

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM
A division of the Legislative Reference Bureau

NEWSLETTER

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Note: Fax from neighbor islands using these numbers with ext. 7-0793.



Navigating during Session

Session is moving along at a rapid pace. By now, you've probably discovered the wealth of online resources available to you on both the Legislature's website (www.capitol.hawaii.gov) and the Public Access Room's website (http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par). You can readily find hearing notices, bill status pages, information sheets listing committees, and submit testimony links.

2013 Legislative Timetable

February

- 7th Triple Referral Filing deadline
15th First Lateral
18th Holiday: Presidents' Day
21st to 27th: Mandatory 5-Day Recess

March

- 1st First Decking
7th First Crossover
11th Budget Decking
13th Budget Crossover
Last day to introduce Substantive Resolutions
14th Second Triple Referral Filing deadline
22nd Second Lateral
26th Holiday: Kuhio Day
29th Holiday: Good Friday

April

- 1st First Lateral for Senate Concurrent Resolutions
2nd First Lateral for House Concurrent Resolutions
5th Second Decking
11th Second Crossover & Last day to disagree
12th First Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
19th Constitutional Amendments: Deadline for final form
22nd Second Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
25th Last day to file Non-Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading
26th Last day to file Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading

May

- 2nd Adjournment sine die (Session pau!)

But what about the bigger picture? Here are some questions we've received in the Public Access Room...

When's the last day the committee can hear the bill before it's considered dead?

- You'll want to look at the 2013 Session Calendar to answer this one, and the answer depends on where the bill is along its path and the number of committees to which it's been referred. On page 2 of the Session Calendar, you'll find definitions of the deadlines. And if you'd like someone to help you see where your bill's progress falls in with those deadlines, you know who to call! (PAR's happy to help!)

Bills have to pass successfully through the committees to which they've been referred,

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but who decides on the membership of each committee, its jurisdiction, and which committees a bill gets referred to?

- The simple answer is... House and Senate leadership. (That's a lot of power, which is one of the reasons why who's in leadership matters so much.) Details appear in the House and Senate Rules -- available by clicking on the "[House](#)" or "[Senate](#)" bar located in the upper right-hand corner of the [Legislature's website](#). Click on the "Rules" link under 2013. Search the documents, or use the table of contents to find what you're looking for. (Warning! There's a lot of interesting information in the rules -- you may find yourself mesmerized...it's been known to happen!)

How do I find out who's testifying for and against the bill? I've gone to the bill status sheet and looked for the written testimony link (appears on right-hand column), but there's nothing there and the hearing is about to start!

- For the current hearing, check with the [committee clerk](#) for the hard-copy testimony file to review what testimony has been received. Procedures for when the testimony will be uploaded to the status sheets differ between the Senate and the House.

They passed the bill with changes -- but I can't find the revised draft on the status sheet!

- It's not instantaneous! They've got to get the concept they've agreed on into exact wording. You'll see the revised version when the committee issues its committee report.

What about paid lobbyists? Is there a way to find a list of them, or to find out if I need to file any paperwork?

- Lobbyists are required to file with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission. To find the *definition* of and *rules* on lobbying, visit their website at <http://hawaii.gov/ethics>. You'll find reports (though some of them require reporting retroactively), forms, guidelines and manuals. Still not sure who's lobbying after looking at the testimony and the ethics page? Ask one of the legislators on the committee, or contact one of the other testifiers who seems involved in the issue. They may be able to fill you in.

What about the staff behind the scenes?

- FYI, the offices of the Chief Clerks and Sergeants-at-Arms in the House and Senate serve vital functions in the operations of both chambers. Descriptions of these offices' duties appear in the House and Senate Rules -- just click on the "[House](#)" or "[Senate](#)" bar located in the upper right-hand corner of the Legislature's website, then click on the "Rules" links under 2013.
- At the committee level, [committee clerks](#) are the key staffers charged with managing the mechanics of committee hearings, processing testimony and committee reports. You can find a list of who's who on PAR's "Information Sheets" page.
- That's also where you'll find the list of the [office manager](#) for each legislator. That's helpful to know if you want to discuss something that's going on in your district.
- In addition, there are partisan and non-partisan service agencies to assist members in drafting and analyzing legislation. Both the House and Senate have Majority (Democrat) and Minority (Republican) support offices. The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) is a non-partisan service agency (of which PAR is a part!) that serves all of the legislators.



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Writing Effective Testimony



A founding block of the democratic process is giving testimony on proposed legislation. As a refresher, here are a few tips for preparing your testimony.

- First and foremost, prepare the core of your testimony in advance. Hearing notices are required to be posted at least 48 hours in advance, but there are cases when this requirement can be waived and less time is available. Be prepared!
- State your most important and compelling reasons in a concise manner. This is your chance to convey your support or concerns, so don't lose your reader in run-on narratives and details that are difficult to sift through.
- If possible, read the testimony of your opponents so that you can present countering data/perspective.
- Written testimony is often required to be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the hearing -- details appear on the hearing notice. Late testimony *may* be accepted by the committee; in such a case, contact the committee clerk for advice and/or instructions.
- Follow protocol in formatting your testimony. It is customary to address the committee chair and members, include the bill number and hearing date and place, and state whether you "Support" or "Oppose" the legislation. For the "bare basics" on how to format your testimony, see "[Written Testimony: The Bare Basics](#)" on the "[Information Sheets](#)" of the [PAR website](http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par) (<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par>).
- Last (but not least), follow the instructions on the hearing notice on how/where to submit your testimony. A misrouted testimony means your voice may not be heard. Questions? PAR's happy to help.



TIP: When printing a report from the "[Reports and List](#)" page on the [Legislature's website](#), try selecting the 'landscape' orientation on the print menu. It ensures there will be room for all of the columns to be included in the printout, and usually requires less paper.

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I've got more questions about the process...

We've got a wealth of resources to share with you!

- You may want to start with the [Hawaii State Constitution, Article III](#) deals with the legislature and passage of bills...just page through using the "next" buttons on the bottom right of each page.
- On PAR's website's homepage, you can find two helpful documents: "Walk Through Session" <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par/pub/pgwalkthru.pdf> and "Organization and Function of the Legislature" <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par/pub/pgorfunc.pdf> .
- Visit PAR's website's Workshop page and check out the "We the Powerful" workshop -- watch the video, or view the PowerPoint or pdf version. <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par/workshp.html>
- Visit the Legislative Reference Bureau's website. Their "Legislative Manuals, Handbooks and Guides" page (<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/reports/pams.html>) has a detailed but easy to follow document, "How a Bill Becomes a Law in Hawaii" (<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/pams/bill2law.pdf>).

Remember, you've got your own support staff available to help you!

The Public Access Room is your office at the Capitol. Call (587-0478) or email (par@capitol.hawaii.gov) anytime.

Get to Know your Deadlines: First Decking and First Crossover

First Decking

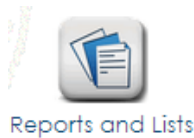
For a bill to become law, in addition to passing through all the committees to which it's been referred, it must pass three separate readings, or votes, in each chamber. The First Decking deadline is the date by which a bill must be filed with the originating chamber's Clerk for 3rd reading. This year, Friday, March 1st is the First Decking deadline.

The Hawaii Constitution, article III, section 15 states in part, "No bill shall become law unless it shall pass three readings in each house on separate days. No bill shall pass third or final reading in either house unless printed copies of the bill in the form to be passed shall have been made available to the members of that house for at least forty-eight hours." The decking deadline ensures bills meet this 48-hour requirement prior to the especially critical third reading. What does this mean if your bill is currently sitting in committee? To survive, it must be passed and reported out of its last committee in time to meet the First Decking deadline.

First Crossover

After a bill is decked, it must pass third reading on or before the next deadline, First Crossover. This year, March 7th is the First Crossover deadline. Any bill that has not successfully passed three readings in its chamber of origin by that date will fail to move forward. Bills that pass third reading will "crossover" to the other, non-originating chamber to go through the same process of committee hearings and chamber readings.

NOTE: Budget bills have later deadlines than non-fiscal bills – the budget decking deadline is March 11th, and budget crossover is March 13th.



Website: Daily Updates

<http://capitol.hawaii.gov/advreports/main.aspx>



There's a little known but wonderfully useful feature on Legislature's website's "Reports and Lists" page -- "Daily Updates."

Select a date and you'll receive a listing of the legislative documents (bills, resolutions, Governor's messages, and various communications) that were filed on any given day. Even better, it allows you to view all the new documents that have been filed **today** -- great when you're keeping up on a wide array of issues, or keeping an eye open for the latest committee reports and amended bills.

Workshops -- Learn more about the Legislative Process and How to Participate Effectively

PAR's "We the Powerful" workshops are offered in the Public Access Room (Room 401) through March 2013: **Tuesdays 12 noon** and **Thursdays 5:30 p.m.** Call (587-0478) or email (par@capitol.hawaii.gov) to sign up! Have a group you'd like to get involved? Contact us to set up a workshop.

PAR Hours during Session -- Come on by in the early evening During Session (January 16 – May 2), the Public Access Room (Room 401) has extended hours! **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

Quote from the File . . .

"The future is always beginning now."

- Mark Strand