

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.



2011 Legislative Timetable

Governor's Sign or Veto deadlines*

The deadline varies according to when the bill was enrolled to the governor.

- If bill was enrolled to Governor before last 10 days of session (*on or before April 18th*):
 - **10 days** to sign or veto, otherwise it became law without signature.
- If bill was enrolled to Governor in the last 10 days of session (*April 19th or later*):
 - Governor can sign into law anytime up to and including **July 12th**;
 - Bill becomes law without signature if neither signed nor vetoed by **July 12th**.
 - If Governor is considering a veto to a bill, he needs to advise the Legislature of that "intent to veto" by **June 27th**;
 - If a bill is on the "intent to veto" list, the Governor can choose to veto the bill any time up to and including **July 12th**.
- **The Legislature may convene, without call, at or before 12 noon on July 12th to consider amending or overriding vetoed bills.**
 - The Legislature may opt to **amend a vetoed bill** to meet the Governor's objections. To become law, such a measure would need to pass a final reading in both chambers, and be signed by the Governor within 10 days of it coming to him.
 - To successfully **override a veto**, the measure must be approved by a 2/3 vote of all members to which each chamber is entitled (i.e., at least 17 of the 25 senators and at least 34 of the 51 representatives).

* Note: For more info on how these dates are arrived at, see [Article III, Section 16 of the Hawaii State Constitution](#).

New Laws

Now that Session is pau, are you wondering what new laws are on the books?

A bill that is successfully passed becomes an "act" of law. To find the "List of Acts" for the 2011 Regular Session, just go to the "[Bill Status and Documents](#)" page, scroll down to the second-to-the-last box for the list of lists. In the middle of the second column, you'll see the "[List of Acts](#)" which will continue to grow as more and more bills are added to the rolls. By clicking on an act number itself, you'll be able to view any 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!



*Do you remember this image from "Schoolhouse Rock"??**

A bill that successfully passes the Legislature and the Governor's desk becomes law based on its effective

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Tips for Communicating With the Governor

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

First of all, congratulations. Not many bills get this far. Most fell casualty to the many deadlines throughout session. This year, fewer than 8% of the bills introduced passed, which is typical for the first year of a biennium.

Now, how to communicate with the Governor's Office? Some of the tips for dealing with the Executive Branch may sound familiar – use the bill number, be clear, be concise, be polite and professional. Clearly identify yourself and include contact information in case there are questions or someone wants to get in touch with you.

In addition to receiving analysis and comment 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 become law without his signature and which should be vetoed and returned to the legislature with a statement of his objections. (See the timetable on page 1 for pertinent deadlines.)

Just go to the governor's website – <http://hawaii.gov/gov> – and click on 'contact the governor.' You'll be led to a form where you can send your message. While you're on their website, look around – the Governor's office may add a special link or email address exclusively for use by people wanting to add their voices to the legislative review process.



Debriefing...

"Here's what went right..."
"Here's what we did wrong..."
"If I had it to do over again, I'd..."



Don't let the valuable lessons you just experienced go uncaptured! The interim is a great time to lay the groundwork for next session.

- **Debrief:** Take time now to review the past session. What do you know now that you wish you had known at session start? What worked well? What challenges to your position or proposal were you ill-equipped to counter? Consider your issue from your opponents' perspective. Is there anything to be learned there? Write it all down while it's still "top of mind."
- **To do:** Make a "to do" list to make sure you make good use of the interim. Sit down with your colleagues (if you don't know who they are, review online testimony and consider making some contacts!). Are there any groups or experts that might be helpful in your effort? Which legislators would you like to meet with? What new legislation would you like to propose?
- **Learn something new:** Would you like to automate your bill tracking or better understand the legislative process? Contact the Public Access Room for a tutorial. Do you need help with research? The LRB Library at the Capitol (Room 005, 587-0690) may be the place to start. The interim's the perfect time to learn – whether it's perfecting your public speaking skills, mastering new technology, or understanding your opponents' point of view.
- **Sketch out your plan and network:** Planning ahead and joining with others may be key to your success. Next January will be here before you know it!

Remember, the Public Access Room (PAR) is open year-round and available for your use. Our hours during interim: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We have convenient work space, internet computers, and helpful staff to assist you.

Note: More ideas on how to prioritize your efforts during the interim can be found in the [May 2005 PAR newsletter](#).

Oh So Special Session?

You may have heard talk about the possibility of the Legislature convening in Special Session during the interim between regular legislative sessions ... Who decides, and what might be considered during such a session?

Well, according to the Constitution of the State of Hawaii, [Article III, Section 10](#), a special session can be convened either by a two-thirds vote of each chamber or by the Governor. A special session is limited to a period of 30 days, though there is a provision for extending the session up to an additional 15 days, if need be.

Why would a special session be called? A wide variety of reasons that include an attempt to override governor's vetoes or to amend vetoed legislation. The Legislature may also be called into session to address emergency situations or matters of pressing import. (Additionally, the *Senate* may convene a special session to consider gubernatorial nominees for judicial posts, if the nominations are made while the Legislature is not in session. See [Article VI, Section 3](#) of the Hawaii Constitution.)

How will you know if a special session is called? Information will appear on the Legislature's website (www.capitol.hawaii.gov). You can check the "Bill Status and Documents" page for the Orders of the Day and information on measures being considered. You'd also be able to see reports in the media. As always, feel free to contact the Public Access Room (PAR), and we'll be happy to share what we know.

New Laws (continued from page 1)

date. To find the effective date, scroll down to the legislation's last section. It may be that instead of a designated date, the measure is effective "upon approval." This means it becomes law on the date it is signed or the date it becomes law without signature (see the timetable on page 1) or the date its veto is successfully overridden.

If the act designates changes to the [Hawaii Revised Statutes \(HRS\)](#), those changes will be reflected in the annual update (the 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.

What if you're 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](#) (available on the LRB's website at <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/reports/bill.html>). This LRB report is helpful in tracking the measures that have been sent to the Governor. It 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.

When will you know if a bill you're interested in has become law? Well, if the Governor signs it, that's great. If not, you may have to wait until after June 27th. On or before then, the Governor will make a list of any bill 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. Where do you find the list of the bills the Governor has noted he may veto? On the "[Bill Status and Documents](#)" page, once again scroll down to the second-to-the-last box on the page to the list of lists. There you'll find "[Notice of Veto](#)," "[List of Vetoed Measures](#)," and "[List of Veto Overrides](#)."

Find any of this confusing? Contact PAR – we'll be happy to help make sense of it all.

**The image is from the great educational video, "I'm Just a Bill," one of the original songs that were part of the television series, "Schoolhouse Rock." The catchy tune and animation presents "Bill" and follows him on his quest to become a law. We have a copy of the video here in the Public Access Room – let us know if you'd like to watch!*

Tidbits

PAR Office Hours

<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/par>

It's the Interim, which means that the Public Access Room (PAR) goes back to its more abbreviated schedule. We'll be open

Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

PAR, Room 401 at the Hawaii State Capitol

Evening and weekend workshops can be arranged. Just call or email (587-0478 or par@capitol.hawaii.gov) and we'll see what works for everyone.

On a Neighbor Island? Keep your eyes open for our fall workshops and help spread the word. Let us know if you've got a group for whom you'd like to have us prepare a special presentation.



*Using the Public Access Room (PAR) –
your office at the Capitol*

Carry-over Bills

"What about next year? I heard my bill isn't really dead...?!" That's right. The Regular Session of 2011 was actually the first year of a two-year biennium, the Twenty-Sixth Legislature. So, any bill that didn't pass out of the Legislature this year is still "in the hopper" and can be acted upon next year, once session starts up again. When next session begins, those carry-over bills can be taken up from whatever point they were left.

The catch? There's usually a *reason* the bill didn't advance during 2011. What's changed? You'll need to find the political will to move it forward in 2012. Alternatively, you may want to advocate for a new bill to be drafted, which incorporates changes that may give it a better chance of passing.

The Public Access Room can help you understand the process and the status of pending legislation.

What about Resolutions?

Resolutions that were introduced during the 2011 Regular Session and failed to be adopted *are* dead – they don't carry over to next year like bills do.

What happens with a resolution that *was* adopted? Resolutions – whether they are concurrent resolutions that have been adopted by both chambers or single chamber resolutions – express the will and intent of the Legislature, and so do *not* go off to the Governor. Instead, what happens to a resolution is specified *within* the resolution. Get through the whereas's and scroll down to the "Be it resolved..." sections. One of the last paragraphs will specify who will receive copies of the resolutions if they pass. The House and Senate Chief Clerks are responsible for coordinating and transmitting the resolutions as specified.

Quotes from the File . . .

"There are two kinds of people, those who finish what they start and so on."

- Robert Byrne

"My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition."

- Indira Gandhi

"The world is divided into people who think they are right."

- Anonymous