



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE  
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782  
[www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://www.hawaii.gov/elections)

SCOTT T. NAGO  
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

February 18, 2015

To: Elections Commission

From: Scott T. Nago  
Chief Election Officer

Re: STATUS OF OPERATIONS

Since our last meeting, the Office of Elections has brought closure to the 2014 Elections. The Supreme Court dismissed the Tommy Waters contest for cause and the results were certified on December 24, 2014.

Currently, the Office of Elections is monitoring legislation; determining political party status; and building the online voter registration system.

Legislation

The Office of Elections is tracking a variety of bills as they progress through legislative session. The measures are related to encouraging voter registration, providing voter education, establishing an election by mail model, and various administrative changes. The following is a summary of notable election related bills.

1. HB 178 HD 1 and SB 441, Relating to Absentee Voting

This bill is part of the Office of Elections' legislative package. It allows blank and voted absentee mail ballots to be transmitted by fax, electronic mail delivery, or online delivery, to all voters within five days of an election. Currently, only military and overseas voters are permitted to vote in this manner.

House Bill 178 HD 1 reported from the House Committee on Judiciary for Second Reading. Senate Bill 441 was passed unamended by the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs on Tuesday, February 17, 2015.

2. HB 401 HD 1 and SB 150 SD 1, Relating to Voting

This bill adds an “opt-out” process to applications for driver’s licenses and state identification cards that requires the applicant to unambiguously indicate that they want to register or not register before the application will be processed.

House Bill 401 HD 1 has been referred to the House Committee on Finance. Similarly, Senate Bill 150 SD 1 was referred to the Senate Committees on Judiciary and Labor, and Ways and Means.

3. SB 287, Relating to Elections

This bill implements elections by mail beginning in 2016 in the County of Kauai. This measure establishes voter service centers for voters to receive replacement ballots, vote on a direct electronic voting machines, or drop-off a voted ballot; and allows voted ballots to be processed prior to election day, with all results being released at the close of polls.

The Senate is using this measure to address elections by mail and has deferred similar bills. Similarly, the House Judiciary Committee passed House Bill 124, which established elections by mail, with amendments on Tuesday, February 17, 2015.

4. SB 364, Relating to Elections

This bill requires the Office of Elections to conduct recounts for elections decided by less than one thousand votes or one-half of one percent of all votes cast for the office, whichever is less. This measure has been referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

5. SB 509, Relating to Proposed Constitutional Amendments  
SB 1298, Relating to Constitutional Amendments

The intent of these measures is to provide educational materials to registered voters regarding proposed constitutional amendments. These measures aim to reestablish previous statutory requirements by a subject matter expertise for distribution by the Office of Elections. Both measures passed the Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee with amendments.

### Political Party Status

At the end of each election cycle, we calculate and determine whether a political party obtained the requisite amount of votes in certain contests to remain a qualified political party. HRS §§ 11-61 & 11-65. We determined that the Green Party of Hawaii did not receive a sufficient amount of votes. However, the Green Party of Hawaii will continue as a political party because they successfully petitioned for three consecutive elections. The Green Party of Hawaii met the petition requirements in 2008, 2010, and 2012, and became pre-qualified for the 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 election cycles.

### Online Voter Registration

The Office of Elections continues to develop the online voter registration system in preparation for the 2016 Election. The new system will be operational by August 3, 2015.

We are working with the counties and the vendor to ensure that the online voter registration system will mirror the current procedures for processing of voter registration applications. Additionally, we are working with the Office of Information Management and Technology, and the Information and Communication Services Division to ensure that the online voter registration system complies with the Governor's directives on new technology. Lastly, we are working with the City and County of Honolulu to establish protocol of how the new system will interact with the driver's license and state identification card database that it maintains.

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