

## Blogs

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### Volcanic Ash

A totally independent, slightly irreverent and hopelessly idealistic view of people and events in Hawai'i and beyond. David Shapiro has covered Hawai'i and national news for 38 years as a reporter, editor and columnist.

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#### **An injudicious hustle**

It appears the fix is officially in by Democratic legislators to take one last shot at saving Ronald Moon from having to retire as chief justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court when he turns 70 in 2010.

The Senate voted 19 to 6 Tuesday to put a proposed constitutional amendment on the November ballot to raise the retirement age for judges to 80. The measure now goes to the House.

This bill is a transparent repeat attempt to block Republican Gov. Linda Lingle from appointing a new chief justice before she leaves office, and a contemptuous slap at voters who less than two years ago rejected by a nearly 2-to-1 margin a similar retirement amendment offered up by Democrats.

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, sponsor of [SB 3202](#), was asked in an interview on Perry and Price last week about the possibility of taking politics out of the picture by applying the new retirement age only to future judges and not current jurists like Moon who knew the rules when they were appointed.

"I think that would be a good compromise," Taniguchi said.

But on Tuesday, Democrats voted down an amendment to make that change, with Taniguchi among those voting no, proving that politics is the point of this bill and it has little to do with age discrimination.

Trying to amend the Constitution for short-term partisan gain and for the selfish benefit of a single person is the most irresponsible kind of legislating.

If this bill wins final passage in the Legislature, look for the issue — and the individual lawmakers responsible for the shameless politicking — to get a lot of attention as the election draws near.