, staff are meeting with non-profit organizations, businesses, and community groups to encourage their members to volunteer and assist with outreach. As it relates to voter registration, we are providing voter registration outreach at naturalization ceremonies for new citizens. Additionally, staff attended the Secondary Student Conference to discuss voting in Hawaii, as well as the Hawaii Self-Advocacy Advisory Committee's yearly meeting to conduct a voter education presentation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 453-VOTE (8683) or 1-800-442-VOTE (8683).