



Senate Committee on Judiciary
Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

RE: Testimony with Comments on S.B. 869 S.D. 1, Relating to Community Outreach Boards

Hearing: February 21, 2025 at 10:20 a.m.

Dear Chair and Members of the Committees:

My name is Ben Creps. I am a staff attorney at the Public First Law Center, a nonprofit organization that promotes government transparency.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony with **comments** on S.B. 869 S.D. 1. We support the intent to increase opportunities for the public to participate in government, and offer an **amendment** to better effectuate that intent.

Section 2 authorizes county departments and *commissions* to create community outreach boards. Authorizing county commissions to create their own Sunshine Law boards, however, appears to be unnecessary. The only examples of community outreach boards cited in Senate Standing Committee Report No. 317 are groups organized by the County of Hawai'i's planning department.

Moreover, the board-within-a-board framework would likely prove unwieldy and potentially subject to misuse. County commission members may already attend informational meetings organized by community groups and others under HRS § 92-2.5(e). We thus recommend **deleting** "a county commission or" at page 2, line 6.

We further note that this measure does not provide a process or framework for the creation of a community outreach board, nor does it set any parameters or guidance on board composition.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify with comments on S.B. 869 S.D. 1.

