



HAWAII STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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NEWS RELEASE

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Hawaii State Ethics Commission Audits Sample Of 2008 Public Financial Interests Disclosure Statements

About 168 high-ranking state officials are required to file public financial interests disclosure statements with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission ("Commission") each year, pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes section 84-17.

This year, the Commission decided, because of available investigative funds, to conduct field audits of as many of these public disclosures as possible, with the assistance of an investigator on contract with the Commission. The Commission selected public disclosures filed in 2008 for the audits, since the auditing began before the 2009 filings were due. Part way through the process of auditing these public disclosure statements, a more pressing need for investigative services arose, and the Commission exhausted its funds for the field audits of the public disclosure statements.

The Commission was able to complete field audits for approximately 30 state officials, selected from each of the three branches of state government. The Commission believed that this was a significant enough number of disclosures audited

to warrant issuing this news release. The results of the audit showed that all of the disclosures audited properly disclosed all information required by law to be disclosed. No omissions were found. No state officials were targeted for the field audits.

The Commission was pleased with the results of the audit. Each year, the Commission receives close to 5,000 disclosure filings of various types. These filings include both public and confidential financial interests disclosure statements (approximately 2,000), lobbying registration and expenditures reports (approximately 2,800), public gifts disclosure statements (approximately 140), and public disclosure statements for candidates for state elective office filed every even-numbered year (approximately 160 to 300 depending on the year). The Commission has a staff of nine: five attorneys (including both the executive and associate directors), one computer specialist, and three clerical staff. The Commission currently receives about \$10,000 in its budget to contract for an investigator.

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