



December 13, 2019

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY MEASURES

Honolulu City Councilmember Tommy Waters today introduced his government accountability and transparency package. The central purpose of our city government is to represent and serve the interests of Oahu's people, and these measures will help fulfill that purpose.

Councilmember Waters made the following statement about Resolution 19-330 relating to appointing the prosecuting attorney:

A recent controversy involving the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney has revealed a gap in our City Charter, where an elected official can voluntarily go on paid administrative leave and allow an unelected appointee to fill the position indefinitely. Having an appointment process for the Prosecuting Attorney, similar to the Prosecutor for Maui County and the Attorney General for the State of Hawai'i, would allow for community input during the public hearing process. If any concerns arise, however, about the Prosecuting Attorney's ability to fulfill their obligations, then their removal could be achieved through a public hearing with additional public input. This process would create a mechanism for a check and balance on the power of the Prosecuting Attorney and help restore trust in our criminal justice process.

Councilmember Waters made the following statement about Resolution 19-331 relating to creating an independent budget for the Ethics Commission:

The proposal seeks to grant the Ethics Commission greater autonomy over its budget by prohibiting the withholding of funds once its budget has been appropriated by the City Council. This would allow the Commission to carry out its Charter-prescribed duties and fulfill its strategic plan of doubling its staff.

Councilmember Waters made the following statement about Resolution 19-329 relating to creating a Youth Commission for the City and County of Honolulu:

During this past year we have seen youth mobilize in the thousands to voice their opinion on several measures that came before the City Council. Establishing a City Youth Commission will foster additional civic engagement by our young people, so that all of us can benefit from their invaluable insight. The collective responsibility that elected officials have to our youth stems from the fact that the policies we implement today ultimately affect their island home, their families, and their future.

If these proposed amendments to the Charter of the City and County of Honolulu pass the City Council, then they will appear on the ballot for the 2020 General Election. For more information on these measures and the Honolulu City Council, please go to the following web sites: <http://www.honolulucitycouncil.com/> or <http://www.honolulu.gov/council>

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