



Hawaii – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2024

Summary

The latest edition of the Hawaii CPAC Scorecard assesses 19 votes in the Hawaii House and Senate from the 2024 session. Hawaii Republicans earned an average conservative rating of just 54%, up from 44% in 2023. Democrats earned an average score of 6% in 2024 compared to 1% in 2023.

Hawaiian legislation in the 2024 session focused mostly on minor governance issues, including speed cameras, workplace regulation and various green initiatives. The headline issues of the session concerned abortion and labor unions. Hawaii legislators voted to force health insurance companies to cover abortion as a “health service” and also increased the power of unions.

Key Takeaways

Expansion of Union Influence in Critical Industries

Hawaii lawmakers took steps to expand the power of organized labor through **HB 1936**, which mandates that mooring line work be performed by unionized labor under collective bargaining. This effectively forces more economic activity under union control, regardless of employer preference or cost-effectiveness. Such mandates inflate costs for businesses and consumers while prioritizing union influence over efficiency. Another bill, **HB 2720**, sought to extend collective bargaining rights to graduate assistants at the University of Hawaii, further embedding unions into the public sector. These moves demonstrate the legislature’s ongoing preference for labor union growth at taxpayer and consumer expense.

Heavy-Handed Environmental Mandates

Environmental policymaking remained a central theme, with **HB 1829** requiring new state facilities to make 25% of parking stalls electric vehicle (EV) ready. This mandate significantly raises construction costs and funnels taxpayer dollars toward one specific energy source, despite the broader energy market offering diverse options. Similarly, **SB 3060** directed agencies to create climate adaptation and resilience plans, setting the stage for further regulatory burdens in the name of sustainability. **HB 1897** attempted to ban hotels from using small plastic containers for amenities, a move widely criticized as a “nanny state” restriction on

consumer choice. These measures reflect a trend of imposing costs on businesses and taxpayers to advance symbolic “green” agendas.

State-Mandated Financial Support For Abortion

SB 2605 mandated that health insurers cover abortion as a “reproductive health service”. CPAC believes that people should not be forced to pay for other people’s abortions. CPAC also believes that abortion is always a human tragedy and opposes efforts to increase the prevalence of abortion.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

HB 2720 Increasing the Amount of Public Unions at Public Universities.

This bill allows graduate assistants employed at the University of Hawaii to collectively bargain. CPAC opposes the growth of public unions and opposed this bill. The House passed this bill on March 5, 2024 by a vote of 46-3 but the bill never became law.

HB 1897 Making Another Attempt to Impose Product Bans on Hotels.

This bill prohibits hotels from providing certain amenities to guests in small plastic containers. CPAC opposes draconian product bans of this nature and opposed this bill. The House passed this bill on March 5, 2024 by a vote of 45-4 but the bill never became law.

SB 3060 Planning for the Passage of Further Green Laws.

This bill requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to create a climate adaptation and resilience implementation plan. CPAC opposes measures that will further help the legislature further subject the populace to onerous climate regulations and opposed this bill. The Senate passed this bill on March 5, 2024 by a vote of 24-1 but the bill never became law.

Trends and Observations

Gun Control Through Ammunition Restrictions

Hawaii lawmakers prohibited individuals under the age of 21 from owning or possessing ammunition (**SB 2845**). The measure echoes national efforts to restrict Second Amendment freedoms by targeting ammunition access rather than firearms directly. CPAC opposes these efforts to strip rights from young people because these efforts are morally wrong in and of themselves, and also because such efforts are the first step to take rights away from everyone.

Expanding Privileges for Illegal Immigrants

Through SB 2782, lawmakers created the Immigrant Services and Access Unit, designed to assist immigrants—including illegal immigrants—in obtaining legal services and statewide resources. This expansion of government bureaucracy incentivizes illegal immigration by extending government benefits and taxpayer-funded support services. CPAC opposed this

policy as a violation of the rule of law and a de facto abetment of the ongoing illegal immigration invasion of America.

Increased Government Direction in Key Industries

The legislature created new state programs to direct economic activity, particularly in tourism and aerospace. **SB 3364** expanded the Hawaii Tourism Authority's powers, requiring it to develop county destination plans and sponsor festivals and putting government in charge of shaping a vital private industry. Similarly, **HB 1959** and **SB 2081** established an Aerospace and Aeronautics Development Program to guide workforce development and industry growth in aerospace. Both measures reflect the legislature's tendency to centralize control and steer industries rather than allow market-driven innovation. CPAC opposed these interventions as unnecessary government intrusion into economic development.

DEI and Social Policy in Law Enforcement

HB 2231 requires Hawaii police forces to increase the number of female and "non-binary" officers. CPAC believes that hiring quotas based on race and sex violate basic principles of fairness and should be illegal under the 14th amendment. CPAC also opposes the pseudoscientific notion that a person's sex can be "non-binary." This bill will undermine trust in law enforcement and put the public in danger by prioritizing ideology over competence and public safety.

Unexpected Tax Relief in a Blue State

In a surprising turn of events, the Democrat-dominated Hawaii legislature passed a tax cut. **HB 2404** doubles the standard tax deduction for Hawaii residents. CPAC supports broad and appropriate tax relief and supported this bill. The bill passed the House unanimously and became law.

No Hawaii legislators received the Excellence (90%+) or Achievement (80% - 89%) awards for 2024.