

2008 Legislative Scorecard: How Well Do Hawaii's Legislators Uphold Liberty and Freedom?

By Pearl Hahn and Jamie Story

To some, the theme of the 2008 legislative session appeared to be “ban and buy”. Legislators attempted to ban any number of items, and in some cases—such as styrofoam containers and non-solar water heaters—they succeeded. The Governor and legislature also placed a number of luxuriously expensive items on their wish list, including Turtle Bay and government preschool for all. Of course, the taxpayers—not our elected officials—will get the bill.

Legislators have been ranked by how they voted on bills pertaining to the following categories:

- Personal freedom—bills that uphold (+) or intrude (-) upon individual liberty and privacy
- Taxes—bills that reduce (+) or increase (-) the amount of taxes and fees paid by Hawaii's citizens
- Business regulations—bills that impact the cost of doing business in Hawaii by seeking to impose (-) or reduce (+) burdensome requirements on employers

- Scope of government—bills that spend taxpayer dollars (-) on items or programs that are outside the appropriate scope of state government
- Effective justice—bills that seek to appropriately decriminalize (+), inappropriately criminalize (-), or give more appropriate punishment (+) for harmful activities

Of all bills passed during the 2008 session, those were selected that were clearly good or bad for taxpayers based on the above categories. The following tables display the percentage of bills for which a legislator voted in the direction of freedom and liberty, in each category. The results are stated separately for the Senate and House and ranked by overall score, except for tied scores, which are listed in alphabetical order. The bottom line? **Only four out of 76 legislators (one in the House and three in the Senate) scored higher than 50 percent on the index.** The full scorecard and bill descriptions can be found at www.grassrootinstitute.org.

Senate	Personal Freedom	Taxes	Business Regulations	Scope of Government	Effective Justice	Overall Score
Sam Slom (R)	100%	83%	71.4%	66.7%	75.0%	79.2%
Gordon Trimble (R)	100%	83%	71.4%	33.3%	75.0%	72.6%
Paul Whalen (R)	75%	33%	71.4%	16.7%	75.0%	54.2%
Fred Hemmings (R)	75%	50%	14.3%	50.0%	50.0%	47.9%
Gary L Hooser (D)	50%	17%	71.4%	0.0%	50.0%	37.7%
Robert Bunda (D)	67%	17%	25.0%	0.0%	66.7%	35.1%
Lorraine R Inouye (D)	50%	17%	28.6%	16.7%	50.0%	32.4%
Clayton Hee (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	16.7%	50.0%	29.6%
Les Ihara (D)	50%	17%	16.7%	0.0%	50.0%	26.7%
Rosalyn H Baker (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Suzanne Chun Oakland (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
J Kalani English (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Will Espero (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Carol Fukunaga (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Mike Gabbard (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Colleen Hanabusa (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
David Y Ige (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Donna Mercado Kim (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Russell S Kokubun (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Ron Menor (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Clarence K Nishihara (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Brian T Taniguchi (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Jill N Tokuda (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Shan S Tsutsui (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%

Norman Sakamoto (D)	50%	17%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	23.4%
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House	Personal Freedom	Taxes	Business Regulations	Scope of Government	Effective Justice	Overall Score
Colleen Rose Meyer (R)	75%	50%	83.3%	0.0%	50.0%	51.7%
Lynn Finnegan (R)	75%	50%	57.1%	0.0%	66.7%	49.8%
Kymberly Pine (R)	75%	33%	57.1%	0.0%	50.0%	43.0%
Barbara C Marumoto (R)	75%	33%	57.1%	0.0%	50.0%	43.0%
Cynthia Thielen (R)	100%	17%	28.6%	0.0%	66.7%	42.4%
Corinne W L Ching (R)	75%	33%	42.9%	0.0%	50.0%	40.2%
Cindy Evans (D)	75%	17%	28.6%	0.0%	75.0%	39.1%
Michael Magaoay (D)	100%	17%	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%	38.4%
Gene Ward (R)	75%	33%	33.3%	0.0%	50.0%	38.3%
Roland Sagum, III (D)	50%	17%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%	37.4%
Robert N Herkes (D)	67%	17%	14.3%	16.7%	66.7%	36.3%
Rida T R Cabanilla (D)	33%	17%	40.0%	0.0%	75.0%	33.1%
Hermina M Morita (D)	67%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	66.7%	32.9%
Glenn Wakai (D)	50%	17%	16.7%	16.7%	50.0%	30.1%
Della A Belatti (D)	67%	17%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	30.1%
Sharon Har (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	66.7%	29.6%
Lyla B Berg (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	16.7%	50.0%	29.6%
James K Tokioka (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	66.7%	29.6%
Alex M Sonson (D)	67%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	29.6%
Tommy Waters (D)	50%	17%	20.0%	0.0%	50.0%	27.4%
Scott Y Nishimoto (D)	50%	17%	20.0%	0.0%	50.0%	27.4%
Tom Brower (D)	50%	17%	16.7%	0.0%	50.0%	26.7%
Mele Carroll (D)	50%	17%	16.7%	0.0%	50.0%	26.7%
Joey Manahan (D)	50%	17%	16.7%	0.0%	50.0%	26.7%
Sylvia Luke (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Ryan I Yamane (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Roy M Takumi (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Pono Chong (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Marilyn B Lee (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Marcus R Oshiro (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Kyle T Yamashita (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Kirk Caldwell (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Ken Ito (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Josh Green (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Jon Riki Karamatsu (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
John Mizuno (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Joe Bertram, III (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Jerry L Chang (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Faye Hanohano (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Dwight Y Takamine (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Clift Tsuji (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Calvin K Y Say (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Blake K Oshiro (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	26.3%
Angus L K McKelvey (D)	50%	17%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	23.4%
Scott K Saiki (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%	22.9%
Maile S L Shimabukuro (D)	50%	17%	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%	22.9%
Karen L Awana (D)	50%	17%	14%	0.0%	33.3%	22.9%
Karl Rhoads (D)	50%	0%	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	22.9%
Joseph M Souki (D)	0%	17%	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%	18.4%
Mark K Takai (D)	0%	0%	25.0%	0.0%	33.3%	11.7%
Bob Nakasone* (D)	0%	17%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%

*Due to health complications, Rep. Nakasone was absent for a large percentage of votes.