REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET

Voting Members:
Val A. Okimoto, Chair; Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair;
Radiant Cordero, Esther Kiaʻāina, Augie Tulba, Tommy Waters

Committee Meeting Held
April 28, 2026

Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair, City Council
City and County of Honolulu

Mr. Chair:

Your Committee on Budget, to which was referred the review and evaluation of the Salary Commission ("Commission") pursuant to Ordinance 17-44, codified as Chapter 3, Article 15, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021 ("ROH"), reports as follows:

The purpose of the review and evaluation is to determine whether the provisions of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition), as amended ("Charter") establishing the Commission should be retained, amended, or repealed. Ordinance 17-44 implements Charter Section 13-103.2, which mandates the periodic review and evaluation of certain City boards and commissions as provided by ordinance.

The Commission was established by Charter Section 3-122, and has the following powers, duties, and functions:

1. Establish the salaries of the following elected officials: the Mayor, Councilmembers, and Prosecuting Attorney, and the following appointed officials: Managing Director, Deputy Managing Director, department heads, deputy department heads, and band director; provided that the Commission does not determine the salaries of directors and deputy directors who are appointed in accordance with civil service laws;

2. Establish schedules for salaries of deputies of the Corporation Counsel and Prosecuting Attorney;

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3. Establish its rules of procedure and adopt rules and regulations pursuant to law; and

4. Employ consultants and staff as is necessary to assist it in the performance of its duties.

The Commission consists of seven members, who serve for staggered terms of five years and until their successors have been appointed and qualified; three appointed by the Mayor, three appointed by the Council, and one appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

By Council Communication 12 (2026), dated January 30, 2026, the Commission submitted to the Council a report on its accomplishments and activities, as required by Ordinance 17-44 (ROH Section 3-15.4).

Your Committee received oral testimony providing comments from one individual.

Your Committee, after due consideration, makes the following findings:

- The Commission conducted public meetings and hearings on recommended salary changes for the previous five-year period (from 2021 through 2025);

- A virtual meeting platform was used to provide a virtual meeting option to increase accessibility and transparency;

- The Commission recorded and published to its website all meetings along with a digital summary of the meeting minutes;

- The Commission responded to inquiries and comments from the mayor, council, and the public through a monitored email inbox and telephone line;

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- The Commission recommended listed annual salary changes for the previous five-year period;
- The Commission incurred no costs associated with holding meetings during the preceding five-year period; and
- The Commission's work was inhibited by extended vacancies of its membership, which created challenges for meeting Sunshine Law quorum requirements and Permitted Interaction Group membership.

Based on the foregoing, your Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Commission be retained in the Charter without change.
2. That no modifications or revisions to the Commission's membership number and qualifications; organization; purpose; or powers, duties, and functions under the Charter are needed at this time.

Your Committee on Budget recommends that this Committee Report be scheduled for a public hearing and be adopted by the Council as the Council's determination on the review and evaluation of the Salary Commission. (Ayes: Cordero, Kia'āina, Nishimoto, Okimoto, Tulba, Waters – 6; Noes: None.)

Respectfully submitted,

Val A. Okimoto

Committee Chair

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
Ke Kanihela o ke Kalana o Honolulu
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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