

**ETHICS COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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May 4, 2022

The Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the City Council:

SUBJECT: Bill 26 (2022) –Relating to Gifts to Mayor, Prosecuting Attorney,
Councilmember, and Officer or Employee

Thank you for introducing Bill 26(2022) on behalf of the Honolulu Ethics Commission. The Commission supports this bill, which seeks to clarify and strengthen the city's gift laws.

The Commission identified updating the gifts law as a key objectives in its 2019 Strategic Plan. To effectuate this objective, the Commission formed a permitted interaction group (PIG) comprised of commissioners, staff, and a highly skilled research assistant. The PIG met monthly for one year to research and analyze the city's gifts law, including its legislative history, peer jurisdictions, and best practices. After careful consideration, the PIG presented its draft legislation to the full Commission, which was discussed during several of the Commission's public meetings. The result of this work is now before you as Bill 26 (2022).

The bill seeks to revise the gifts laws by:

1. Adding new and clarifying existing definitions.
2. Establishing a zero tolerance for gifts from prohibited sources.
3. Codifying well-established gifts exceptions.

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4. Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments, including removing redundant language, for clarity and style.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of this measure. We look forward to discussing this measure in greater detail when it is referred to committee. Should have you have any questions, please call me at (808) 768-9242.

Very truly yours,

Wong-Nowinski, Digitally signed by Wong
Nowinski, Laurie A
Laurie A Date: 2022.05.03 09:53:50
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Laurie A. Wong-Nowinski
Asst. Executive Director and Legal Counsel

cc: Rick Blangiardi, Mayor
Michael D. Formby, Managing Director