



HAWAII STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawaii • Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 6, 2009

The Honorable James Kunane Tokioka, Chair
The Honorable Blake K. Oshiro, Vice Chair
House Committee on Legislative Management
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 439
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: **Testimony on H.B. No. 196, Relating to Standards of Conduct**

Hearing: Friday, February 6, 2009, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

Testifying: Daniel J. Mollway, Executive Director and General Counsel
Hawaii State Ethics Commission

The Honorable James Kunane Tokioka, Chair; The Honorable Blake K. Oshiro, Vice Chair; and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Legislative Management:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on H.B. No. 196, Relating to Standards of Conduct. The purpose of this bill is to lower the threshold for disclosing gifts received by state officials and employees from \$200 to \$100.

The Hawaii State Ethics Commission strongly supports this bill.

First, we believe that any state official or employee who receives in excess of \$100 in gifts from a single source in a one-year period should be required to disclose this information. Most state employees do not receive gifts at all, and those who exceed \$100 in gifts should be required to disclose the gift or gifts in the interest of transparency and public confidence in state government.

Second, we believe that a \$200 threshold is simply too high to allow gifts to go undisclosed, and the Hawaii State Ethics Commission has held this view for many years, and has so testified often in the past.

For the reasons set forth above, the Hawaii State Ethics Commission strongly supports this bill and urges its advancement. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this bill, and I will be happy to address any questions that members of this Committee may have.

DJM/af