

PIA Committee

From: Asato, Karlie <kasato@hgea.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2016 2:48 PM
To: PIA Committee
Subject: HGEA Testimony: PIA-10 (13)
Attachments: MCC_PIA10 (13) restricting Political Activity.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please find attached the Hawaii Government Employees Association's testimony in strong opposition of the proposed Maui County Charter Amendment (PIA-10(13)), which would prohibit county employees from making campaign contributions to support or oppose any candidate for County elected office. The hearing is scheduled for tomorrow, June 1, at 9 a.m. before the Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee.

Thank you,
Karlie

Karlie Asato

Legislative Support Staff

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HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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Maui County Council
Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
June 1, 2016

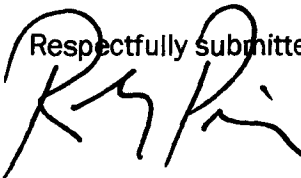
PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT
RESTRICTING COUNTY EMPLOYEES
POLITICAL ACTIVITY PIA-10 (13)

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly opposes the purpose and intent of the proposed Maui County Charter Amendment which would prohibit county employees from making campaign contributions to support or oppose any candidate for County elected office. This proposed Charter Amendment raises serious first amendment issues. Simply because an individual is a Maui County employee, it should not mean they must give up their right to participate in the political process, including contributing to candidates who are seeking to become mayor or a member of the Maui County Council.

County employees, while on their own time, should be able to express their personal opinions on campaign issues, contribute to political campaigns, and volunteer for campaigns. These rights, however, should be restricted while public employees are at work, representing the employer, and in some rare instances when in conflict with an employee's official duties.

It is wrong to treat Maui County employees differently other people because of their political activities outside the workplace. Both State and County ethics laws prohibit public employees from campaigning on work time or using their position for private benefit. Even the Hatch Act, which places a number of significant restrictions on federal employees' political activities, permits them to contribute to federal political campaigns.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong opposition to the proposed Charter Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director