



# CITY COUNCIL

## CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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### **Councilmember Djou Welcomes the Dismissal of Councilmember Tam's Ethics Complaint Against Djou**

Honolulu City Councilmember Charles K. Djou (Waikiki, East Honolulu) reacted to the dismissal by the Honolulu City Ethics Commission of a complaint filed last July by Honolulu City Councilmember Rod Tam (Nuuanu, Liliha, Downtown) against Djou.

"I am happy the system worked and Rod Tam's frivolous ethics complaint against me has now formally been dismissed. While Rod Tam's complaint was nothing more than typical City Hall politics at its worst, the public should at least take confidence that the City Ethics Commission's leadership is competent and fair," stated Councilmember Djou. "I am always happy to let the public judge my ethics record against Rod Tam's."

Councilmember Tam filed an ethics commission complaint against Councilmember Djou last year when Djou spoke to reporter Johnny Brannon of the Honolulu Advertiser and Diana Leone of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin regarding a proposed settlement between the City and the EPA. (Brannon today works for Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann.)

Tam, however, also issued a press release on the same day he submitted his complaint and immediately revealed to the news media that he had filed a confidential ethics complaint against Djou. Within a span of a few hours Tam essentially stated Djou violated the ethics rules by improperly revealing confidential information and then promptly committed the exact same act that he accused Djou of wrongdoing.

In an editorial, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin characterized Tam's ethics complaint as "preposterous." As a state senator, Tam was sanctioned by the State Ethics Commission for using his state legislative office for political campaigning. As a city councilmember, Tam was sanctioned by the City Ethics Commission for using his city council office to essentially sell building permits for profit. Tam remains the only currently elected official in the State of Hawaii who has been sanctioned by both the State and City ethics agencies.

At the time Tam was sanctioned, neither the State nor the City ethics agencies held the power to issue civil fines for ethics violations. As a direct result of legislation introduced by Djou, today both the State and City ethics agencies may issue fines against elected officials for ethics code violations. Djou has also been the leader in cleaning up the City Liquor Commission's corruption problems and a consistent watchdog for taxpayers against public corruption.

Recently, Djou successfully fought to pass legislation to strengthen the City's conflict-of-interest rules, but his measure was vetoed by the mayor.