

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM

A division of the Legislative Reference Bureau

NEWSLETTER

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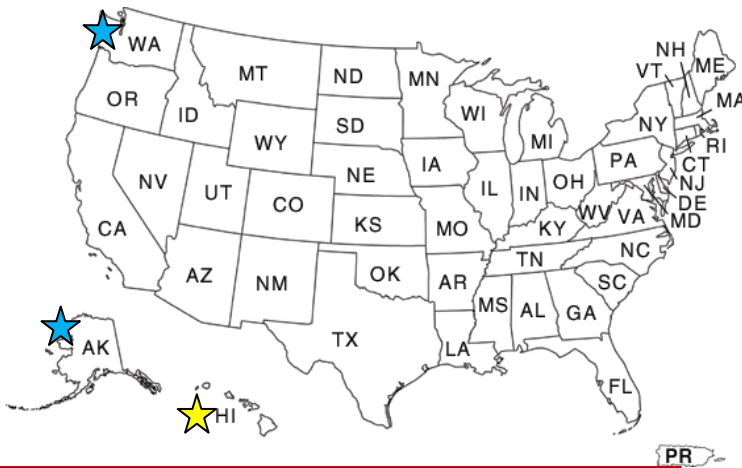
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Hawai'i Stands Alone

Just how unique is our Public Access Room?



With an endless summer, islands surrounded by turquoise blue waters teeming with sea life and the beautiful aloha spirit, we can all agree that Hawai'i is certainly the most unique state in the nation. But further research has proven that there is one more item adding to Hawai'i's uniqueness: our Public Access Room (PAR) here at the capitol.

Since our opening 25 years ago this year, we have long suspected that we were one-of-a-kind and a newly finished research project by one of our legislative research assistants, Jocelyn Idriss, confirmed our suspicions! Upon visiting the websites and calling the legislative offices of every state in the union, we discovered that Washington and Alaska were the only two states that reported having an office even remotely similar to PAR.

The state of Alaska has 23 Legislative Information Offices across the remote landscape while the state of Washington has a Legislative Information Room at its capitol building. Both states' facilities reportedly have 'several' computers but they are fairly restricted in use (connecting only to their legislature's page to track bills) and do not offer free printing services. *Continued on Page 4*

2015 Legislative Timetable

March

- 26th Holiday: Kuhio Day
- 27th Second Lateral
- 31st First Lateral for Concurrent Resolutions

April

- 3rd Holiday: Good Friday
- 9th First Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
- 10th Second Decking
- 16th Second Crossover & Last day to disagree
- 20th Second Lateral for Concurrent Resolutions (House)
- 24th Constitutional Amendments: Deadline for final form
- 27th Second Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
- 30th Last day to file Non-Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading

May

- 1st Last day to file Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading
- 7th Adjournment *sine die* (Session pau!)

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Frequently Asked Questions on Resolutions



➤ **What does a resolution do? What are they good for?**

- While resolutions don't become law, they do express the sentiment of the Legislature and may prove vital in moving your issue forward. Resolutions have a wide range of uses: they can request a study or other course of action; request the formation of a task force or working group; establish an honorary designation for a day or month; or congratulate an individual or organization.
- Some legislators may choose to revive aspects of a dead bill into a resolution. In this respect, resolutions are valuable in keeping discussion on a particular subject moving forward.

➤ **What is the difference between an HR and HCR or SR and SCR?**

- The prefixes HCR or SCR refer to a "Concurrent Resolution," which expresses the will and intent of the entire legislature. The prefixes HR or SR denote a single chamber (House or Senate) resolution that expresses the will and intent of either the House or the Senate.
- Concurrent resolutions are often introduced in conjunction with identically-worded single chamber resolutions, in the hope that if the concurrent resolution fails to pass the second chamber, the single chamber resolution still stands.
- Single chamber resolutions may also be used to establish a chamber's rules, leadership positions, and committee assignments.
- There are some things that cannot happen without the adoption of a concurrent resolution by the Legislature. For example, the Legislature cannot regulate new professions or mandate new health insurance coverage without first adopting a concurrent resolution requesting the state auditor to conduct a review. Another example is that the State cannot sell state land or issue easements covering portions of the state's submerged lands without approval by the Legislature through the adoption of a concurrent resolution.

➤ **What needs to happen for a resolution to be adopted?**

- Like bills, resolutions are referred to committees (at least one, but maybe more) that they need to pass through. In addition, they need to be adopted by a vote on the chamber floor.
- A single chamber resolution (HR or SR) must pass through the committee(s) it was referred to and pass a vote on the chamber floor to be adopted. A concurrent resolution (HCR or SCR) must do the same in its originating chamber, and then crossover to the *non*-originating chamber and pass through whatever committee(s) it is referred to as well as pass a floor vote in that chamber to be adopted.
- And, of course, there are deadlines by which all of these things must happen.

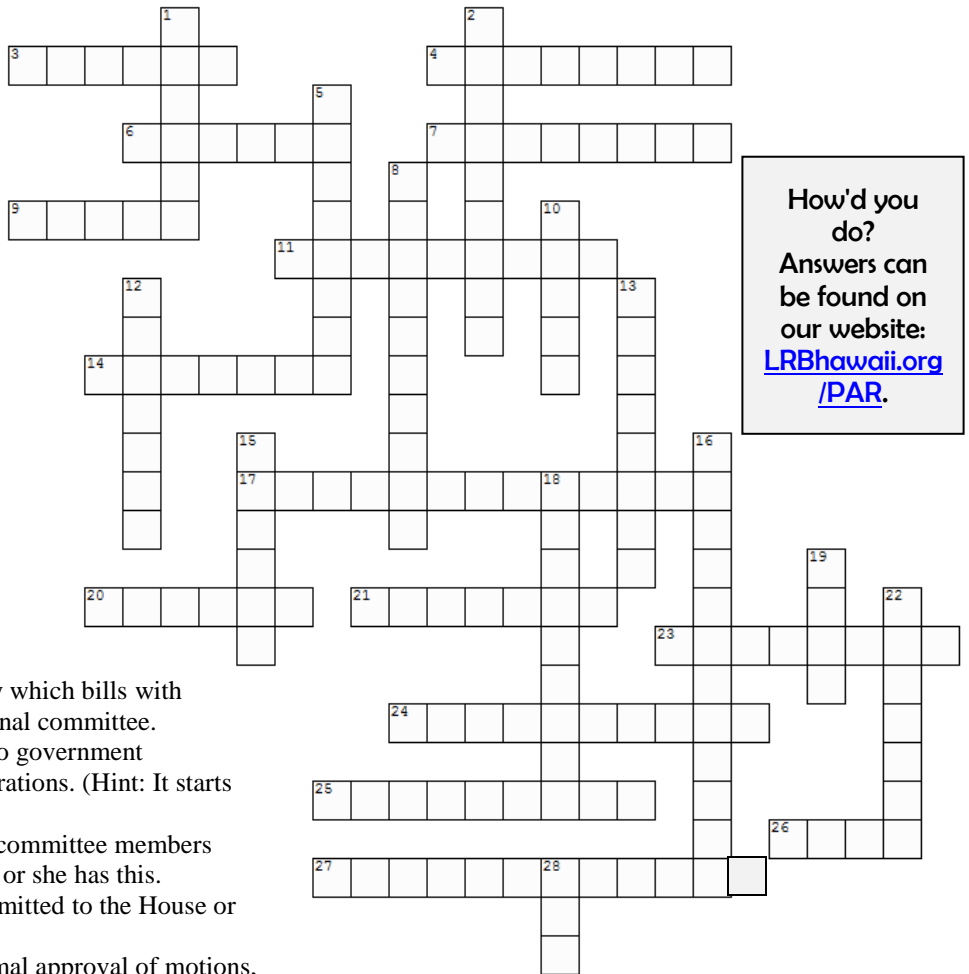
➤ **How else does a resolution differ from a bill?**

- Not only can the subject matter of resolutions change, so can their titles. In other words, everything in it can change! (A bill's title can not be changed.)
- The structure of resolutions is very different than bills. Resolutions consist of a series of "Whereas" clauses with the broadest passages coming first, followed by more definitive statements, and ending with two or more "Be it resolved" clauses. The last clause specifies where the resolution is to be transmitted upon adoption.
- Resolutions are not enrolled (sent) to the Governor. Upon adoption, resolutions are transmitted to the individuals, officers, agencies, or other parties cited in the resolution.
- Resolutions do not carryover from one session to the next. (Bills can carryover from the 1st year of the biennial session to the 2nd.)
- The deadlines for resolutions come a lot later in session than for bills. (First lateral for concurrent resolutions is March 31; first crossover is April 9; and second crossover is April 27.)

LEGISLATIVE JARGON

Across

3. A financial plan. (HB500 addresses the Executive Branch's.)
4. Before a bill is enacted it must pass three votes in each chamber; these votes are called what? (Hint: People also go to psychics for these.)
6. A legislative body at the Hawaii State Legislature consisting of twenty-five members who are elected to serve four year terms.
7. The codified law of Hawaii is the "Hawaii Revised ____" (often referred to as the HRS). (Hint: You'll see the 14 blue volumes in many of the offices at the Capitol.)
9. The sets of internal guidelines that the two legislative chambers operate under and that govern their actions.
11. The legislative term used to describe the time when bills move from the House to the Senate or from the Senate to the House.
14. Legislative term describing the date by which bills with multiple referrals must move to their final committee.
17. Funding approved by the Legislature to government departments and agencies for their operations. (Hint: It starts with an "app.")
20. When a Committee Chair has enough committee members present to take a vote on a measure, he or she has this.
21. Legislative deadline for bills to be submitted to the House or Senate clerk prior to 3rd reading.
23. This is a term used to describe the formal approval of motions, amendments, or resolutions by legislators or legislative bodies. (Hint: Couples who want children may consider this.)
24. A type of legislative committee where appointed members of the House and Senate meet to sort out any remaining differences on a bill. These committees usually meet near the end of session prior to final decking.
25. An appointed group of Legislators who discuss and potentially pass out bills on specific areas of legislative policy.
26. A proposed law which may be debated by the Legislature throughout the session. There were 2,894 introduced this year.
27. Legislators may vote "aye with ____" when they want to support a bill but don't entirely agree with its contents.



How'd you do?
Answers can be found on our website:
LRBhawaii.org/PAR.

Down

1. A temporary break from floor proceedings in the House and Senate. (Hint: Many elementary school students look forward to this period of time in their school day.)
2. What a member of the public submits orally or in writing to express their position on a piece of legislation during a hearing.
5. After bills are introduced they receive this, which dictates which committees they need to pass through.
8. A measure that does not have the force of law behind it but expresses the will of the Legislature. (Hint: People often make these at New Years.)
10. When a committee hears a bill but decides not to pass it that day or not to pass it all, they do this to the bill.
12. An official committee meeting posted publicly during which bills are debated and the public offers testimony.
13. A term denoting a two-year period. Hawaii's Legislature begins each odd numbered year.
15. A subset of House or Senate members, usually of the same party, who meet to discuss policy issues.
16. First thing that happens to a bill in the Legislative process. (Hint: What you perform when two people are meeting for the first time.)
18. A change made by a Committee to a bill after it has been heard.
19. An action the Governor can take to not approve a bill passed by the Legislature.
22. A published document that contains all of the discussion and action that took place during either the House or Senate floor sessions.
28. A bill which becomes law.

(Continued from Page 1, "Hawai'i Stands Alone")

With respect to legislative informational materials available, either as handouts or online, neither state matched the quantity of materials available here at PAR. One interesting thing Washington does have is a 1-800 number that is open for the public to ask questions and voice concerns. Allegedly, any concerns are then recorded and sent to the person's designated legislator. As for the remaining 47 states, 22 states have no type of educational handouts on the legislative process available online, while 28 states have at least one online educational handout or text that could be printed. Most often, it was a text or diagram of "How a Bill Becomes a Law." This makes us ever so grateful to be celebrating our 25th anniversary this year, and we look forward to continuing to serve our Hawai'i ohana for many more years to come!

Learning Sessions

New Brown Bag Workshops

In April we will be offering a series of "Legislature 201" workshops for the public. Bring your lunch and join us! Please call or email to sign up! (587-0478 or par@capitol.hawaii.gov).



- ❖ **Floor Sessions and Orders of the Day:** Tuesday, April 7th, 12 noon-1 p.m.
Learn about what takes place on session days in the House and Senate chambers (and why it's important); understand some of the rules and traditions governing floor proceedings; become comfortable interpreting and following the agendas.
- ❖ **Odd Things Happen!:** Thursday, April 9th, 12 noon-1 p.m.
You may know "how a bill becomes a law," but you'll be surprised by some of the unusual (and sometimes bewildering) things that have been known to happen at the Legislature.
- ❖ **Conference Committees:** Thursday, April 16th, 12 noon-1 p.m.
Understanding this end-of-session process can be a challenge for everyone. We'll offer some tips, information, and strategies that can help.

"We the Powerful" Workshops

You can still participate in our standard "We the Powerful" workshop -- just call or email to schedule a time! The presentation includes: understanding the legislative process, delivering effective testimony, using the Legislature's website, and an overview of other resources. Let us know your level of knowledge and experience, and we will do our best to tailor the workshop accordingly.

PAR Hours during Session

During Session (until May 7th), the Public Access Room (Room 401) has extended hours!

Monday - Friday, 7:45 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Quotes from the File . . .

"Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens."

- Jimi Hendrix

"The vitality of thought is in adventure. Ideas won't keep. Something must be done about them."

- Alfred North Whitehead

"Dripping water hollows out stone, not through force but through persistence."

-Ovid, Roman Poet