

SB1618 • Hawaii

Relating To Journalism.

Introduced

Risk: Medium

Comprehensive

Last Action (Jan 21, 2026): Re-Referred to CPN/EDU, JDC/WAM.

Summary

Establishes a Journalistic Ethics Commission in Hawaii to enhance journalistic integrity, mandating ethics training for journalists and requiring annual reports to the Legislature. The Journalistic Ethics Review Board handles complaints and appeals regarding violations of the Journalistic Code of Ethics. The Board of Regents must analyze the journalism program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Social Sciences.

Business Impact

If you operate a journalism outlet in Hawaii, you must complete ethics training by January 1, 2025, or face penalties from the Journalistic Ethics Commission.

Key Provisions

- Establishes a Journalistic Ethics Commission within the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.
- Requires news media outlets to provide ethics training for journalists and editors.
- Creates a Journalistic Ethics Review Board to handle complaints and appeals, administratively attached to the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.
- Requires the Board of Regents to analyze the journalism program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Social Sciences and report to the Legislature.
- Establishes penalties for violations of the Journalistic Code of Ethics.
- Requires the Journalistic Ethics Commission to submit annual reports to the Legislature.

Compliance Checklist

- Provide periodic journalistic ethics training for journalists and editors. | Who: All news media outlets operating in Hawaii. | Penalty: Potential fines and other penalties for non-compliance.
- Label AI-generated or AI-manipulated content prominently. | Who: Journalists and editors at news media outlets. | Penalty: Penalties as determined by the Journalistic Ethics Review Board.

Industries Affected

Consumer Protection

Education

Journalism

Media

Employment

Bill Sponsors

Name	Party	Role
KOUCHI		Primary
KIM		Primary
DECOITE		Primary
DELA CRUZ		Primary
FEVELLA		Primary
HASHIMOTO		Primary
RICHARDS		Primary
SAN BUENAVENTURA		Primary
Wakai		Cosponsor

Official Source

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=SB&billnumber;=1618&year;=2026

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