

## Complaint

State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State Ethics Commission  
Attention: Melinda Wood, Vice Chair  
1001 Bishop St # 970, Honolulu, HI 96813  
Email: [ethics@hawaiiethics.org](mailto:ethics@hawaiiethics.org)

Complainant:  
Katherine Lindell, editor  
Hawaii Ocean News  
Email: [Katherine@hawaiiocceannews.com](mailto:Katherine@hawaiiocceannews.com)

Friday, July 20, 2021, 10:57 HST

Aloha Ombudsman Matsunaga,

The reason for our message to you is to respectfully request that your office conduct an investigation into recent activity between a State Senator, Senator Sharon Moriwaki, and her possibly unlawful relationships with certain low level executive branch officials.

On 7/14/2021, 10:58 AM, we sent the following email to DoBOR Administrator, Ed Underwood, along with copies of the email to our legislators:

*Aloha Mr. Underwood,*

*Because of the urgency, breadth and scope of the information we provide in our response, we have published the latter online. [Please see our response here.](#)*

*Best,  
Katherine Lindell, Editor  
[Hawaii Ocean News](#)*

As this email was only meant to point Mr. Underwood to our online response to a previous email that he had sent us, we didn't expect a response in the short-term. However, on 7/14/2021, 11:47 AM, less than 50 minutes later, we were surprised by an email from Senator Sharon Moriwaki, as follows:

*On 7/14/2021 11:47 AM, Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki wrote:  
Just give to your AG just in case this goes anywhere. But he's acting up because he's being ask to follow the rules. Are u planning WG*

meeting? We should meet again on enforcing rules. If Snoddy thinks liveaboard rake boat out once a year can we meet to go over. Then post clearly (Katherine said she would make signs) and have WG help you/DOCARE cite and enforce. Btw I like Jason's idea to pay special duty overtime to his guys. Everybody wins! I know you don't want to add new liveaboards (the ones on waiting list) but just a thought: how about having WG come up with criteria w Corey and have them screen the waiting list and send letters to those who don't meet criteria and approve those who do?  
Sent from my iPhone

Senator Moriwaki obviously sent this email to us by accident as we do not maintain a conversation thread with her. We believe the email was intended for DoBOR Administrator, Ed Underwood.

Ms. Wood, there is something strange, possibly unethical, if not illegal about this email that warrants investigation: (1) a **State Senator** appears to be advising low-level executive branch officials to create a secret criteria for choosing who is offered principal habitation permits in the State's public harbor system, circumventing the time-based waitlist criteria established by rule and a long history of usual and customary administration, all of which would appear to violate multiple laws and constitutional provisions, (2) that a **State Senator** appears to be giving legal advice to low level executive branch officials regarding certain individuals who she says are "acting up," which would appear to be completely outside of her purview as State Senator, and (3) that a **State Senator** appears to be advising/condoning DoCARE on how it pays its officers for patrolling of the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor. All of this constitutes an out-of-the-sunshine, suspect collusion between low-level executive branch officials and a **State Senator**, which may be unethical, if not illegal.

Attached find a copy of the detailed message authentication pathway that confirms the origin of Senator Moriwaki's email.

Ms. Wood, we are writing to respectfully request that your office conduct an investigation.

Sincerely,

Katherine Lindell, editor  
Hawaii Ocean News