

April 5, 2006

Representative Calvin Say
State Capitol, Room 431

Representative Sylvia Luke
State Capitol, Room 302

Subject: Petition to Pass SB 1061 on Lobbyist Contribution Ban to Legislators During Session

Dear Speaker Say and Representative Luke:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, support SB 1061 and strongly urge you to pass this bill. We believe that legislators have a duty to make their decisions based on the public interest.

Having a financial relationship with people who lobby for particular legislation during the period of their decision-making is, in our view, a conflict of interest.

Our concern is that lobbyists make donations to legislators during the legislative session, and legislators may solicit campaign donations when lobbyists' legislation is pending.

This practice must stop. Just as judges are prohibited from having a financial relationship with a party to a lawsuit in their court, we believe that legislators should suspend a financial relationship with lobbyists when they sit in judgment on legislation during the session.

We note that SB 1061 should be amended to effectuate its intent by referencing HRS 11-191 as to what constitutes a "contribution" by a lobbyist, and including contributions to political parties because these funds are often used to finance legislators' election campaigns.

Your action on SB 1061 is needed urgently, because the deadline for committee actions is fast approaching. We trust that you will act favorably to our request. For more information on this matter, please contact Larry Geller at 255-4385.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Consumer Rights
Citizen Voice
Hawaii Consumers
Hawaii Institute for Human Rights
Hawaii Media Action Group
Hawaii Pro-Democracy Initiative
Kokua Council
League of Women Voters of Maui
League of Women Voters of Hawaii
League of Women Voters of Hawaii County
League of Women Voters of Honolulu
League of Women Voter of Kauai
Right to Know Committee
Voter Owned Elections

cc: All legislators