

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM
A division of the Legislative Reference Bureau

NEWSLETTER

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2011 Legislative Timetable

March

- 4th First Decking: Last day to file non-budget bills for Third Reading in originating chamber
10th First Crossover (Bills)
14th Budget Decking
16th Budget Crossover & Last day to introduce Substantive Resolutions
17th Triple Referral Filing (Bills)
24th Second Lateral (Bills): Must be moved to final committee in non-originating chamber
25th Holiday: Kuhio Day

April

- 1st/5th First Lateral for Concurrent Resolutions (1st for SCRs and 5th for HCRs)
8th Second Decking (Bills): Last day to file bills for Third Reading in non-originating body
14th Second Crossover (Bills) & Last day to disagree
15th First Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
21st Constitutional Amendments: Deadline for final form
22nd Holiday: Good Friday
25th Second Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
28th Last day to file Non-Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading
29th Last day to file Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading

May

- 5th Adjournment sine die (Session pau!)

For more information on deadlines, see "Session Calendar" at http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par/legfyi.html



We've passed First Crossover! The House and Senate are in full swing, bills and resolutions are being heard in committees, votes and floor speeches are taking place in chamber. So much to keep track of! How to stay on top of it all? Here's an overview of what you need to know:

- 1) What needs to happen for a bill to become law or a resolution to be adopted;
2) When it has to happen by (the deadlines it needs to meet); and
3) Timely information on the measure's progress (the status of the bill or resolution you're interested in).

For the first two, the PAR has great resources for you – workshops and tutorials on legislative process, as well as our annotated session calendar with a description of the deadlines. [See the PAR website (http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par) for more information.]

For now we'll focus on the 3rd item – acquiring timely information on a measure's progress without making a mountain of work.

Continued on Page 2

In this Issue

- Tracking bills.....1
Art at the Capitol.....2
The "Little Books".....3
Reapportionment.....3
Tidbits.....4
Quotes from the file.....4

*You're invited to an evening of*  
**Art at the Capitol**  
*Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.*

Don't miss the annual **Art at the Capitol** event!



It's a fun evening and a unique opportunity to view the art that graces legislators' offices. For the most part, the artworks have been selected from the State's "Art in Public Places Collection" by the respective legislators, with assistance from the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) staff. Things change from year to year, so it seems there's always something new!

You'll be able to meet and talk story with some of the artists and legislators as you stroll through offices and back rooms that are usually away from public view.

The annual event is coordinated by the Legislature, the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and Friends of the HiSAM (Hawaii State Art Museum).

Come and spend a relaxed evening, enjoying art the Capitol!



"Journey from the Heiau," by Suzanne Marinelli

## **Art at PAR!**

In the Public Access Room (Room 401), we'll be highlighting the work of our "Chief Head Grown-up in Charge," **Suzanne Marinelli**, Public Access Coordinator. Those who have visited the office know that the warm and welcoming atmosphere is greatly enhanced by the basketry and sculptural works that Suzanne has loaned us. Come on by the evening of April 1<sup>st</sup> and learn a bit more about the pieces, chat with the artist and relax with some of our "almost-famous punch!"

### **Tracking Bills, Continued from Page 1**

As soon as a measure is introduced and given its bill or resolution number, it receives its own special webpage, devoted just to that particular measure. The "status sheet" page is what appears when you go to the Legislature's website ([www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov)) and input a measure number. Everything that ever happens to a bill or resolution is reflected on its status sheet. (It's also got wonderful links to the measure's hearing notices, testimony, committee reports, and all the different drafts.)

- 1) One way to track a measure is to re-visit its "status sheet" on a regular basis. You can go to the Legislature's website, input the bill or resolution number (no spaces, no draft numbers), and voila! See if anything has changed since the last time you visited the page.

This can get a bit tedious if you're following several measures. To make it a little easier, you can go to the "Bill Status and Documents" page of the website, and then enter a stream of different measure numbers, one after another, separated by commas.

- 2) You can then bookmark or "add to favorites" the resulting page that shows the list of status links. Then, return to that page of links whenever you want to check on the status of your list of measures. It'll save time.
- 3) Alternatively, you can follow the measures you're interested in by using a feed reader to keep track of updates. Feeds, also known as *RSS feeds*, contain frequently updated content published by a website. We've spoken of these in the past – see [PAR's March 2008 Newsletter](#). Using a feed reader is basically a method of keeping track of any changes to particular web pages, in this case, status sheets of the measures you're following. For more information on RSS feeds, visit the Legislature's help page at [http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/site1/docs/rss\\_help.asp](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/site1/docs/rss_help.asp), or contact PAR and we'll help guide you.

## Re / apportion / ment

It's 2011 – time for reapportionment. You're sure to hear more about this in the coming months, so it's a good idea to review some of the basics. The Senate and House district boundaries are revisited every 10 years, to review census data and to ensure appropriate and fair representation.

According to the [Hawaii State Constitution \(Article IV\)](#) and the Hawaii Revised Statutes ([HRS §25-1](#)), a reapportionment commission has to be constituted by May 1<sup>st</sup>, and the members will stay on it until a general election is held under the commission's reapportionment plan. Their task? To reapportion the House and Senate seats on the basis, method and criteria prescribed by the U.S. Constitution and Article IV of the Hawaii State Constitution. The commission also redraws the State's congressional district lines from which members of the U.S. House of Representatives are elected.

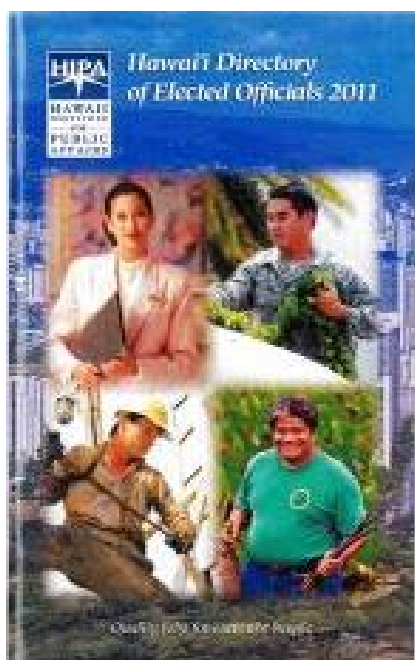
Guidance on how this is accomplished is found in the Hawaii State Constitution and the HRS. In the [HRS, Chapter 25](#) addresses the duties, powers and compensation of the reapportionment commission and the island advisory councils. Part and parcel of the process are public hearings, so that you can provide input.

The Hawaii Revised Statutes is pretty specific about when this all needs to happen – the commission is required to have public hearings, re-consider the plan and report on the final plan within certain time frames. The final plan stays in effect for the election of the next five legislatures (which translates to 10 years).

The 9-member commission can summon people and information in the course of their work and can ask people to testify under oath. Members receive compensation for their service -- \$50 per meeting, but not to exceed \$1,000 per month. Every department, division, board, bureau, commission or other agency of the State is directed to cooperate and provide assistance as requested to the commission in the performance of its duties. The commission is directed to keep a written record of its meetings and hearings and to submit a written report to the legislature, "twenty days prior to the regular session next convening" (which translates to December 2011 for this year's commission).

The chief election officer serves as the non-voting secretary of the commission and, under the direction of the commission, furnishes all necessary technical services. The legislature appropriates funds to enable the commission to carry out its duties.

Continued on Page 4



## The "little books" – They have arrived!

"Are the little books here?" That's one of the most common questions we hear in the PAR once Session gets in high gear. And now we can say: "Yes!"

The incredibly handy "Hawaii Directory of Elected Officials" is published by the [Hawaii Institute of Public Affairs](#) (HIPA), with help from a number of co-sponsoring organizations. Once again, they've generously provided large numbers of them to the Public Access Room for distribution to our patrons.

Its compact size – less than 4" x 6" – makes it easy to carry in your pocket, purse or bag. In addition to being a guide to legislators and staff here at the Capitol, the booklet includes contact information for our Federal and County elected officials.

Feel free to pick one up when you swing by PAR. And don't forget to grab one for a friend!

## Tidbits

### The Legislature's Website ... It keeps getting better!

[www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov)

- A new link has appeared on status sheets that allows you to submit testimony easily for that measure.
- There's also a link on the home page for submitting testimony – click it and enter the bill or resolution number.
- House events that have been broadcast are now available on demand! Just follow the link to "Webcasts" on the House page. (Senate events that have been broadcast are also available on demand – just follow the link on the Senate page.)

Suggestions for future improvements? Let the webmasters know – email them at [webmaster@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@Capitol.hawaii.gov).

### This law shall take effect on... January 1, 2050!?

Don't panic if you see what looks like a crazy date at the end of your bill. Often legislators will amend a bill's effective date to a so-called "defective date." It's an effective date that is far in the future and is inserted as a "placeholder" to ensure that there will be further discussion on the measure. Although not intended to be enacted with this far future date in place, if it were, it would not render the measure invalid – it would simply prevent the measure from taking effect for a long time. Want to find out more? Check out an article about defective dates that appeared in the [April 2009 PAR Newsletter](#) (available online at <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par> ).

### What's all that crossed-out stuff in the bill?

Ever been confused by all the "crossed-out" language that appears in a bill? Afraid you've picked up a "work in progress?" Take a moment to look at the bigger picture, and you'll find that it usually occurs when the bill proposes that language from the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) be changed. Language to be deleted appears stricken (a line through it) and bracketed[] so that it looks [~~like this~~]. Language to be added is underscored. This helps legislators and the public to see the proposed changes to Hawaii's law or to the State Constitution. Often the second to the last section of the bill spells out the meaning of the stricken and underscored language – this is often called the "Ramsayer provision."

### Reapportionment, Continued from Page 3

Meanwhile, there are also apportionment advisory councils – one for each of the basic island units. ([HRS §25-7](#)) These councils serve in an advisory capacity to the reapportionment commission on matters that affect the basic island unit and are made up of registered voters from the area. Advisory council members also receive compensation for their service – \$50 per meeting, but not to exceed \$500 per month.

Who decides who will serve on the commission and the councils? According to the Hawaii Constitution ([Article IV, Section 2](#)), the Senate President and House Speaker each name 2 members of the commission. The minority members of the Senate and of the House each designate one of *their* members to select 2 additional members of the commission. Those 8 members then name the 9<sup>th</sup> member and chairperson through a vote of at least six members. The Senate President, House Speaker, and the two Minority legislators named to designate commission members will also each designate a member to serve on each basic island unit advisory council.

Want to take a look at the source documents? Go to the "[Hawaii Revised Statutes](#)" link on the legislature's website. (Click the "Browse the HRS Sections" button. Then, select Volume 1, and navigate to the Hawaii Constitution or HRS Chapter 25. Need help? Call or email PAR: 808/587-0478 or [par@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:par@capitol.hawaii.gov).)

*Quotes from the File . . .*

**"Information is the currency of democracy."**

*- Thomas Jefferson*

**"A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle."**

*- Kahlil Gibran*

**"It still holds true that man is most uniquely human when he turns obstacles into opportunities."**

*- Eric Hoffer*