# BILL028(26)
# Testimony

**MISC. COMM. 153**

COUNCIL

**COUNCIL  Meeting**

Meeting Date: Apr 15, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 0

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 0

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Natalie Iwasa | iwasajunk@mail.com | 96825 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Oppose | Apr 13, 2026 @ 11:56 PM |

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

FROM: Natalie Iwasa, CPA, CFE
808-395-3233

DATE: Wednesday, April 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Bill 28 CD1, Legislative Budget
Proposed Salary Increases – **OPPOSED**
Proviso (e), Transfers Between Activities and Expenditures - **OPPOSED**
Proviso for Council Allotment – **OPPOSED**
Vacant Positions - **COMMENT**

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Bill 28, CD1, which sets the legislative budget for next fiscal year.

Proposed Salary Increases

The Honolulu Salary Commission is poised to recommend a 4.7% increase to councilmembers as well as certain city administrators and the mayor. The proposed increase is higher than inflation, which was at 2.6%, according to their report. It is also apparently higher than the increase for bargaining unit 13.

At least five members of the public submitted testimony in opposition to the proposed increase days prior to the meeting, yet during the meeting, it was announced that no testimony had been received.

**What happened to the public's testimony? Why was it posted online more than a day *after* the meeting?**

As you know, three of the current six Commission members were appointed by the Council. In addition, Council Services provides administrative support to the Commission. (One of their roles is "Staffing the Council and its committees at hearings and meetings **to ensure compliance with laws and rules**." *Emphasis added.*)

When I submitted my testimony to the Commission, I asked for acknowledgement of receipt and confirmation it would be given to commissioners prior to their meeting. I only received a "read receipt" about 9:40 the morning of the meeting. As a follow up, I asked why my testimony was not given to commissioners prior to their meeting. I have received no response.

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**This process is NOT acceptable. Councilmembers should ask and understand why public testimony was not provided to the Commission and then rectify the process.**

General Proviso (e)

Proviso (e) on page 5 of the bill authorizes transfers of monies between activities or characters of expenditure upon approval of the council chair.

**Why is the legislative branch not subject to the same type of transparency that the city administration is?**

The administration is required to come back to Council for transfers above certain amounts. (See ROH 2-17.2, attached in part.) That gives the public an opportunity to weigh in on these proposed changes. The same type of restrictions should be put on transfers in the legislative budget.

Council Allotments

The council allotment contains a proviso that at least $10,000 (per district) out of current expenses is appropriated for district mailers. Mailers should come out of the allotment initially appropriated if not included elsewhere. I do not support this increase to the council's budget, especially in an election year, when mailers raise the level of name recognition for anyone running for office.

**Please amend Bill 28, CD1 accordingly. Please also provide a listing of vacant positions, including number of positions and years vacant, for the next reading of budget bills.**

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**ROH 2-17.2** ***Transfer of funds.***

(1) *Transfers between activities.* Transfer of funds from an activity may not be executed without council approval by resolution when the cumulative amount of transfers from that activity exceeds $100,000 or 10 percent of the amount appropriated for that activity in the executive operating budget ordinance, as may be amended, whichever is less. Transfer of funds to an activity may not be executed without council approval by resolution when the cumulative amount of transfers to that activity exceeds $100,000 or 10 percent of the amount appropriated for that activity in the executive operating budget ordinance, as may be amended, whichever is less. A report of all individual transfers of funds between activities occurring within each month must be filed with the office of the city clerk within 15 days after the end of the month. The report must include but need not be limited to the following information:

(A) The amount of funds transferred;

(B) The source of funding of the transferred funds;

(C) The originating activity and character of expenditure thereof from which the funds are transferred;

(D) The activity and character of expenditure thereof to which the funds are transferred;

(E) The purpose for the transfer; and

(F) The impact of the loss of funds on the originating activity.

(2) *Transfers between characters of expenditure.* Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (4), transfer of funds between characters of expenditure within the same activity may not be executed without council approval by resolution when the cumulative amount of the transfers exceeds the lesser of:

(A) $100,000; or

(B) The greater of:

(i) Ten percent of the appropriation for either the originating or receiving character of expenditure; or

(ii) $10,000.

A report of all individual transfers of funds between characters of expenditure must be filed with the office of the city clerk within 15 days after the end of the month. The report must include but need not be limited to the following information:

(i) The amount of funds transferred;

(ii) The source of funding of the transferred funds;

(iii) The originating character of expenditure from which the funds are transferred;

(iv) The character of expenditure to which the funds are transferred;

(v) The purpose of the transfer; and

(vi) The impact of the loss of funds on the originating character of expenditure.