BILL028(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 217

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jun 3, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 2

Oppose: 2

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
James Gauer	jamesjtz@aol.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 29, 2026 @ 11:34 AM

Testimony:

Support for the purpose of district mailing and postage

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pikachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ohana Unity Party	Oppose	May 31, 2026 @ 08:24 AM

Testimony:

Oppose Bill 28 (2026), CD1 – Legislative Budget for Fiscal Year 2027

Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

I respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to Bill 28 (2026), CD1.

According to the Budget Committee Report, Bill 28 appropriates approximately **$33,457,332** for the Legislative Budget for Fiscal Year 2027. The Committee Report further notes that the CD1 version increases the budget and includes an additional **$90,000 for council district mailers, or $10,000 per Council district.**

THE PUBLIC DESERVES AN EXPLANATION

At a time when Honolulu residents are struggling with:

• Housing costs that continue to drive families from Hawai‘i

• Rising property taxes and utility costs

• Aging infrastructure

• Flooding concerns

• Sewer and drainage deficiencies

• Cost-of-living pressures affecting nearly every household

The City Council is proposing a legislative budget of more than **$33.4 million** for its own operations.

Taxpayers have a right to ask:

Why is government asking residents to tighten their belts while government spending continues to grow?

THE MAILER ISSUE

The addition of **$90,000 for district mailers** is particularly concerning.

While communication with constituents is important, taxpayers may reasonably question whether publicly funded mailers are the highest priority use of funds when residents are dealing with affordability challenges and infrastructure needs.

Before allocating additional funds for mailers, the Council should provide:

• Clear performance metrics

• Public reporting on effectiveness

• Detailed accounting of expenditures

• Justification for why existing communication channels are insufficient

ACCOUNTABILITY SHOULD START AT HOME

The Council routinely reviews and scrutinizes spending by other departments.

The Council should hold itself to the same standard.

If the legislative branch expects taxpayers to support city budgets, bond issuances, rail appropriations, and capital expenditures totaling hundreds of millions or billions of dollars, then the legislative branch should be willing to demonstrate fiscal restraint in its own budget.

QUESTIONS TAXPAYERS DESERVE ANSWERED

Before approving this budget, I respectfully ask the Council to publicly address:

1. Why does the legislative branch require more than $33.4 million in FY2027 funding?

2. What measurable public benefits justify the additional $90,000 for district mailers?

3. What specific cost-saving measures were considered and rejected?

4. How much has the legislative budget increased over the last five years?

5. What percentage of this budget directly benefits taxpayers versus administrative operations?

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE MATTERS

Many residents increasingly believe that government budgets are approved regardless of public testimony.

Whether that perception is accurate or not, public trust can only be strengthened through transparency, accountability, and meaningful discussion of spending priorities.

The Council should lead by example.

CONCLUSION

Before asking taxpayers to fund a legislative budget exceeding **$33 million**, the Council should demonstrate fiscal discipline, justify every increase, and ensure that taxpayer resources are directed toward the highest priorities of Honolulu residents.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to vote NO on Bill 28 (2026), CD1, or amend the measure to reduce expenditures and eliminate nonessential spending items.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.
Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

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Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natalie Iwasa	iwasajunk@mail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jun 2, 2026 @ 08:53 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Darius Kila	repkila@capitol.hawaii.gov	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 2, 2026 @ 03:11 PM

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

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

DATE: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

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

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

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

The budget includes 174 positions. Despite multiple requests for you to provide information on vacant funded positions, you have not done so, other than a verbal reading of vacancies at the council level. This is extremely disappointing, especially when one considers the times the term "transparency" has been used by councilmembers with respect to bills or resolutions the council is considering that impacts city administration.

Not providing vacant position information is not transparent and not fair to the public. Nor is it good governance.

Proposed Salary Increases

Some online commentors have asked whether the proposed salary increase of 4.7% would mean that budgets need to increase as well. Conveniently, or perhaps otherwise, the legislative budget already includes "up to 4% salary adjustments for exempt branch personnel."

Given that the Honolulu Salary Commission did not provide analytical data or comparisons showing how they arrived at 4.7%, questions may be raised and conclusions drawn, whether right or wrong. For some people, perception is reality, and this type of opaque process leads to more distrust in our system as well as of elected leaders.

General Proviso Section 3, (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.

Testimony of Natalie Iwasa
June 3, 2026
Bill 28, CD1, Legislative Budget

The legislative branch should be subject to the same type of transparency that the 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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June 3, 2026
Bill 28, CD1, Legislative Budget

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.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Hale o nā Luna Makaʻāinana

STATE OF HAWAIʻI
STATE CAPITOL
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAIʻI 96813

June 2, 2026

Meeting: June 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

Council Meeting
Regular Meeting, City Council Chamber
Honolulu, Hawaiʻi

RE: Testimony in Support of Bill 28(2026) CD1, LEGISLATIVE BUDGET

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and esteemed members of the Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on Bill 28(2026) CD1 pertaining to the Legislative Budget for the City and County of Honolulu for Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

I am in strong support of this Bill regarding the Legislative Budget for the City Council. It is important to keep the City Council and Agencies funded to ensure continuity of services to the public. However, if the allocation to the Solid Waste Special Fund is to support eminent domain for a new landfill site, I respectfully request that this amount be deleted or assigned to something other than eminent domain for a new landfill site. I support the proposed budget that does not expand the landfill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this bill. If you have any questions, you may contact me at (808) 586-9480 or by email at repkila@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Very truly yours,

Darius K. Kila
Representative, House District 44
Māʻili, Lualualei, Nānākuli, Honokai Hale,
Ko ʻOlina

Representative Darius K. Kila
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