

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM

A division of the Legislative Reference Bureau

NEWSLETTER

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Communicating with the Governor



**Your bill has made it through the Legislature!
Now what? It's off to the Governor's desk...**

If your bill has made it past the Legislature, congratulations! Not many bills get this far. Most fall casualty to one of the many deadlines bills have to meet throughout the legislative session. This year, approximately 89% of the bills introduced failed to pass, which is not unusual for a legislative session.

While you can celebrate and breathe a sigh of relief, there's one more major hurdle. The bill moves on to the head of the Executive branch - the Governor - for approval.

In addition to receiving analysis and comments from his executive departments, the Governor welcomes the public's views as he decides which bills to sign into law, which ones he'll allow to

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2016 Legislative Timetable

June

7th Candidate filing deadline for 2016 Election
27th Governor: Notice of intent to veto deadline
(35th day after adjournment *sine die*)

July

12th Governor: Veto deadline
(45th day after adjournment *sine die*)
14th Voter registration deadline for Primary Election

August

13th Primary Election

October

10th Voter registration deadline for General Election

November

8th General Election

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become law without his signature, and which should be vetoed and returned to the Legislature with a statement of his objections.

Communicating your stance on a bill is one way to continue your involvement in the bill-to-law process. How to communicate with the Governor? Well, the Governor's office has made it easy for the public to share their thoughts on legislation with him. Simply visit the Governor's website (governor.hawaii.gov), click on the "[Contact Us](#)" link on the homepage, select "[Comments on Legislation](#)," and enter your remarks. Make sure to include the bill number and other requested information. Be clear, concise, polite, and professional. Remember to identify yourself and include contact information in case there are questions or someone wants to get in touch with you. If you don't have access to a computer or prefer to communicate your message via phone, you can reach the Governor's Office by calling 586-0034.

While you're on the website, take a look around – the Governor's office even has a link for those who wish to request a [public bill signing](#).

Video Tutorials: New "How to" Guides

Have you ever wanted someone to show you how to submit testimony online? Wouldn't it be so much easier if someone guided you through the steps to create a measure tracking list?

The Public Access Room has posted new video tutorials on how to perform various functions on the Hawaii State Legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov). These videos walk you through each task with helpful, step-by-step visual and narrative instructions. We took particular care to create video tutorials that would be easy to understand and follow for everyone, even those who are not familiar with the Hawaii State Legislature website or are not confident using computers. The videos may be helpful resources as you try to encourage others to get involved.

The "How to" video tutorials include:

[How to Submit Testimony Online](#)

[How to Receive Hearing Notifications](#)

[How to Create a Measure Tracking List](#)

[How to Register](#)

[How to Find Out Who Your Legislators Are](#)

[How to Search for Measures](#)



The videos can be found on our YouTube page (goo.gl/Obfch8), and soon there will be links on the Public Access Room's website (LRBhawaii.org/PAR).

Take a look! We hope these video tutorials will make getting involved in the legislative process a bit less intimidating.



Snapshot of the Legislative Session



Track the Activity on All Measures that Passed the Legislature

Are you interested in seeing what new laws are on the books? A bill that has successfully met all the requirements of the legislative process becomes an "act" of law. To find the "List of Acts" for the 2016 Regular Session, go to the Hawaii State Legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov), click on the "[Reports and Lists](#)" icon, scroll down to the box with the "Governor's Actions" heading and click on "[List of Acts.](#)" This list will continue to grow as more measures are added. By clicking on an act number, you'll be able to view the Governor's Message conveying the legislation, followed by the legislation with the official "act" stamp. This can be very gratifying if you've been waiting a long time to see a particular bill become law!

A bill that successfully passes the Legislature and is sent to the Governor's desk becomes law based on its effective date. To find the effective date, scroll down to the bill's last section. The bill could have a designated date (for example July 1, 2016) that the law would take effect. Alternatively, the bill might state that the law will be effective "upon approval." This means it becomes law on the date it is signed, the date it becomes law without the governor's signature, or the date its veto is successfully overridden by the Legislature.

If the act designates changes to the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), those changes will be reflected in the annual update (the cumulative supplement) of the printed edition which is published at year's end. The online version of the HRS (which can be found on the Legislature's website) will also be updated to reflect the changes near the year's end.

Interested in finding out whether a particular section of the HRS is affected by the passage of legislation? Check out the Legislative Reference Bureau's (LRB's) "Supplemental Information Relating to Bills Passed," which will be available on the LRB website's Session Reports page (lrbhawaii.org/reports/bill.html). This LRB report lists the measures that have been sent to the Governor and includes a subject index, a list of the HRS sections affected by bills that have passed, and even a summary of the total appropriations included in the executive budget bill.

Want to know if a bill you're interested in will become law? If the Governor signs the bill early, you're all set. If not, you may have to wait until after June 27th. On or before then, the Governor will provide the Legislature with a list of the bills he may veto. Note, bills on this list may end up not being vetoed. However, any bill that is not on the list is going to become law – either with the Governor's signature, or on July 12th if no veto or signature occurs. Under the "Governor's Actions" heading referenced earlier, you can see a snapshot of all the bills the governor is considering. Aside from finding the list of acts, you'll find bills that are [pending](#), bills that were [signed](#) into law, bills that became law [without the governor's signature](#), bills that the governor [intends to veto](#), bills that are [actually vetoed](#), and [veto overrides](#) by the Legislature.

If you're interested in seeing all of the concurrent and single chamber resolutions adopted this year, you can find them on the Reports and Lists page under "[Resolutions Adopted.](#)" This brings up all of the successful concurrent resolutions (resolutions that have been adopted by both chambers) and single chamber resolutions (resolutions that have only been adopted by the House or Senate).



Regroup, Reassess, Revive

Out of Luck This Session? Don't Give Up, Get Ready for Next Year!

The 2016 session is over. If you were supporting a bill that didn't go through as you had hoped, it's time to regroup, reassess, and revive. Planning ahead can help you better your chances of success in the 2017 session. While it's true that the formal legislative activity takes place during session, there's still a lot that can be done during the interim to lay the groundwork for next year. If you plan ahead, you will already have a good game plan in motion by the time next January rolls around. Here are some ideas to help you move forward:

Make notes now – while the session is still fresh in your mind.

As much as you may want to put it behind you, debrief now. Sit down with a pen and paper, or at the keyboard, and write it all down. If you are part of a larger group, sit down with them and brainstorm together. Do a thorough review: What could have gone better? What worked well? What ideas did you have that you just didn't have the time or the resources to follow through on? What potential supporters did you identify? What challenges to your proposal or position were you ill-equipped to counter? What research information do you wish you had? Did you identify similar proposals that you can support? What advice would you give to someone trying to do the same thing next session? What do you know now that you wish you had known at the start of session?

Sketch out your game plan, and network.

Based on what you have learned this session, sketch out a game plan to revive your proposal. Set up meetings during the interim with the legislators who sit on relevant committees in order to communicate your ideas to them. Provide them with as much information as possible to help support your position and ask for feedback and advice. Identify and approach legislators who will help you get a new bill drafted that effectively presents your proposal. Identify key individuals that you would like to involve in your efforts. Find allies to help divide up the research and outreach tasks. Create a network and develop a plan for getting the word out. Map out a tentative time line showing key "to do" items – and schedule a follow-up review to evaluate how things are progressing. And remember, you can use PAR during the interim – the computers, convenient work space, informational handouts and helpful staff are all here to assist you. PAR is open year-round, and we want to help you make the most of the interim. After all, we're your office at the Capitol!

PAR Interim Hours

May 6, 2016 - January 18, 2017

Monday - Friday

8:00am - 4:30pm

