

Q1: (ENGLISH)

Question:

“Shall the Revised City Charter be amended to require that the City Council appropriate, without having to simultaneously increase real property tax rates to fund the appropriation, one-half of one percent of the City’s estimated real property tax revenues in each fiscal year’s budget and capital program, to be deposited into a Climate Resiliency Fund, the purpose of which is to support initiatives and projects aimed at mitigating the impacts of climate change, enhancing the resilience of the City’s infrastructure and communities, and promoting sustainable practices?”

YES NO

Present Situation:

There is currently no Climate Resiliency Fund. Funding to support initiatives and projects aimed at mitigating the impacts of climate change, enhancing the resilience of the City’s infrastructure and communities, and promoting sustainable practices are currently reviewed and funded annually by the Honolulu City Council either through the Executive Operating Budget or the Executive Capitol Budget and Program.

If Proposal Passes:

A Climate Resiliency Fund would be created that would finance preventive, restorative and educational measures relating to climate change, and which would be funded by one-half of one percent of the City’s estimated annual real property tax revenues. The phrase, “without having to simultaneously increase real property tax rates to fund the appropriations,” however, should not be read to limit the power of the Honolulu City Council to increase real property taxes in the same year that it funds the Climate Resiliency Fund.

Q2: (ENGLISH)

Question:

“Shall the Revised City Charter be amended to establish the Department of Emergency Management as an independent agency of the City Executive Branch by assigning the Department of Emergency Management a separate chapter in the City Charter similar to the chapters assigned to all other City departments to provide that all Department of Emergency Management positions, including its Director and Deputy Director, are subject to the civil service laws; and to specify a minimum level of qualifications for the civil service position of the

Director of Emergency Management, with additional minimum qualifications to be determined in accordance with civil service laws?”

YES NO

Present Situation:

The City’s Department of Emergency Management (“DEM”) (formerly known as the civil defense agency) currently falls directly under the Office of the Managing Director, but is not assigned its own chapter under the Charter as are other City departments. The citizen’s advisory commission on civil defense is a separate agency that likewise falls directly under the Office of the Managing Director.

The selection and retention of the DEM director and deputy director positions are subject to civil service rules, that is, they are subject to the merit principle. The Department of Human Resources, which administers the City’s civil service program, imposes minimum qualifications for the DEM director position that are consistent with the merit principle. The Charter sets forth the duties of the DEM director but not the position’s minimum qualifications.

If Proposal Passes:

The Executive Branch would be reorganized such that the DEM would be assigned its own chapter under the Charter, like other City departments, and the citizens advisory commission would fall within the DEM. These changes would not impact the term of the incumbent DEM director who is serving on January 1, 2025.

Corresponding Charter amendments would be enacted to ensure that the DEM director and deputy director positions continue to be subject to civil service rules. Specifically, these amendments would exclude the DEM director and deputy director positions from the authority of the salary commission, which determines the salaries for department heads and deputy heads, and from the exemptions from civil service that apply to all other independent department directors and deputy directors.

The Charter would also be amended to clarify the duties of the DEM director and add other duties, including the implementation of training, exercise, and public information programs relating to emergency management. Finally, the Charter would expressly incorporate DHR’s minimum qualifications for the DEM director position, and impose an additional requirement of at least five years of responsible administrative experience in emergency management, disaster planning, or public safety services management, at least two years of which must have included supervising emergency management or homeland security activities, or both.

Q3: (ENGLISH)

Question:

“Shall the Revised City Charter be amended to establish an Ocean Safety Commission to review and make recommendations on certain activities of the Department of Ocean Safety and to appoint and remove the Chief of Ocean Safety?”

YES NO

Present Situation:

Pursuant to his authority under Revised City Charter Section 4-202, the mayor recently established the department of ocean safety (“OSD”) as a standalone agency independent from the department of emergency services under which it fell. The OSD is headed by a director of ocean safety who is appointed and may be removed by the mayor.

If Proposal Passes:

This resolution will amend the Charter to create a five-member ocean safety commission within the OSD that will have the authority, among other things, to make recommendations on the OSD’s annual budget; review OSD operations and recommend improvements; perform annual evaluations of the ocean safety chief’s performance; hear citizen complaints about the OSD or its personnel, and recommend corrective actions to the OSD chief; and submit annual reports to the mayor and council on OSD activities.

In addition, the position title of OSD “director” will be replaced by the title, OSD “chief.” The OSD chief will be appointed by the ocean safety commission and may be removed only after receiving the reasons for their removal and an opportunity for a hearing before the ocean safety commission. The OSD director appointed by the mayor will continue to hold the position on December 31, 2024, and will continue to serve as OSD director until the ocean safety commission appoints a new chief.

Q4: (ENGLISH)

Question:

“Shall the Revised City Charter provisions relating to the salaries for Councilmembers be amended to cap any annual increase at no more than five percent, require that any changes be tied to the average annual salary changes of city employees in the City's collective bargaining units, and remove the Council's authority to vote on its own raises?”

YES NO

Present Situation:

Pursuant to Revised City Charter Section 3-122, the salary commission (“Commission”) establishes by resolution the salaries for certain municipal positions, including those of the City Council. These salaries must accord with the principles of “adequate compensation for work performed” and “preservation of a sensible relationship with the salaries of other City employees.” The City Council may accept or reject any portion of the Commission’s resolution, including any part relating to the Councilmembers’ own salaries.

If Proposal Passes:

The Charter will be amended to require that the Commission issue one resolution establishing the salaries for Councilmembers and a separate resolution establishing the salaries for other positions.

With regard to Councilmembers’ salaries, any future raises would be capped at 5% annually and be required to be “substantially equivalent” to the average of the most recent annual salary changes of the city’s various collective bargaining units. The City Council will no longer have the authority to accept or reject the Commission’s resolution related to its own salaries.