

Hawai`i State Association of Counties (HSAC)

Counties of Kaua`i, Maui, Hawai`i and City & County of Honolulu

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February 3, 2017

TO: The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Stacy Crivello
HSAC President

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2017; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 315, RELATING TO COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Hawaii State Association of Counties in **support** of this measure. The purpose of this measure is to allow members of a county council to attend informational meetings or educational presentations open to the public, without limitation on the number of attendees.

This measure is in the 2017 Hawaii State Association of Counties Legislative Package. Therefore, I submit this testimony on HSAC's behalf.

HSAC **supports** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This measure would improve councilmembers' ability to engage with the public and be informed about issues facing their district and their county. It is particularly important in Kauai County and Maui County, where all nine councilmembers are elected "at large" and represent ALL residents of the county.
2. Attending these public events, such as community organization meetings or forums, will not jeopardize openness in government because councilmembers do not have control over agendas, discussions, or outcomes of meetings conducted by non-councilmembers.
3. This measure is an important step toward enabling county councils the freedom to educate themselves and carry out their duties more efficiently, as state legislators now currently enjoy.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HSAC:FY2017:17Testimony:HB315a_mkz