

# Independent Panel Urged for Judiciary Investigation

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**Common Cause/Hawaii** says Chief Justice Herman Lum should empanel an "outside" committee to investigate charges of ethics violations by some state judiciary employees.

"Given that there are so many high-level judiciary administrators involved, it might be difficult to look into the matter," Ian Lind, Common Cause executive director, said yesterday.

Lum returned to his office yesterday after a month-long trip to the Mainland and London, where he attended professional conferences.

He told reporters he will conduct a "thorough assessment" of the allegations against judiciary employees.

LIND SAID he will ask to meet with Lum so he can suggest that the chief justice look for a blue-ribbon panel without ties to high-ranking judiciary officials to investigate charges of politicking, ethics violations and wasted taxpayers' funds.

Tom "Fat Boy" Okuda, acting administrative director of the courts, has been linked to many of the activities, Lind said. Other court officials are tied to Employees for Good Government Service (EGGS), a lobbying

organization made up of judiciary employees.

Those officials include Clyde Namuo, Circuit Court legal documents officer; Lt. Roy Murayama, head of the penal summons division of the sheriff's office, and Calvin Ching, a District Court administrator.

Numerous court division supervisors have been recruiting workers to spend part of their workdays rolling sushi for state legislators' fund-raisers, Lind said.

"So many people in the judiciary are involved," he said.

LUM, IN a written statement,  
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## Chief Justice Orders Judiciary Probe

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promised he will take "the appropriate and necessary corrective actions" if the allegations are true. On his first day back on the job, Lum met with Okuda.

Lum also met with city Prosecutor Charles Marsland. The prosecutor's office is reviewing information about the sheriff's office provided by a legislator.

The chief justice said he might not have spent enough time watching over the administration of the court system because he has been working on reducing the backlog of cases. However, he said, he now will take an active role in administering the court system, including the sheriff's office.

Lum said he has ordered that no political meetings be held on judiciary property and that there be no inappropriate kitchen use in court buildings.

But, he said, that directive doesn't mean that such activities have taken place.

**THE CHARGES** that have been

made by Common Cause and Republican Rep. Fred Hemmings in the past month, include:

- ✓ Ethics violations by Okuda for improper lobbying.
- ✓ Possible criminal wrongdoing because of withholding of warrants by the sheriff's office.
- ✓ Waste of taxpayers' money for sophisticated weapons and

guard dogs for the sheriff's office.

- ✓ Purchase of eight cars for the sheriff's office without going through competitive bid procedures to secure the lowest price possible.

If the allegations are true, Lum said, he will accept "full responsibility for the situation."