



Your Voice: Navigating the State Legislative Process

January 7, 2026

Public Access Room (PAR)
lrb.hawaii.gov/par



Your Voice: Participating at the Hawaii State Legislature. Presented by the Public Access Room (PAR), (808) 587-0478, par@capitol.hawaii.gov. Our website is lrb.hawaii.gov/par.

QR code goes to lrb.hawaii.gov/par

Agenda

- Find your Legislator
- Using your voice
- Search for bills/ sign up for hearing notices
- Legislative process
- Provide testimony
- Learn about the Public Access Room!

Public Access Room

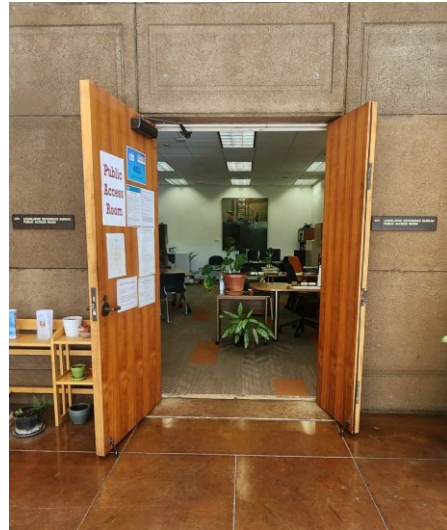
Your Office at
the State Capitol



4th Floor, Room 401

(808) 587-0478

par@capitol.hawaii.gov



Our physical office – the public’s office – is in Room 401 of the State Capitol building (at 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813) at the corner of Beretania and Punchbowl streets.

(By the way, the Hawaii State Capitol is a beautiful building with a lot of symbolism built into its open architecture. For more information, visit the governor’s website: <https://governor.hawaii.gov/contact-us/hawai'i-state-capitol-tours/>)

Hawaii Government

3 equal branches

Legislative
Makes laws

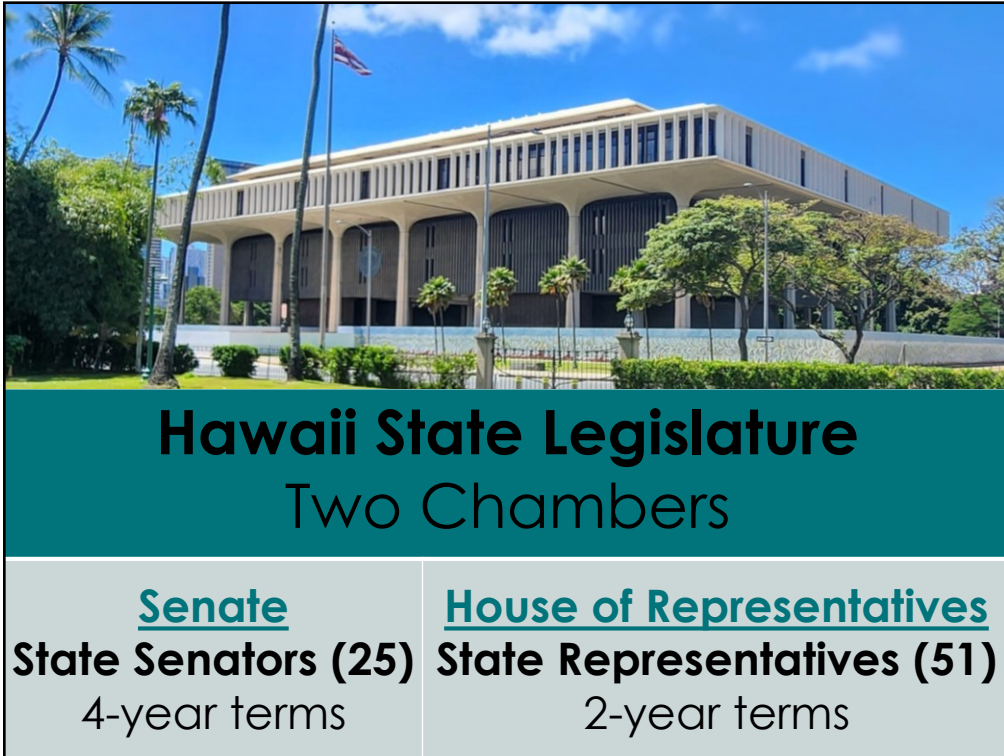


Executive
(Governor &
Departments)
Implements
laws

Judicial
(Courts)
Interprets
laws

Let's start with the big picture. Our democracy is set up with a balance of power – three different, equal branches of government that help to keep one another in check. Roughly speaking, the Legislative branch *makes* the laws, the Executive branch *implements* those laws, and the Judiciary branch *interprets* the law.

In this workshop, we'll be focused on the Legislative branch, the branch of government concerned with making the laws.



The Hawaii State legislature is made up of two different chambers (this is called a “bicameral” legislature) – the Senate is the group of 25 senators serving 4-year terms, and the House of Representatives is the group of 51 representatives elected to 2-year terms.

Roughly speaking, a senator’s district is roughly twice as large as a representative’s district.

We can use the term “legislator” to refer to either a senator or a representative.

In this presentation, we’ll be focusing on how the chambers work to make the laws that govern the state, and both chambers operate in roughly the same way. But be aware that they actually each have special powers and responsibilities (for example, the Senate has the ‘advise and consent’ power over Governor’s appointment of department directors).

What do these lawmakers do?

SERVE • as their constituents' voice, vote on legislation

SERVE • on committees focused on particular subject matter

SERVE • in leadership roles

First off, we're a representative democracy, and the legislators actually "speak" for you. Each address in the state is represented by one member of the House of Representatives and one member of the Senate. They **serve as the voting districts' 'voice'** at the legislature as they consider legislation and may also be able to help constituents with a variety of issues.

Secondly, in order to make the whole complicated process a little more manageable, the House and Senate each organize themselves into various **committees** that focus on legislation in particular subject areas. As you'll see, the chairs of these committees have quite a bit of power. Who decides who is on which committee and who gets to be each committee's chair?

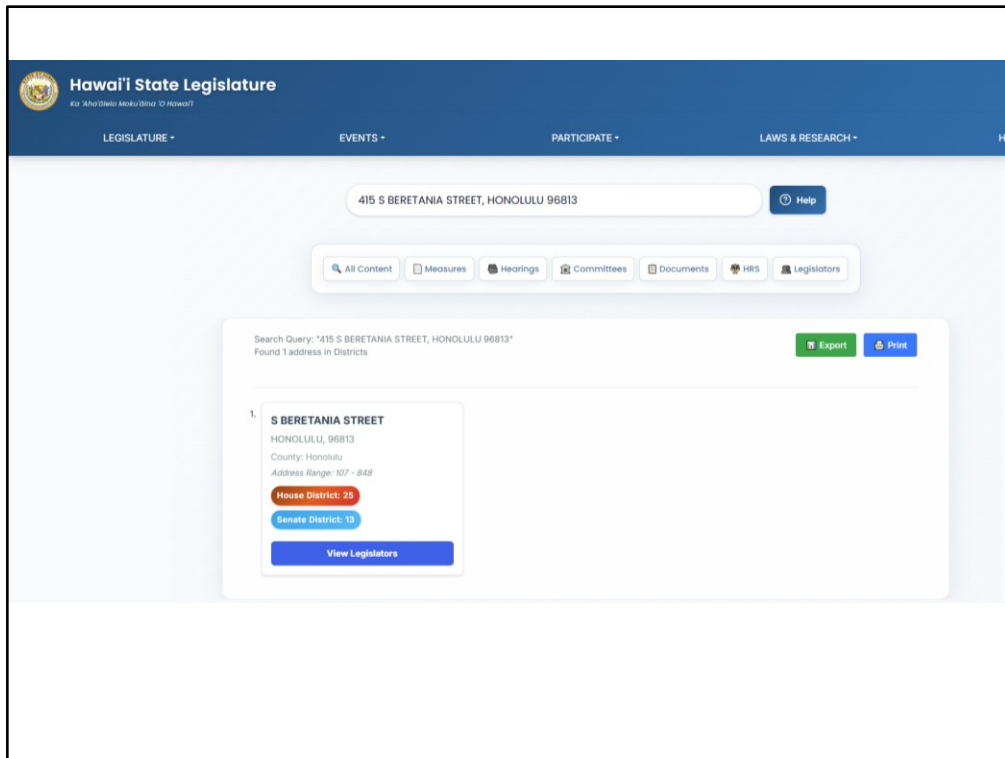
That would be **leadership**. Each chamber elects who will be their leader (the President in the Senate, the Speaker in the House, the Vice President or Vice Speaker, the Majority Leader, and Majority Floor Leader). The reason leadership is so important? Power. They influence a great deal, as you'll see in the slides ahead.

FYI -- When we use the term "Majority" it refers to the political party that has the most members in the chamber – in Hawaii currently, for both chambers that would be the members of the Democratic Party. The "Minority" party (here, the Republican members) also elect one another to leadership positions, to better coordinate the actions of their members.



To find out who your own representative and senator are, it's as simple as going to the legislature's website, capitol.hawaii.gov

From the capitol homepage, click on the "Legislature" tab. Then select "Find your legislator" from the drop-down menu.



You'll come to this screen where you can type in your address or navigate on the map to a particular location. We suggest you use your actual street address rather than just town, as district lines can run through towns so there may be more than one legislator for Kaneohe, for example

For example – typing in the state capitol's address

Hawai'i State Legislature

LEGISLATURE -

EVENTS -

PARTICIPATE -

LAWS & RESEARCH -

HELP

All Content

Measures

Hearings

Committees

Documents

HRS

Legislators

Legislators for Selected Address

S BERETANIA ST , HONOLULU

1.

Iwamoto, Kim Coco

2025

HOUSE District 25

Ala Moana, Kaka'ako, Downtown

Phone: 808-586-6485 Fax: 808-586-6489

Email: rep@iwamoto@capitol.hawaii.gov

2.

Rhoads, Karl

2025

SENATE District 13

Dowsett Highlands, Pu'unui, Nu'uani, Pacific Heights, Pauoa, Punchbowl, Piilama, Liliha, Iwilei, Chinatown, and Downtown

Phone: 808-586-6130 Fax: 808-586-6131

Email: senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov

Back to Search Results

Here we see the results, Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto and Senator Karl Rhoads.

9

Hawaii State Legislature

LEGISLATURE •
EVENTS •
PARTICIPATE •
LAWS & RESEARCH •
HELP & INFO •

[Senate District 13](#)
Dowsett Highlands, Puunui, Nu'uuanu,
Pacific Heights, Pauoa, Punchbowl,
Pālama, Liliha, Iwilei, Chinatown, and
Downtown
Room: 228
Phone: 808-586-6130
Fax: 808-586-6131
senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov

About
Experience
News
Links

Senator Karl Rhoads currently serves as Chair of the Committee on Judiciary and member of the Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Housing.

2025 Committee Member of

Judiciary
Agriculture and Environment
Public Safety and Military Affairs

2025 Allowance Report

Measures Introduced in 2025

Measure and Title
[SB5.SD1](#)
RELATIVE TO RESERVATIVE VACANCIES
[SB31 SD2 HD2 CD1](#)
RELATIVE TO PROPERTY
[SB33](#)
RELATIVE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
[SB39](#)

You can click on either legislator to view their webpages. Here, we take a look a Senator Rhoad’s page.

**Don't forget
the most
important
participants in
State
legislative
government...**

**People
like you!**



But don't forget the most important participants in State legislative government is the Public. People like you!
Without the public, it just doesn't work.

What can you do?

- **Vote!**
 - State Senator
 - State Representative
 - Proposed Amendments to the State Constitution
- **Run for office** (or help)
- **Communicate** with legislators
- **Offer testimony**
- **Join** with others
 - Advocate!



Here's a reminder of some of the things that we as everyday citizens can do to be part of our own governance.

We vote the senators and representatives into office – senators serve 4-year terms, representatives are elected to 2-year terms. We also vote on proposed changes to the Constitution.

You can run for office or help someone else to do that – you don't need to be a political science major or a lawyer. People with all sorts of experience and backgrounds serve in these positions. We have what is called a part-time legislature (in session from January to May), and many members keep other work positions outside of the capitol while they serve. Of course, things get very busy during session, so you'd need to plan on that!

You can also communicate with the people that are in office, letting them know your priorities, views, and concerns. In PAR, we concentrate on helping you with that, as well as helping people understand how to offer testimony and reminding you to join with others to amplify your voice.

Use Your Voice

Talk with Legislators

Suggest a bill

Ask for a hearing

Testify

Contact the Governor

There's a lot you can do at the legislature:

First off, simply communicate with the people in office. Let them know your views and priorities.

You can also suggest a bill to change a law. When you see the bills being discussed, you can ask for a hearing for ones you'd like to see move forward. If bills you're concerned about do come up for a hearing, you can offer your written and oral testimony. Sometimes, you may want to lobby the entire chamber or legislature – they all need to vote on legislation.

Finally, you may want to contact the governor.

Keep at it! It can take some time to see change at the capitol.

Use Your Voice 2

Communicate with Your Legislators

COMMUNICATE YOUR POSITION

By Letter...

Email...

Phone call...

In Person

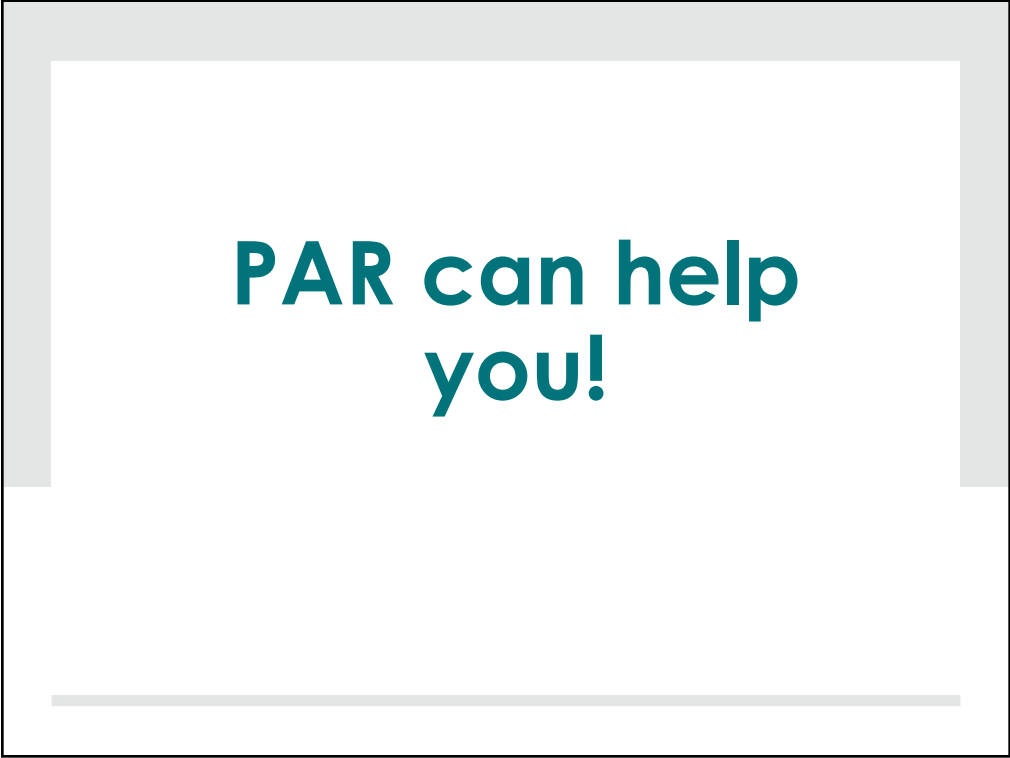
We've already mentioned voting – which is an important way of expressing your voice – but how about communicating with the people who were elected to represent you? Let them know what you think they should focus on – environmental policy, education issues, transportation infrastructure, housing, tourism, public safety issues – what seems particularly pressing to you? What would help or affect you and your family, neighbors, and colleagues? Are there particular issues in your neighborhood that concern you?

It's always appropriate to communicate with your own representative and senator about such matters – you don't have to wait for them to be in legislative session – their offices are open year-round.

Legislators like to hear from their constituents. And even though they may not do what you'd like them to do, they really do listen! Give them a chance – let them know what you think.

Is it better to write or call? Either one – just do it! Writing provides a written record, while calling allows for a dialogue.

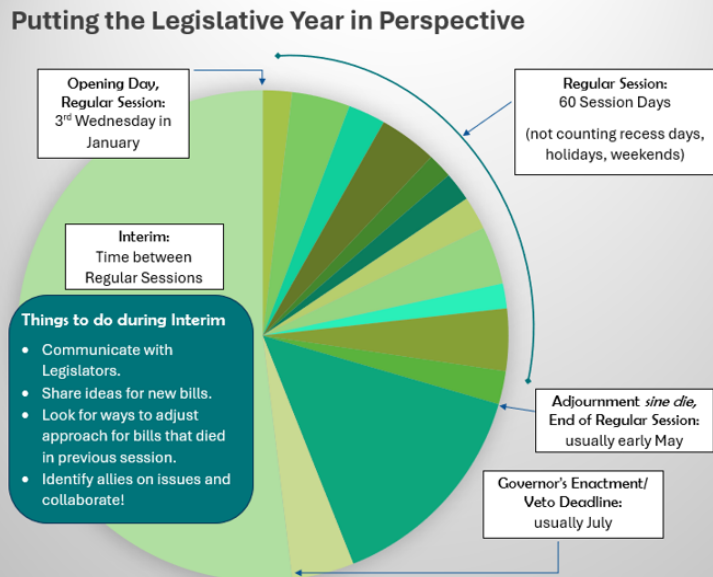
By the way, if you want to hear back from them, let them know. "I'd appreciate a call back." or "I look forward to hearing from you."



**PAR can help
you!**

PAR can help you as you engage with the legislature and the legislative process. Unsure if you should contact your legislator? Call us, and we'll help you focus. And we're one of the best kept secrets in the state – tell your friends!

Regular Session starts on the 3rd Wednesday in January, For 2026: January 21, 2026



As mentioned, in Hawaii we have what is called a “part-time legislature.” About 2/3 of the calendar year is the ‘interim’ period between regular legislative sessions. But that doesn’t mean they’re not busy being your legislators year-round.

It’s crucial to use this time between sessions well, so you’ll be ready for the fast-moving session when it starts (which is always on the 3rd Wednesday in January as directed by the Hawaii State Constitution [[https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii Section 10](https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii%20Section%2010)]).

About 2,800 bills are introduced each year, all in about the first week after the start of session...you can imagine the frenzy!

Each of the wedges in this illustration signifies a major deadline – and is intended to show you just how fast things move during session (over about a quarter of the year). During interim (when the legislative session isn’t taking place) people can meet to brainstorm new ideas for bills, communicate with legislators about those ideas, consider new ideas for bills that died in the previous session, and identify allies to collaborate with.

The 2026 Session Calendar: A Guide to the Deadlines

JAN 21 OPENING DAY – Hawaii’s constitution mandates that the regular legislative session starts at 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of January.

JAN 23 LAST DAY TO INTRODUCE ALL NON-ADMINISTRATION BILL PACKAGES – Bills bundled together by common interest groups and accepted and labeled as a package by the clerks. You can view the various packages of legislation by clicking on the “[Reports and Lists](#)” button on [capitol.hawaii.gov](#).

& LAST DAY FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO SUBMIT GRANT AND SUBSIDY REQUESTS – Deadline for “Grant-in-Aid” (GIA) applications. Grants may be appropriated to nonprofit and other organizations for various public purposes that are recognized as priorities and are seen as complimentary to state government functions. Applications, information, and more specifics regarding the deadline appear under “[Legislative Information](#)” on [capitol.hawaii.gov](#).

JAN 26 STATE-OF-THE-STATE ADDRESS – The Governor’s annual address to the assembled joint legislature. The address presents an opportunity for the Governor to report on affairs of state, and to put forth recommendations and initiatives. Many visitors come to the Capitol to hear the Governor’s speech and witness the proceedings from the gallery (*lanasochika no the maunani hooaloaloa*).

& LAST DAY TO INTRODUCE ADMINISTRATION BILL – executive branch agencies for consideration by the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on [capitol.hawaii.gov](#).

JAN 28 LAST DAY TO INTRODUCE BILLS – A bill is “intro HB or SB prefix) and then puts it on the calendar specify which committees must hear and pass it is given a “Bill Status” webpage that can be accessed.

FEB 11 (HOUSE BILLS) & FEB 12 (SENATE BILLS) THRU can be in their second-to-last committee by the final deadline allows ample time for successful bills to

Legislative Calendar

THE 2026 SESSION CALENDAR

Note: On the 60 session days (days when members convene in their respective chambers), the session day count appears in a box on the lower-right, like this: ►►► [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] [46] [47] [48] [49] [50] [51] [52] [53] [54] [55] [56] [57] [58] [59] [60]. Legend: ■ = bills ■ = resolutions ■ = budget See reverse side for more deadline information.

Sun		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January				21 Opening Day	22	23 Non-Admin Bill Package Cutoff Grants/Subsidies Cutoff	24
25	26 State-of-the-State Address & Admin Bill Package Cutoff	27 Recess #1	28 Bill Intro Cutoff	29 Recess #2	30	31	
February							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11 Triple Referral Filing (HBs)	12 Triple Referral Filing (SBs)	13	14	
5	16 HOLIDAY Presidents' Day	17	18	19 First Lateral Filing (Bills)	20 First Lateral (Bills)	21	
22	23	24	25	26 Mandatory 5-Day Recess Begins	27	28	
March							

The legislative calendar with the specific dates that will rule our lives during session is published prior to the beginning of a session – and usually not *much* before-hand. (Look for it in December or so)

The calendar is established by the Senate President and the House Speaker (chamber leadership), working together.

By the way, the Public Access Room takes that calendar and creates an annotated version that’s color coded and has helpful definitions on the backside so you can sort out what the deadlines mean. You can find the most recent version on PAR’s website (click on the “Current Legislature” tab <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>).

QR Code goes to PAR’s Current Legislature webpage – look for current session calendar with guide to the deadlines on that page

Tip: Share **ideas** for new laws

-- well before the start of session!

Legislators also hear from lobbyists, interest groups, and other legislators but also want to hear from the **PUBLIC**



Another way to use your voice is to share an idea for a new law with a legislator. The legislator can take your idea, have it drafted into a bill, and if the bill is successful, it will become an act of law. You need to know it's a tough road – over 90% of bills introduced each year don't become law. But if you've got a good idea and the time is ripe...!

NOTE: If you would like a legislator to introduce a bill on your behalf, you'll be wise to make the request during the interim months. It's usually easier to meet with legislators then and gives you a chance to discuss the matter when there is enough time to talk it over in an unhurried and thorough way. Most likely, if you wait until January...(sorry)...you're likely to be too late. Communicate with your legislator before Thanksgiving to provide time for discussion and potential drafting of language for a bill!

To get a bill introduced, find a legislator

Start with:

- Your own
- Subject matter committee chair
- Members who have supported similar issues

In Hawaii, all bills must be introduced by a legislator. Other states may have different procedures, but that's the way it is in Hawaii. So, the next step is to find a legislator who likes the idea and who agrees to introduce the bill on your behalf.

If you've done your research as to why this bill is a good idea, you'll be much more likely to get a legislator's agreement to introduce your bill. The PAR staff can help point you in the right direction in finding someone to approach.

It's often a good idea to start with the senator and/or representative serving your district. That's good protocol but isn't an absolute rule at all.

You could also go to the members of the subject matter committee to which your potential bill would probably first be referred – the Senate and/or House transportation committee for a transportation idea, for instance.

Or perhaps we know or can help you find out who's supported similar legislation or issues in the past. That might be a good legislator to approach.

[The legislator may also ask a colleague in the other chamber to introduce an identical bill (called a "companion bill"), just to help the idea's chances of moving ahead. While introduced with identical language, the bills can quickly change from one another and live or die on their own.]

Summarize the problem (or the opportunity)

- *This law would make __ mandatory...*
- *It is needed because...*
- *Other states that have instituted similar laws include...*
- *Website with data on this subject: ...*

Start developing your idea...

First, identify the problem or opportunity. (It sounds simple, but sometimes this one takes a little work). See if you can summarize it into a short paragraph (just a few sentences).


Then list what you think a law would do.


If you've got research, know of a group that's behind the idea, or a state that has enacted similar legislation, you can let the legislator know that, too.

It helps to think this through prior to speaking with a legislator...

How to Talk to Legislators

- Short & concise
- Highlight important points
- Be clear: what are you asking
- Bullet points
- Consider a leave behind sheet



One Pager for Legislators
November 2024
 

Proposal for X

a new bill / policy / issue, a request for support

Background

The Issue / Problem / Opportunity

The Solution

The Ask

Stakeholders / Supporters

Contact Info

A brief statement about yourself, your organization (if applicable), what your organization does.

Summarize the issue for which you are seeking support or assistance; legislation from other states, share data.

- Consider using bullet points
- Your summary should be quick and easy to read

Identify solutions and how your legislator can assist (for example, introducing new legislation or providing resources and support.)

Be specific about what you are asking the legislator to do.

- Introduce or take a position on a bill?
- Provide feedback on your idea?
- Suggestions of other people to contact and work with?
- Sign a letter of support?

Include a list of supporters.

Include your contact information so that the legislator or legislative staff can contact you if they have questions or

Think through what it is you want to say... Are you asking the legislator to take a particular action? Is there a situation that is a cause for concern? Do you want the legislator to hear your views and respond with his or her own?

Short and simple is usually a great place to start. If it's a complicated situation, offer an overview and a willingness to provide additional details. Help the legislator or staff member understand what you are asking for – make your request clear.

This One-Pager example template can be found on the PAR website:
<https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/idea-to-introduction-the-birth-of-a-bill/>
 under the How to Approach a Legislator section (QR code goes to this webpage – scroll down for How to Approach a Legislator section)

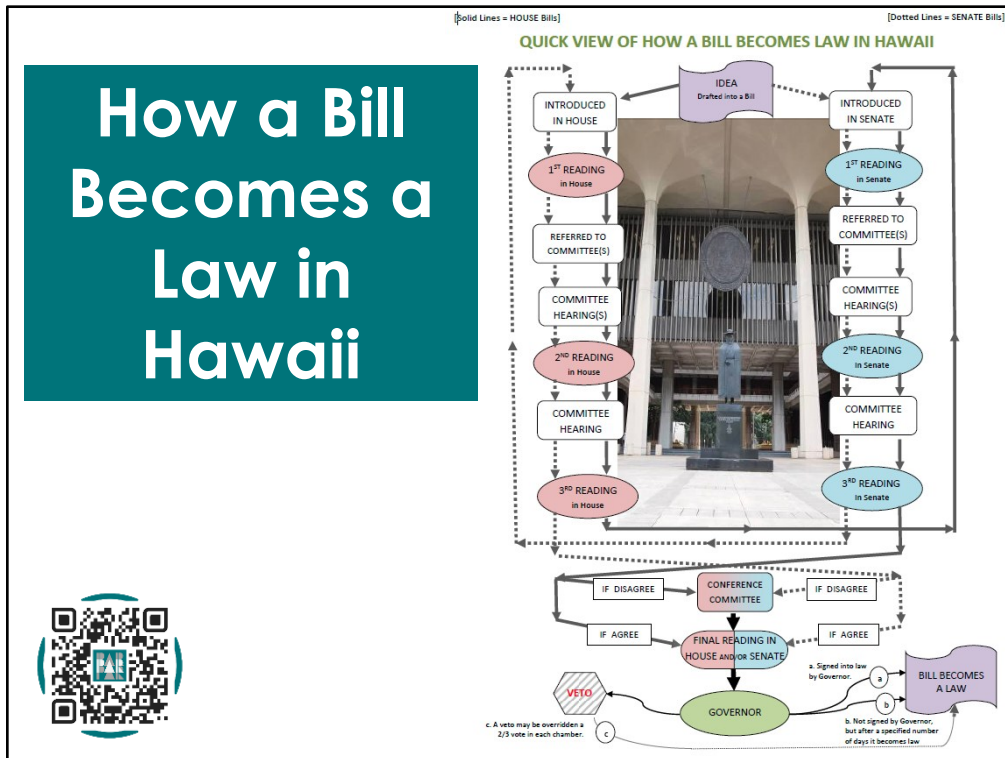
A brief glimpse of what's to come in a bill's life...

- ✓ Pass through **all committees** it gets referred to in the House and Senate
- ✓ Pass **three readings in both the House and Senate chambers** (where all the members convene)
- ✓ Both House and Senate agree on **exact wording**
- ✓ Be signed or allowed to come into law by **Governor**, or House and Senate successfully overrides his veto

The bill has a lot of hoops to jump through to become law:

- Pass 3 readings (votes) in each chamber by the full House (51 members) and the full Senate (25 members). This is a constitutional requirement for a bill to become law. The readings take place before, during, and after the bill makes it way through the committees.
- Survive all the committees it's referred to. It's during the committee process that the bill is "heard" – public hearings or decision makings are scheduled so that the public can have their voice heard regarding whether the legislation is a good idea. The number of committees a bill needs to go through in each chamber varies. As we'll see, it may be amended as it moves along.
- Both chambers must agree on the exact language of the final version.
- Be signed into law by the Governor, *or* become law without his signature, *or* if the bill is vetoed, have his veto overridden by 2/3 of the House and 2/3 of the Senate (or amend the bill to meet the governor's objections).

It's a high bar for a bill to become a law!



This is what the legislative process in Hawaii looks like... Goes through three readings while it makes its way through committees, crosses over to the other chamber and goes through the same process, and then make sure both chambers agree on the final wording of the bill that will go off to the governor. The governor can then sign the bill, veto it, or allow it to become law without signature. (If he vetoes it, the legislature does have a mechanism so they can override the veto and still have the bill become law.)

For more information on a bill's journey: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/a-bills-journey/> (QR code points to this webpage)

DEADLINES

THE 2026 SESSION CALENDAR

Note: On the 60 session days (days when members convene in their respective chambers), the session day count appears in a box on the lower-right, like this: ▶▶▶ [5]. ■ = bills ■ = resolutions ■ = budget See reverse side for more deadline information.

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February						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 Triple Referral Filing (HBs) [13]	12 Triple Referral Filing (SBs) [14]	13	14
5	16 HOLIDAY Presidents' Day	17	18 First Lateral Filing (Bills) [18]	19 First Lateral (Bills) [19]	20 First Lateral (Bills) [20]	21
22	23	24	25	26 Mandatory 5-Day Recess Begins [25]	27	28
March						
1	2	3	4 Mandatory 5-Day Recess Ends	5 Single Referral Filing Deadline (SBs) [25]	6 First Decking (Bills) [26]	7
8	9 Recess #3	10	11 Recess #4	12 First Crossover (Bills) [27]	13 Subst. Resolution Cutoff [28]	14
15	16 Budget Decking [29]	17	18 Budget Crossover [30]	19 Second Triple Referral Filing (Bills) [31]	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 HOLIDAY Kuhio Day [32]	27 Second Lateral Filing (Bills) [33]	28
29	30 Second Lateral (Bills) [37]	31 First Lateral (SCRs) [38]				
April			1	2 First Lateral (HCRs) [39]	3 HOLIDAY Good Friday [40]	4

And it must do all of that by certain deadlines! Which is why that session calendar is so important. Over 90% of bills die – they don’t pass one of the deadlines... They’re called “dead”-lines because they’re designed to “kill” bills and narrow down the field of legislation being discussed.

The session calendar is usually finalized in December preceeding the January start of session. It can be found on PAR’s current legislature page:

<https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>

Also on this page are contact lists (email, phone, room number for legislators; committee membership lists and committee schedules; committee clerks and office managers lists, and more!)

QR code goes to PAR’s Current Legislature webpage. Look for Session Calendar handout there (2025 Session Calendar is typically finalized in December/January).

Bill Introduction

Bills are
introduced at the
start of session
(usually about a
one-week period)




Approximately 2,500-3,000 bills are introduced each year (Senate and House combined). There is a narrow window when bills can be introduced, usually beginning with the first day of session and usually lasting about a week.

In our state, only legislators can introduce bills. So, if you have an idea that you think would make a good law, make sure to let your legislators know. They can send your idea to a drafting agency at the Capitol where researchers can take your idea and put it into bill form. If your bill is drafted and a legislator introduces it, it has a chance to become law.

A legislator will have an idea drafted into a **BILL** that will be **INTRODUCED** at the start of **Regular Session**.

THE SENATE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023 STATE OF HAWAII	S.B. NO.	1035 S.D. 2 H.D. 1 C.D. 1
A BILL FOR AN ACT		
RELATING TO THE GENERAL EXCISE TAX.		
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:		
1	SECTION 1. The legislature finds that under the current	
2	general excise tax, there is an incongruity in the way medical	
3	service providers are treated. Medical services rendered at a	
4	nonprofit hospital, infirmary, or sanitarium are exempt from the	



When a legislator introduces a bill (often taking into account constituent needs or requests, he or she will then work with one of the five bill-drafting agencies in the Capitol to have the bill written up.

When the bill is submitted by your representative or senator, it is promptly **given a number, which will be the tool used to keep track of it. The prefix “HB” begins a House bill number; “SB” begins a Senate bill number.** If your bill is changed by various committees along the way, different draft numbers will be tacked onto the end of the bill number to help you keep track of the new versions. (HD = draft made by the House/House Draft, SD = draft made by the Senate/Senate Draft, CD = draft made as part of the conference process/Conference Draft.

When the bill was drafted, it was given a bill title – “A Bill for an Act Relating to the General Excise Tax,” for example. The bill title can not change, and it must reflect the bill’s contents. (The bill’s content may change as it goes through the legislative process, but it must always be appropriate to the bill’s unchanging title.)

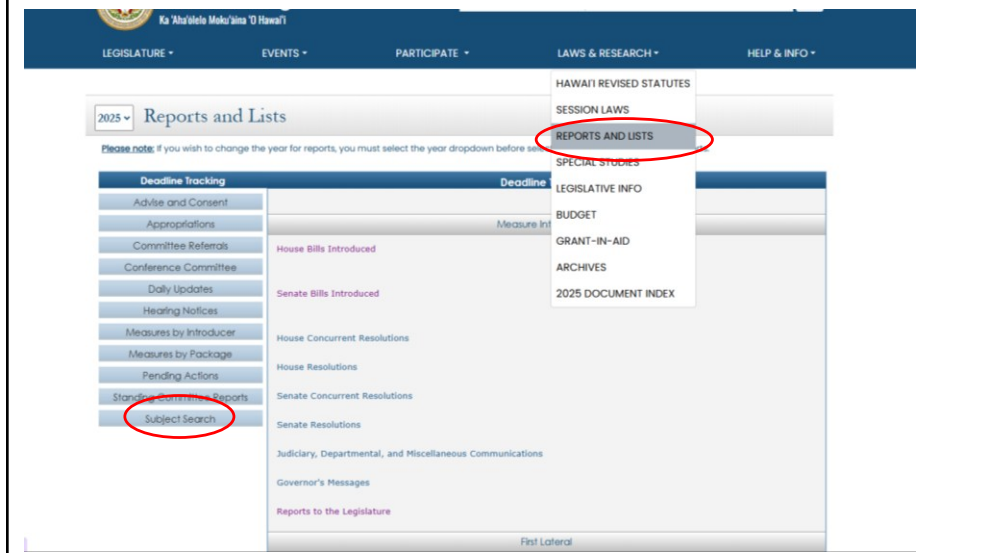
Bills can be short or long, simple or complex. Usually, the first section will state what the bill intends to do, the following sections outline what exactly is being done (revising the law books, for example, indicating deleted or added language), and the final section specifies when the law will take effect if enacted.

QR code points to <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/types-of-measures-bills-resolutions-messages/> -

look for section Anatomy of a Bill: Learn the fundamentals on what makes up a Bill that talks more about how bills are structured as well as how new content is documented proposed to be added to current law (HRS) or proposed to be deleted.


Searching for Bills

Start with Laws & Research > Reports and Lists > Subject Search



To search for bills – You can search by subject by using the Laws & Research drop down menu in the blue bar at the top of the capitol.hawaii.gov webpage and select Reports and Lists.

Once on the Reports and Lists page – click on Subject Search at the bottom of the light blue options on the left side of the screen.



Ka 'Aha'ōlelo Moku'āina 'O Hawai'i

LEGISLATURE ▾EVENTS ▾PARTICIPATE ▾LAWS & RESEARCH ▾HELP & INFO ▾

2025 ▾

Reports and Lists

Please note: if you wish to change the year for reports, you must select the year dropdown before selecting any other dropdowns or reports.

Deadline Tracking

Advise and Consent

Appropriations

Committee Referrals

Conference Committee

Daily Updates

Hearing Notices

Measures by Introducer

Measures by Package

Pending Actions

Standing Committee Reports

Subject Search

Subject Search









Search Measure Titles, Report Titles, and Descriptions of measures for the exact text entered.

Please omit diacritical marks (okinas and kahakos) from search words.

public school

Go

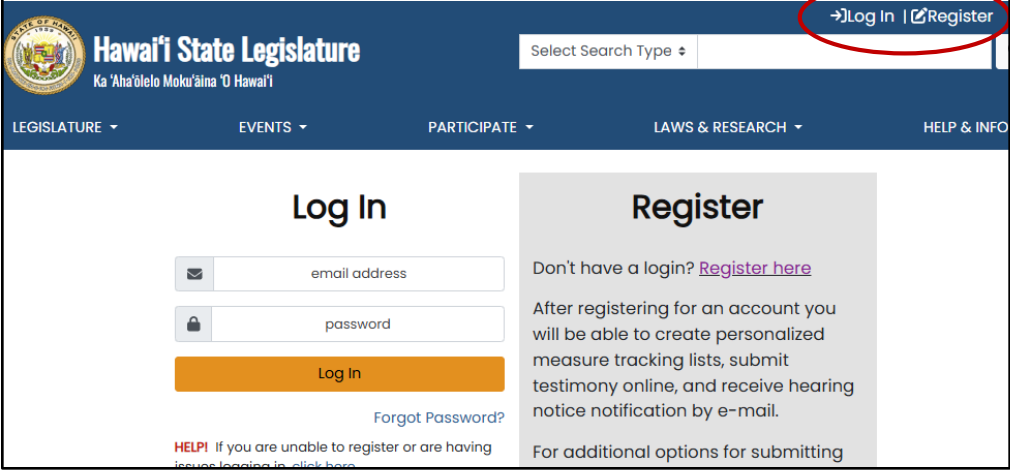
As you do the Subject Search – note that it will search measure titles, report titles (key words) and the description of the measure. This search does not search the full text/entire body of the proposed measure.

Subject Search		meal	1/4	^	v	x	Hawaii State Legislature	
Search Results for: public school								
Print Export to Excel Export to CSV Back to report selection screen		64 records returned.						
Measure Text.pdf	Measure Status	Current Status	Introducer(s)		Current Referral	Companion		
 DC45 Rpt: Annual Report on Pilot Project for Lease of Public School Lands: DOE From the Department of Education, dated October 29, 2024, transmitting the Annual Report on Pilot Project for Lease of Public School Lands pursuant to Act 155, SLH 2013.		(s) 1/16/2025 - Filed.	Control+F search results on the page					
 DC230 Rpt: Annual Report Regarding State-Funded Prekindergarten Programs and Private Partnership-Funded Prekindergarten Programs in the Public Schools: DOE From the Executive Office on Early Learning, dated December 26, 2024, transmitting the Annual Report Regarding State-Funded Prekindergarten Programs and Private Partnership-Funded Prekindergarten Programs in the Public Schools pursuant to Section 302L-8, HRS.		(s) 1/16/2025 - Filed.						
 HB51 DAGS; Automated External Defibrillators; Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation; State Buildings; Public Schools; Training; Cardiac Emergency Response Plan; Counties; Appropriations (4) RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE. No later than January 1, 2025, requires the Department of Accounting and General Services to install and maintain automated external defibrillators in all state buildings, including all public schools. Requires DAGS to establish a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan and work with the counties to implement the plan into the counties' emergency service provider protocols. Requires DAGS to provide trainings on the use of automated external defibrillators and the performance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation for state employees and security staff of certain state agencies. Makes appropriations.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to LAB, EDN, FIN, referral sheet 1	GARRETT		LAB, EDN, FIN			
 HB63 Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation; CPR; Health Education; Public Schools; Private Schools; Charter Schools RELATING TO EDUCATION. Beginning in the 2025-2027 school year, requires each public, private, and charter school in the State to establish a program within the health education curriculum for high school students to provide instruction in CPR. Specifies instruction requirements. Waives liability for instruction under certain circumstances.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to EDN, FIN, referral sheet 1	SOUZA, PERRUSO		EDN, FIN			
 HB87 Public Schools; Free Breakfast and Lunch; Universal School Meals; Appropriation (s) RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, requires public schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students. Appropriates funds.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to EDN, FIN, referral sheet 1	POEPOE, BELATTI, CHUN, GARRETT, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KAPELA, KILA, KITAGAWA, KUSON, MARTEN, NATAYOSHI, OLDS, PERRUSO, QUINLAN, SOUZA, TAM		EDN, FIN			
 HB98 Education; Public Schools; Complexes; Curriculum; Authentic Assessments RELATING TO AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS. Authorizes public school complexes to use authentic assessments as part of classroom-based performance assessments.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to EDN, FIN, referral sheet 1	PERRUSO, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, MARTEN, OLDS, PIERICK, POEPOE, SOUZA		EDN, FIN			
 HB100 Standard-based Curriculum; Digital Citizenship; Public Schools; Media Literacy RELATING TO MEDIA LITERACY. Authorizes school complexes to incorporate media literacy in their standards-based curriculum, including content that prevents negative impacts of misinformation, disinformation, digital discrimination, and online hate speech.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to EDN, FIN, referral sheet 1	PERRUSO, BELATTI, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, MARTEN, POEPOE, TAM, Chun		EDN, FIN			
 HB191 Department of Education; Farm to School Program; Geographic Preference; Locally Grown Food RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT. Requires the Department of Education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to EDN, AGR, FIN, referral sheet 1	PERRUSO, ALDOS, BELATTI, CHUN, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KAHALOA, NATSUMOTO, POEPOE, SOUZA, WARD		EDN, AGR, FIN			

Once you get your search results, you can refine further by using control+f on your keyboard, to highlight specific words you might be looking for. In this example we searched for “public school” in the subject search box on the previous screen and once we get to this results screen, did a control+f keyboard search to see if anything comes up research to school meals (could also search lunch or breakfast).

For HB63 Education; Public Schools; Complexes; Curriculum; Authentic Assessments has the red bracket on the left side of the screen. Those fields – the keywords, title, and summary – are what is being searched when you do a Subject Search.

To Submit Testimony, sign up for Hearing Notices and more..
First, register your email address to create an account
After that, just log in...



The screenshot shows the Hawaii State Legislature website. At the top, there is a blue header with the state seal on the left, the text "Hawai'i State Legislature" and "Ka 'Aha'Ōlelo Moku'āina 'O Hawai'i" in the center, and a search bar on the right. In the top right corner of the header, the links "Log In" and "Register" are circled in red. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "LEGISLATURE", "EVENTS", "PARTICIPATE", "LAWS & RESEARCH", and "HELP & INFO". The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Log In" and contains a form with an "email address" field, a "password" field, a "Log In" button, and a "Forgot Password?" link. The right column is titled "Register" and contains text about the benefits of registering, a "Register here" link, and a link for "additional options for submitting".

Log In

email address

password

Log In

[Forgot Password?](#)

Register

Don't have a login? [Register here](#)

After registering for an account you will be able to create personalized measure tracking lists, submit testimony online, and receive hearing notice notification by e-mail.

For additional options for submitting

Go to the legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov). To use the "Submit Testimony" or any of the other account-based features, first we "Log In" to the website – we'll enter our email address and the password we created.

LEGISLATURE ▾EVENTS ▾PARTICIPATE ▾LAWS & RESEARCH ▾HELP & INFO ▾

You are signed in as johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com

Submit Testimony

Hearing Notifications

Measure Tracking

Edit Account

Find Legislator

HEARING NOTIFICATION

Receive hearing notification by measure or committee.

Save and Exit

HELP! If you are not receiving notifications, please click here.

Subscribe by measure

Enter measure with no spaces or draft numbers and click Add. You may click on the measure link to view current measure status.

AddClear this List

Measure Title

HB300RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.Remove

Subscribe by committee

Check the boxes next to the committees you wish to receive notices for.

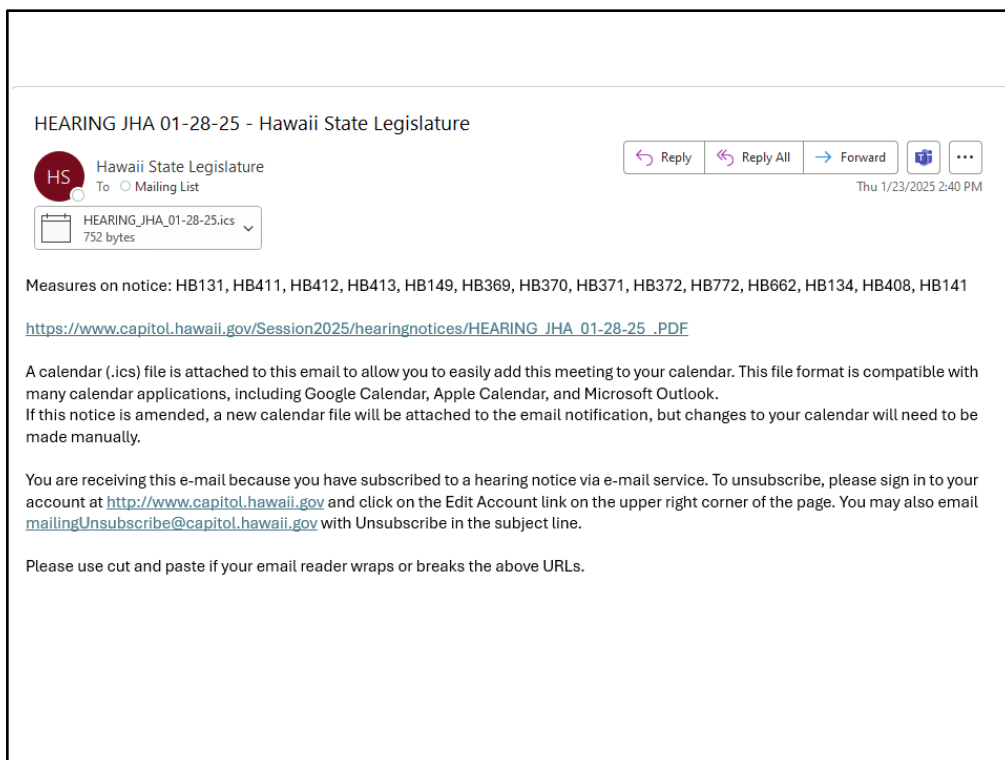
☐ Check All/Uncheck All

	Committee Name	Chamber
<input type="checkbox"/>		Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	AGR	Agriculture & Food Systems House
<input type="checkbox"/>	CAA	Culture & Arts House
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPC	Consumer Protection & House

You can use the Hearing Notifications option when you are logged in to your capitol.hawaii.gov account to sign up to receive emails for hearing notifications by individual measure or by committee. Make sure you click Save and Exit before you leave the page, if you've made any changes.

If you sign up to receive notifications by committee, you may receive quite a number of emails. So many people prefer to be more focused and subscribe by measure. It's up to you though!

31



This is an example of what the hearing notice email will look like. You can click on the PDF link to see the agenda, and that will tell you more information about the measures on the hearing agenda.

The screenshot shows the 'MEASURE TRACKING' section of a website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: LEGISLATURE, EVENTS, PARTICIPATE, LAWS & RESEARCH, and HELP & INFO. Below this, a user is signed in as 'johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com'. A row of buttons includes 'Submit Testimony', 'Hearing Notifications', 'Measure Tracking' (highlighted), 'Edit Account', and 'Find Legislator'.

The main heading is 'MEASURE TRACKING' with a subtext: 'Create lists of measures, enter customized notes on measures, and generate a detailed measure report.'

Two columns of instructions are present:

- Left Column:** 'Enter a name and click Create List to store the measures you wish to track. Use Show List to begin adding measures to that list.'
- Right Column:** 'Add measures to your list by clicking Add a Measure. Add notes to your measures by selecting Add Notes. You may view status of the measure by clicking the measure link. Generate Report will display a detailed report of your measure list. Measures will appear in the order you add them.'

Four red boxes with arrows point to specific features:

- 1st – create list:** Points to the 'Create List' button.
- 2nd – show list:** Points to the 'Show List' button next to the '2025 bills' list name.
- 3rd – add measures:** Points to the 'Add a Measure' button.
- 4th – generate report whenever you want:** Points to the 'Generate Report' button.

The '2025 bills' list is expanded, showing a table with the following data:

Measure		Measure Notes (250 char max)	
SB180	Add Notes	keep Jessica posted	Delete

If you want to create your own Measure Tracking list:

1st, on the left side of the screen – you need to create and name your list – in this example – I had created a list called 2025 Bills

2nd, click on Show List next to 2025 Bills

3rd, you can add measures (bills or resolutions) to your list. Remember to click add measure to get them in your list. Note: you can list multiple measures at once to add, just separate by a comma.

4th, come back periodically and Generate Report – this will allow you to check on all your bills at once, rather than having to look them up one at a time

Measure Tracking Report: 2025 bills					
Your personalized measure tracking report.			Hawaii State Legislature		
Export to Excel Export to CSV					
Measure	Notes	Current Status	Introducer(s)	Referral	Companion
SB180  DAGS; OETS; State Website; Translation Tool; Appropriations RELATING TO ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES. Appropriates funds to the Department of Accounting and General Services for the Office of Enterprise Technology Services to develop and maintain a translation tool for the State's website.	keep Jessica posted	(S) 1/17/2025 - Referred to LBT, WAM.	AQUINO	LBT, WAM	
SB2  Landscaping; Fruit Trees; Harvest; Indemnification RELATING TO TREES. Requires the State, to the extent practicable, to plant fruit trees in new or renovated landscaping that includes trees. Authorizes persons to harvest fruit from those fruit trees. Provides that the State is not liable for any injuries or illnesses resulting from the harvesting or ingesting of fruit, including food-borne illness.		(S) 1/16/2025 - Referred to GVO, WAM/JDC.	AWA, DECORTE, FEVELLA	GVO, WAM/JDC	
HB300  State Budget RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET. Appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.		(H) 1/21/2025 - Referred to FIN, referral sheet 1	NAKAMURA (Introduced by request of another party)	FIN	SB473
SB182  Hotels; Hotel Services; Service Disruptions; Strikes; Lockouts; Third-Party Vendor; Guests; Notice; Damages RELATING TO SERVICE DISRUPTIONS. Requires hotelkeepers to provide adequate notice of strikes and lockouts to guests and third-party vendors under certain conditions. Allows for recovery of damages.		(S) 1/17/2025 - Referred to LBT, CPN/JDC.	AQUINO	LBT, CPN/JDC	
SB184  Deposit Beverage Container Program; Deposit and Refund Value; Increase RELATING TO THE DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINER PROGRAM. Increases the deposit and refund value for beverage containers from 5 cents to 10 cents under the deposit beverage container program.		(S) 1/21/2025 - The committee(s) on AEN has scheduled a public hearing on 01-24-25 1:00PM; Conference Room 224 & Videoconference.	AQUINO	AEN, WAM	

Example of a 2025 Bills list in Measure Tracking

Once you are on this page – you can export to Excel and use excel tools to manage the results, or print the page as a PDF as another way to share the information with others – if you print to PDF, we recommend you print as landscape orientation, to keep the columns all on one page.

Also from this view, you can click on Current Status to resort the list. Click on that column heading twice, and it will bring the measures will most recent action at the top. This is useful as we go through the session, especially if you have many measures on your list, because it will push the bills that are more likely to have died (things that haven't had an action in many weeks) to the bottom.

And of course, you can click on the PDF on the right side of the list to see the full text via PDF of the measure or click on the blue measure number to go to the measure summary status page to see more information.



First Reading

Constitutional
requirement:
Bills must pass
3 readings
(votes) on the
floor of each
chamber

The First Reading vote is nothing to get excited about. All the bills pass their first vote on the floor.

You'll soon find out what committees the bill needs to go through...

After the bill is introduced, it will soon get its committee referral in its originating chamber (the House for HBs, the Senate for SBs) – the list of committees the bill will go through in order to survive. It could be that our bill is referred to three committees, or to two, or maybe just one. Sometimes, the committees may be asked to meet together (a joint referral). In any case, this list of committees is called the 'committee referral' and once we know what committees a bill needs to go through, we can use our voice to influence things.

Your Voice

Ask for a Public Hearing

Chair decides which bills will get a hearing – there is limited time!



We can ask for a public hearing. We'll have to move quickly – those deadlines come up *fast!* Committees need to give at least 48-hours notice of a public hearing and the committees don't all meet every day of the week.

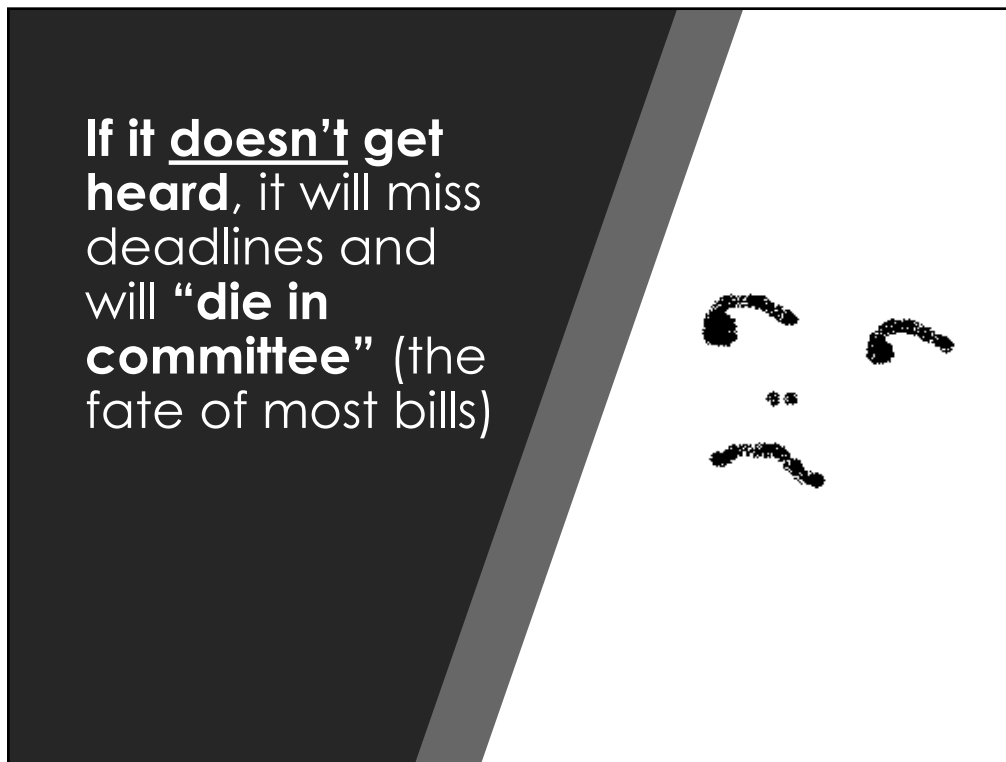
Are there other people we can get to join our call for a hearing? If so, you'll want them to help you move the bill forward –

Go to the person with the
power:
chair of the committee

We ask the person with the power – the chair of that first committee – to have the bill heard, considered by the committee.

Getting your bill scheduled for a committee hearing is a big step – many bills never get that far. Contact the committee chair’s office and just ask – “Would you please make sure to schedule *[bill number]* for a hearing? I think it’s important because...” They should be upfront with you about whether they will. The chair’s office has a lot of things to consider – your bill is one among many that have been referred to the committee, and they’ve only got so much time to hear bills.

When a bill is scheduled for a hearing, a *hearing notice* is published and distributed to let everyone know what’s being discussed. This is the opportunity the public has been waiting for to provide testimony.



If the chair doesn't like your bill or doesn't think it's a priority and won't schedule it, it will just sit there while deadlines go by, and it will be left behind.

If the chair is not inclined to hear your bill, you may want to talk to other members of the committee – if they're in favor of it being heard, they may be willing to advocate to the chair.

You can find lists of the committees and committee chairs on both the legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov) and PAR's (LRB.hawaii.gov/PAR/).

Remember to keep your eyes open for other bills that are being heard that may cover similar subject matter. You may want to testify on those. That involves keeping your eyes open for hearing notices.

**If your bill does get
scheduled for a public
hearing...**

If a bill you're interested in does get scheduled for a public hearing, you've got another chance to use your voice...

Your Voice Testify!

Who testifies?

Executive Departments, Interest
Groups, Lobbyists, Public

Testify! Offer your opinion on whether the bill is a good idea.

Your testimony at those committee meetings can be very helpful to the committee members. Don't make them have to come to decisions on legislation all on their own! Members of the public can offer a tremendous amount of experience, expertise, and variety of viewpoints that help to make better laws for us all. Also testifying will be executive departments, interest groups, and paid lobbyists.

Just a head's up: there's never as much time as you think you need to prepare your testimony! Just do the best you can and see if you can get other people who care about the issue to offer their testimony, too. The deadline is usually just 24-hours prior to the hearing.

Testimony information appears at the end of the **hearing notice**.

THE SENATE THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2021		
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair		
NOTICE OF HEARING		
DATE:	Wednesday, March 17, 2021	
TIME:	9:30 AM	
PLACE:	Conference Room 229 & Videoconference	
THE STATE CAPITAL To comply with social media laws, you will not be able to see a live stream of all Senate proceedings. Click here for more information.	HB 78, HD1 (HSCR921) Status & Testimony	RELATING TO THE UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION OF HIGH-VOLTAGE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES. CPN, WAM Eliminates the requirement for a public utility to seek approval from the public utilities commission for the underground construction of high-voltage electric transmission lines if certain conditions are met. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)
HB 459, HD2 (HSCR881) Status & Testimony	Decision Making to follow, if time permits.	
HB 940, HD2 (HSCR880) Status & Testimony	All testimony received by the Hawai'i Senate is posted on the Hawai'i Legislature's website, which is accessible to the public. Please do not include private information that you do not want disclosed to the public.	
HB 171, HD1	Persons wishing to submit written testimony or request to testify via videoconference may do so up to 24 hours prior to the hearing.	
	Click here to submit written testimony .	
	If you wish to testify via videoconference during the hearing, please sign in to your account on the Legislature's website, then click on the "Testimony" icon on the home page. Detailed step-by-step instructions are available on the testimony submittal page. They are also posted on the Legislature's website here . Please note the following:	

The hearing notice lists the time and place it will meet and which measures are being considered.

Guidelines and the testimony deadline appear at the end of the hearing notice.

No rules

on what your written
testimony
looks or sounds like.

That's up to **you**.



In submitting written testimony, there's no set rule as to what it should look like. That's up to you. We do encourage you to try to keep it to a page or two. Try to make the main points immediately apparent.

Keep in mind committees may impose time limits for in person testimony especially in cases where they have a long agenda, another reason to put your most important points at the beginning of your testimony.

QR code goes to PAR Engagement 101 webpage: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/engagement-101/>

This webpage has information for signing up for an account on the Legislature's website to be able to sign up for hearing notices and walks through the steps of submitting testimony. There's even a template for testimony (just a suggestion on how to get started), if you want it.

Written Testimony



- Bill number
- Your name
- Are you **for** or **against** the bill?
- Why?

Remember...

- Stories are great
- Use your own words
 - Keep it short
- You don't have to be an expert

Include the essentials: the bill number, your name, whether you are for or against the measure, and where you're coming from. (Are you an expert? Great. But that's not necessary. Maybe you have an experience you'd like to share. Or maybe you're motivated by your moral or religious beliefs. Let them know where you're coming from.)

It's useful to clearly state if you are for or against the measure.

So, remember... You don't have to be an expert. Stories are great. Use your own words. Keep it short. Type up your testimony and save it as a file on your computer. Now you're ready to submit it! (Don't have time for that? No worries – there's a place on the webform in which you can type your testimony.)

Hawai'i State Legislature
Ka 'Aha 'Ōiēlo Moku 'Ōiēlo 'O Hawai'i

Edit Account | Log Out

Search...

Advanced Search | Help

LEGISLATURE - EVENTS - PARTICIPATE - LAWS & RESEARCH - HELP & INFO -

You are signed in as **John Q Citizen- (johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com)**

Submit Testimony | **Hearing Notifications** | **Measure Tracking** | **Edit Account** | **Find Legislator**

SUBMIT TESTIMONY

Testimony being submitted by John Q Citizen- (johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com)

Enter Bill or Measure and click Continue

Examples: HB100 or SB123 (not case sensitive)

Please note that **you will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony**. If your testimony is green in the list below, then it was successfully submitted and received.

Your Testimony

☐ - Not yet submitted

By using our online testimony submission process, you agree to the terms below.

Enter a bill or measure to continue.

[View Instructions](#) | [See our Help page](#)


This privacy statement applies to the Hawai'i State Legislature Website, www.capitol.hawaii.gov, operated jointly by the Hawai'i State Senate and House of Representatives. The Website is designed to promote open access to information and records of the Hawai'i State Legislature and its members.

The Website has been designed to minimize the need to provide personal information as a condition to accessing information and services available on the website. Some

Then, enter the bill number you want to testify on. Don't put in any spaces between the letters and numbers, and don't add on any draft numbers. Review the terms listed on the right. All testimony is public and will be posted to the website. Click on "Continue".

You won't be able to submit testimony until a hearing is scheduled. If a hearing is scheduled, after hitting continue the testimony submission form will appear.

SUBMIT TESTIMONY



Testimony being submitted by John Q Citizen- (johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com)

Enter Bill or Measure and click Continue

Examples: HB100 or SB123 (not case sensitive)

Please note that **you will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony.** If your testimony is green in the list below, then it was successfully submitted and received.

Please Submit testimony, Save Progress, or click Clear above to show Your Testimony list.

Bill	Committee Room	Date/Time	
SB 16			
RELATING TO HAWAIIAN AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII.	HWN	CR 224 & Videoconference	Jan 26, 2023 1:00 PM View Notice

Testifier's Full Name
(First and Last)

*If planning on testifying via Zoom, this name must match your Zoom name exactly.

Your position on SB16

☐ Support
☐ Oppose
☐ Comments Only

The bill's hearing information will appear along with a submission form.

Proceed to **fill out the form** that appears.

If you are requesting the opportunity to testify remotely, make sure that the "Testifier's Full Name" field at the top of the form has the name of the person who will be offering Zoom testimony – the Zoom identity must match this field.

You'll need to click on the little circle to indicate your position on the measure – do you support, oppose, or are you just offering comments (no position on the bill, but offering information or perspective).

Comments Only

Testifying:

☒ As an individual citizen

☐ On behalf of an organization (name of government agency, organization, or business you are representing)

Public Access Room

How will you be testifying? [more info](#)

Zoom option disables 24 hrs before hearing

☐ In person & submitting written testimony

☐ Remotely via Zoom & submitting written testimony

☒ Written testimony only


Please submit your written testimony using ONE of the two options listed below.

- Acceptable document filetype extensions: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .odt
- Attachments 20MB max
- Attachments will NOT be saved and must be attached at time of submission

File Upload: No file chosen

-- OR --

Your testimony/comments on SBI6



Then, indicate whether you're testifying as an individual or on behalf of an organization and whether you'll just be submitting written testimony or if you wish to also offer oral testimony, either in person or remotely via Zoom.

Now you're ready to add your written testimony.

SUBMIT TESTIMONY

Testimony being submitted by John Q Citizen- (johnqcitizenhawaii@gmail.com)

Enter Bill or Measure and click Continue

Examples: HB100 or SB123 (not case sensitive)

Please note that **you will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony**. If your testimony is green in the list below, then it was successfully submitted and received.

Your Testimony

Not yet submitted.

Successfully submitted.

Support Oppose Comments

Measure Hearing

SB16

HEARING HWN 01-26-23

Room: CR 224 & Videoconference

1:00 PM

View

How the process of posting written testimony works:

Once your testimony is submitted and is listed in green in the sidebar, it is in our system. However, it is not automatically posted to the website.

Senate

- Written testimony submitted by the 24-hour deadline will be posted online prior to the convening of the public hearing.
- Written testimony received after the 24-hour deadline will be posted to the Capitol website within 24 hours after the hearing has adjourned and may be marked as "late".

House

- The hearing committee gathers all "on-time" testimony in the system for a particular bill, which is testimony submitted at least 24 hours before the hearing, and compiles it into a single document. Staff will try to incorporate additional testimony received within 24 hours of the hearing if possible.
- The hearing committee will post testimony received "on-time" to the Capitol website at the beginning of the hearing.
- Testimony received after the 24-hour deadline may be marked as "late" but will be posted to the Capitol website as soon as possible following the hearing. Testimony submitted after the hearing will not be considered or posted.

Your testimony was submitted and should appear in the list to the left. You will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony. If it is listed in green, then it was successfully received by our system.

You'll be returned to the original "Submit Testimony" page. A green box on the left corresponding to your hearing will appear. This indicates that your written testimony has been successfully transmitted to the committee.

49

In Person Testimony



- “Chair ___, Vice Chair ___ and members of the committee...”
- Short and simple (may be a time limit)
 - Introduce yourself
 - State your position
 - Remember to **Breathe!**
- **Become a trusted resource!**

Here are some simple guidelines

“Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee...” is a great way to start.

Short and simple (2-3 minutes) – there may be a time limit, honor it.

Introduce yourself and the group or organization (if any) you represent.

Clearly state your position – in favor? Opposed? Alternatives?

Be courteous, respectful, and professional

Remember to **Breathe!**

Don’t just read your testimony – the committee has your written words. Instead, summarize your position, provide a point you’d like to emphasize. A short story can be very effective.

Tell the truth and don’t exaggerate. **Become a trusted resource!**

After all the
testimony has been
heard...

So now what? You've offered testimony, now you wait to see what the committee will do.

The Committee may...

- **Vote**
 - pass the bill without changes
 - pass the bill with changes
- **Not vote!** Defer or hold



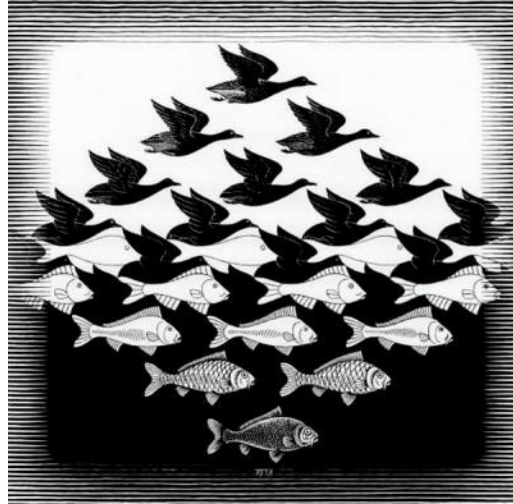
- 1) The committee may vote to pass the bill just as it is, without any changes.
- 2) The committee may vote to pass the bill “as amended,” with changes.
- 3) The committee may choose not to vote – instead, the chair announces that they will “defer” or “hold” the bill. If they haven’t set a date for decision making, this means the bill will stay in the committee and miss the upcoming deadlines.

If the committee votes to pass the bill, the bill survives and moves forward in the legislative process.

The person who decides which of these paths to go on? The chair of the committee.

NOTE: On rare occasions, the committee may vote on the bill and the bill fails to win the vote; the bill would then be dead. It is much more common for a vote to be avoided if the chair knows there will not be enough support to pass it.

If changes *have* occurred...



Changes may be **minor or significant**

If they passed the bill with changes, they can be minor changes like correcting punctuation and other technical changes, or major changes affecting what the bill does.

2 Common Changes

Effective date: “1/1/3000”

Appropriate/fund: \$_____

(blank amount)

! Note: Bill must conform to its title !

The thing that constrains how much a bill can change is its title, which never changes. The bill must always conform to its **title**. (for example: ...Relating to Education or ...Relating to License Plates)

Two common changes:

- Effective date may be **far in future** “to ensure further discussion”: The “defective” effective date is a mechanism to ensure that the bill goes into the conference committee process near the end of session. There is no intention of it going off to the governor like that.
- Dollar amounts may be **blanked out**: If they want to keep a dollar amount associated with the bill, they’ll make note of it in the committee report. The final dollar amount or appropriation details will usually be determined during the conference committee process.

Any changes will be summarized in the **committee report**, published whenever a bill moves forward out of committee.

If changed, it gets a
new draft number...

The screenshot shows the Oregon Legislative Bill page for HB141 HD1 SD1. The page has a dark blue header with navigation links: LEGISLATURE, EVENTS, PARTICIPATE, LAWS & RESEARCH, and HELP & INFO. Below the header, the bill number 'HB141 HD1 SD1' is displayed in large blue text, followed by icons for PDF, HTML, and a question mark. An orange button labeled 'Submit Testimony' is to the right. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains the following information: Measure Title: RELATING TO FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES.; Report Title: State Ethics Commission Package; Financial Disclosures; Legislators; Lobbyists; Relationships; Description: Beginning 1/1/2025, requires each state legislator to include within the legislator's disclosure of financial interests the names of certain lobbyists with whom the legislator has a relationship. Effective 1/1/2025. (SD1). The right column has two sections: 'All Versions of this Measure' and 'Committee Reports'. The 'All Versions of this Measure' section lists three versions: HB141_SD1, HB141_HD1, and HB141, each with a PDF icon. The 'Committee Reports' section lists two reports: HB141_HD1_HSCR782_ and HB141_SD1_SSCR1233_, each with a PDF icon.

HB141 HD1 SD1	
Measure Title:	RELATING TO FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES.
Report Title:	State Ethics Commission Package; Financial Disclosures; Legislators; Lobbyists; Relationships
Description:	Beginning 1/1/2025, requires each state legislator to include within the legislator's disclosure of financial interests the names of certain lobbyists with whom the legislator has a relationship. Effective 1/1/2025. (SD1)

All Versions of this Measure	
HB141_SD1	
HB141_HD1	
HB141	

Committee Reports	
HB141_HD1_HSCR782_	
HB141_SD1_SSCR1233_	

The amended bill will be given a new draft number.

It has still got its bill number, but now there is a new suffix indicating which draft (or version) of the bill we're looking at. HD = House Draft, SD = Senate Draft – the number indicates the number of times it's been changed by that chamber. This can look a bit confusing at first, but it really does help to make sure we're looking at the same version of the bill.



On the right side of the page, you'll find links to previous versions of the measure. To get a quick glimpse of what changes were made, check out the committee reports that are published as the committees move the bill forward. Each committee report will summarize the changes, if any, that were made.

Under Hearing Notices, you can view the hearing notices (Agenda) as well as watch the proceedings – in real time, or after the fact – by clicking on the YouTube logo.

QR code points to PAR's using the Legislature's Website webpage <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/using-the-legislatures-website/> - look for link to "Quickview: How to Read the Bill/Measure Status Summary Page" for a brief handout on the sections of the measure status summary page (like the example on this slide)



Second Reading

Constitutional
requirement:
Bills must pass
3 readings
(votes) on the
floor of each
chamber

Yay! Your bill passed its first (or first and second) committees... Now it's back to the floor for Second Reading! A majority of the members present vote 'aye.' And now we go on to our next committee if there is one...

Your Voice Testify! (Again)

If your bill moves forward to the next committee... do it again!

- Ask to have it heard at the **next** committee
- Offer testimony at the **next** committee
- Tailor your testimony to the **new** committee
- Don't assume subsequent committees have read your earlier testimony
- Repeat as necessary!

If the bill moves forward, you can ask that it be heard by the next committee. If a public hearing is scheduled, come and testify again. You don't have to worry about a whole new creative writing project, instead you can use virtually the same testimony you provided at the previous hearing. Just make sure that if the bill has changed, your testimony is still relevant. And you may want to emphasize the parts of your testimony that address the committee's purview.



Third Reading

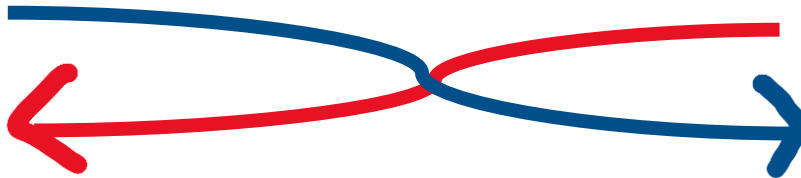
Constitutional
requirement:
Bills must pass
3 readings
(votes) on the
floor of each
chamber

After it's made it through all the committees (which it must do by the First Decking deadline), it comes back to the floor for the Third Reading. The members of the House or Senate are given 48-hours notice of all bills coming up for Third Reading. This ensures that they've had time to review them before this critical vote. The bill has to survive Third Reading by the First Crossover deadline.

Crossover

House bills go to the
Senate

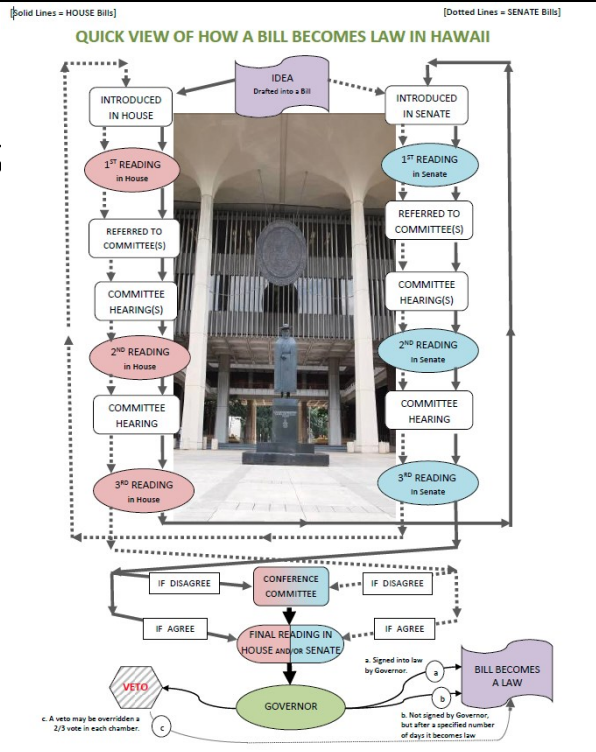
Senate bills go to the
House



If your bill survives all three readings, then it ‘crosses over’ and attempts to go through the same process in the other chamber!

This time it will be the non-originating chamber that passes it on First Reading and then assigns committees, and you’ll ask for the bill to be heard, just like before. Deadlines come quickly during this part of session, and a bill must get through all three readings in the non-originating chamber by the Second Crossover deadline.

And the bills go through the **same process in the other chamber**



So, we've gone down one side of the diagram, and now we start down the other side. Now the Senate will be considering the House bills that survived First Crossover, and the House will be considering the Senate bills that survived.

(Note: If we were following a Senate bill, it would have to pass the Senate committees it was referred to and three readings on the Senate floor before First Crossover – it would then be transmitted to the House for its journey there.)

For more information on a bill's journey: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/a-bills-journey/> (QR code points to this webpage)

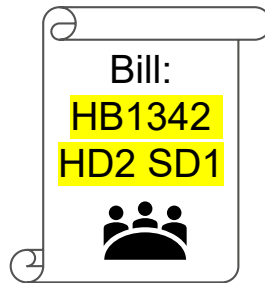
Session moves even faster
after **First Crossover**...

Bills must get through their
non-originating chamber by
Second Crossover

If a bill makes it past Second
Crossover and multiple drafts
exist..

Things move quickly after First Crossover! They must get through their committees and three readings by the Second Crossover deadline.

House and Senate leadership can appoint members to **Conference Committees** to find agreement on a bill that has different House and Senate versions (ex: HB1342 HD2 SD1)



Conference committees try to reach agreement on final version of the bill

If the House has passed one version of the bill, and the Senate has passed another, the conference committees appointed by House and Senate leadership for that bill will try to iron out the differences and come to an agreement on the final version of the bill to be presented to their chambers. For example, if the House moved forward a HD2 version, and the Senate voted on a SD1 version: the conference committees can compare the drafts and consider what the final version of the bill should look like.

Conference committee members (also known as 'managers') are usually made up of chairs (or their designees) of the committees that heard the bill. The subject matter committee chair (the first committee to hear the bill in each chamber) are usually the chairs of the conference committee.



Conference Meetings



- **No guarantee** that members will be appointed or meetings scheduled
- **Public**, but no testimony
- **Joint conference rules** set by House and Senate leadership
- Usually, only **conference chairs** talk
- If bill has a **money referral (to FIN or WAM)**, needs final approval from money committee
- Any final version needs to be reported out with joint conference committee report filed by **Final Decking deadline**

Bills can still die here. Conference committees may fail to be appointed, convene, or may not come to an agreement. The fate of your bill may be tied to the fate of other bills being negotiated by *other* conference committees. While the meetings are open to the public, no testimony is accepted. Instead, advocates contact the conference members and anyone else they think may have some influence over the outcome and focus on which particulars they want to see in the final bill. Joint rules regarding conference are established by House and Senate leadership. Usually, the only ones talking during conference meetings are the conference chairs. Some conference committees may meet repeatedly as they attempt to come to an agreement. If a bill has a money referral (to FIN or WAM), they'll need approval from the money committee before reporting it out. The conferees need to come to agreement and report the bill out by the Final Decking deadline. [If there's an appropriation, it will need to be reported out by the "Final Decking (Fiscal Bills)" deadline – usually a day later than the deadline for non-money bills.]

Your Voice

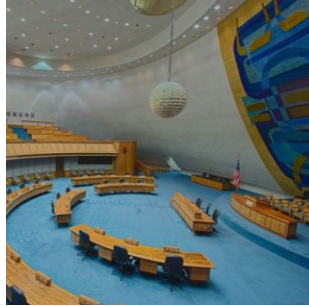
Advocate to Conferees

... and any other
legislators you've
developed a relationship
with...

While the meetings are open to the public, no testimony is received. Instead, advocates contact the conference members and anyone else they think may have some influence over the outcome. Advocates may focus on which particulars they want to see in the final bill.

The conferees need to come to agreement by the Final Decking deadline. For the budget and other appropriations bills, you'll see that there's a "Final Decking (**Fiscal Bills**)" deadline.

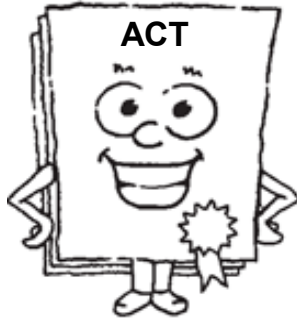
Final Reading



Both chambers must vote on
final version of bill
by the end of session
(*a.k.a. adjournment sine die*)

Finally, if the bill emerges from conference committee with a conference draft (CD1), that new version of the bill must be voted on by both the House and the Senate. The Final Reading must take place by the end of session (adjournment *sine die*) and members must be given 48 hours notice before the vote.

Your Voice 2

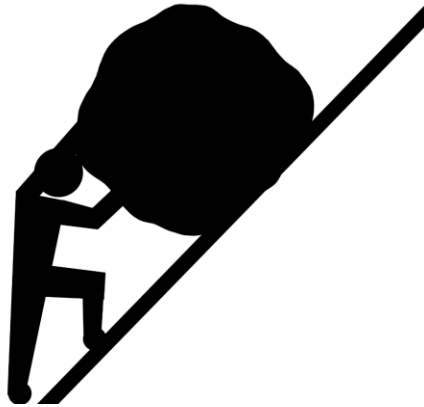


**Let the Governor
know your view**

But it's not over yet! The Governor has a say in whether the bill becomes law. You may want to let the Governor know that he should sign the bill into law – or let him know if you want it vetoed! If it does get signed (or not vetoed by a certain date), the bill becomes an act of law that governs the state of Hawaii. The date the law goes into effect is specified in the last section of the bill.

Note: If the bill is vetoed, there's still an opportunity for it to become law – the House and Senate can reconvene in special session, and if both chambers override the veto with a 2/3 vote, the bill is enacted. The legislature also has the option of amending a vetoed bill to meet the governor's objections; it then becomes law if the governor signs it.

**If it doesn't succeed...
Don't give up –**



get ready for next year's session!

Only about 10% of proposed bills make it all the way through the process.

If your bill dies...keep at it and remember that “many hands make light work.” The process is often long and complicated, so having other people involved will both increase your chances and keep you from burning out. Go over what happened during this year’s session and get ready for next year. Many ideas take more than one session to get to the end of the process – they can be adjusted and reintroduced.

It’s disappointing to a bill you are in favor of die. It helps to remember the bright side – Did a hearing spark good discussion on an issue? Raise awareness? Identify potential allies? Often, you can take a step back and find some progress that’s been made.

Even though the process of making a law may seem slow (it can take years) and is often frustrating, the process keeps a lot of “bad” legislation from coming into law. Just read through the descriptions of all the bills introduced at the start of session – you’re sure to see some things you disagree with!

Before you know it...

**It'll be the 3rd Wednesday in
January,
And the whole process begins
again*...**

*Actually, it's a **two-year cycle** that
follows the elections...

We didn't want to confuse you at the outset, but if your bill dies in an odd-numbered year, the first year of the 2-year legislative cycle (a biennium), it's not really dead(!).

In the first year of a biennium, any bill that didn't pass out of the legislature actually just goes into a coma. We say that it "died" but it's actually a potential "zombie" that could come back to life. In the 2nd year, in addition to all the new bills legislators will introduce, bills from the 1st year can be revived at exactly the same place they "died."

BUT at the end of the even-numbered year, the 2nd year of the biennium, if it hasn't passed into law, it is really truly finally absolutely totally DEAD.

We'll have elections in November of the even-numbered year, and a new biennium begins the following January with all new bills introduced.

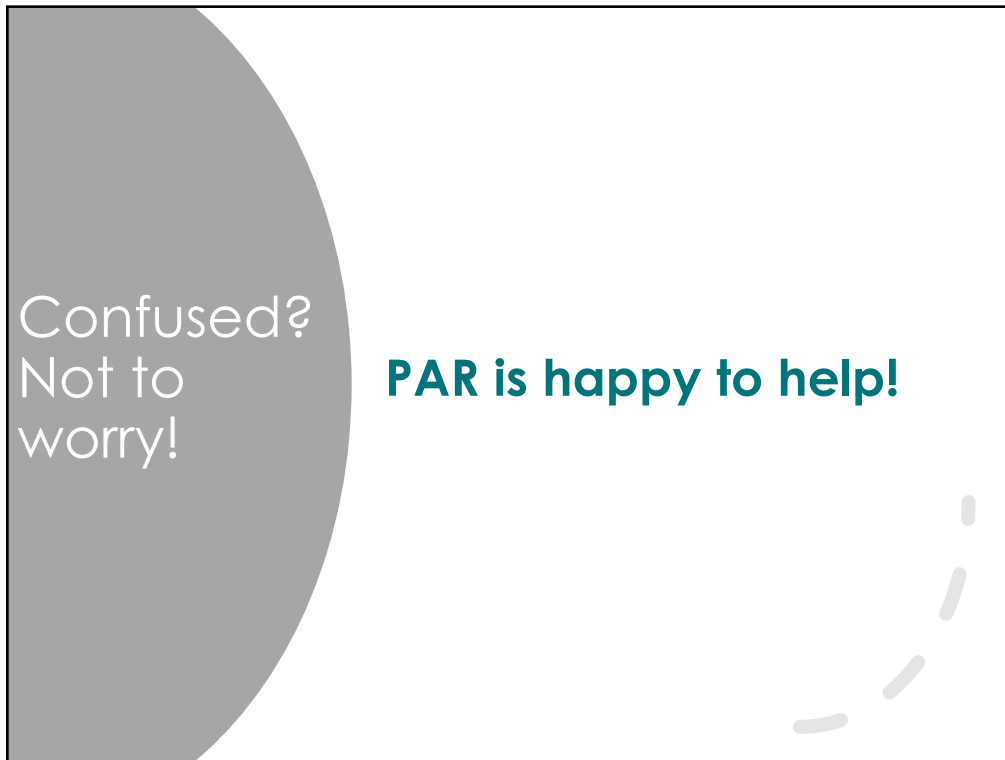
That's no reason to stop your campaign, though. Remember, more than just a specific bill, you're advocating for an idea! You can make a list of what you'd like a bill to do, take it to a legislator, ask that person to introduce a bill for you the following year... and it starts all over again.

Biennial Legislature

- In **odd-numbered years** (after elections), it starts afresh with **all new bills**
- In **even-numbered years**, **new bills** are introduced (with higher bill numbers) **plus** the bills from the previous session that didn't make it – they can keep moving
- But if no new action is taken, they will die

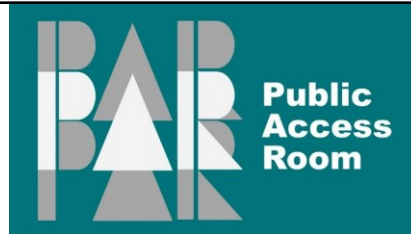
In the first year of a biennium (odd-numbered year), any bill that didn't pass out of the legislature and 'died' along the way isn't actually dead – it becomes a "carryover" bill that could come back to life in the second year (even-numbered year). In the second year, in addition to all the new bills legislators will introduce, bills from the first year can be revived at exactly the same place they were at the end of session. (Note: Often nothing happens to a carryover bill.) At the end of the second-year session, any bill that hasn't passed into law is completely dead. We'll have elections in November, and a new biennium begins the following January with all new bills introduced.

Remember, more than just a specific bill, you're advocating for an idea! During the interim, meet with legislators and allies to talk about your strategy next year. You may want to have a new bill introduced that incorporates some concerns that came up this session. You may want to ask for just part of what the original bill asked for. In any case, use the interim to get ready for next January. PAR's open year-round, too. So don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of help.



We know it all can seem a bit overwhelming and confusing. This is a lot of information! But the Public Access Room was established by the legislature as a resource to help to answer any of your questions and help you understand and learn more about the process.

Public Access Room (PAR)



- Help, information, and training at no charge
- Non-partisan
- Lots of resources!
 - Guidance on process
 - Computers with internet
 - Wireless access & recharge station
 - Helpful handouts
 - Website (lrb.hawaii.gov/par/)
 - Workshops and tutorials (YouTube)
 - Infographics on Facebook and Instagram



We are **non-partisan**, dealing exclusively in **process** and never in **policy** considerations. There is never a fee for our services – we’re supported by your tax dollars. You can come to PAR to use one of the public computers or the printer, have a small meeting, get copies of your testimony, or watch a hearing remotely. We have tables for you to work on your laptop (there’s free wifi throughout the building) or recharge your devices. Or perhaps just sit and relax a while. We can answer your questions and point you to resources. We also offer workshops and tutorials so you can learn more.

More information on LRB can be found on the website: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/>
QR code goes to <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/>

PAR's Website

Visit the
Public
Access
Room
website...



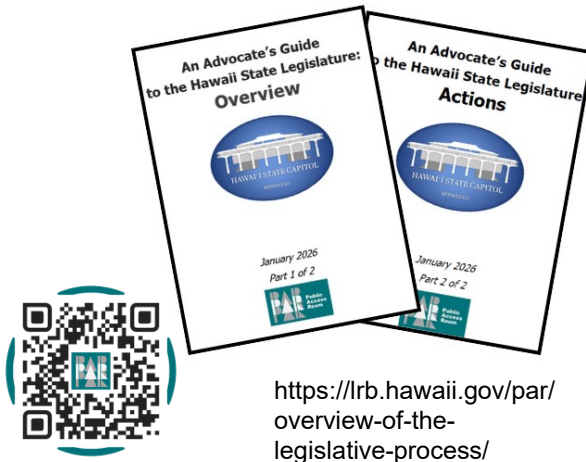
HTTP://LRB.HAWAII.GOV/PAR




The Legislature's website has become quite a wonderful resource. We can teach people how to use the website.

QR code goes to main Public Access Room webpage: lrb.hawaii.gov/par

New from PAR for 2026:



<https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/>



Advocate's Guide Table of Contents

Part 1: Overview

- Chapter 1: Hawaii State Legislature
- Chapter 2: How a Bill Becomes a Law
- Chapter 3: What's in a Bill
- Chapter 4: On the Floor: Chamber Proceedings
- Chapter 5: Other Measures
- Chapter 6: Once a Bill Becomes Law

Part 2: Actions

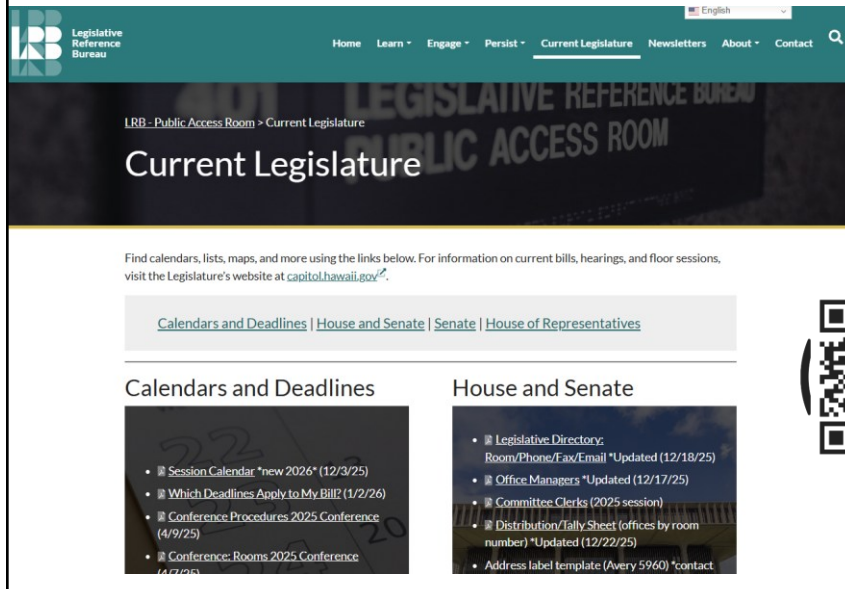
- Chapter 1: Proposing an Idea for a Bill
- Chapter 2: Committee Hearings
- Chapter 3: Participating in Hearings
- Chapter 4: Finding & Tracking Bills
- Chapter 5: Advocacy Outside of Hearings

80+ pages of practical guidance

Our new advocates guide is available on our website.

QR code points to: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/> visit to find the Advocate's Guide

PAR's Current Legislature Webpage



<https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>

[illegible]

- Handouts
- Workshops
- Social Media
 - Instagram
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
- Answering phone calls & emails



PAR's Upcoming Workshops

UPCOMING PAR ZOOM WORKSHOPS
<https://lrh.hawaii.gov/par/workshops/>

07 January | **Your Voice: Participating at the Hawaii State Legislature** 12-1 PM

13 January | **Legislative Calendar & Deadlines** 12-1 PM

14 January | **Get to Know the Legislature's Website** 12-1 PM

Can't attend?
Register via Zoom and we'll email the recording link and post to PAR's YouTube channel

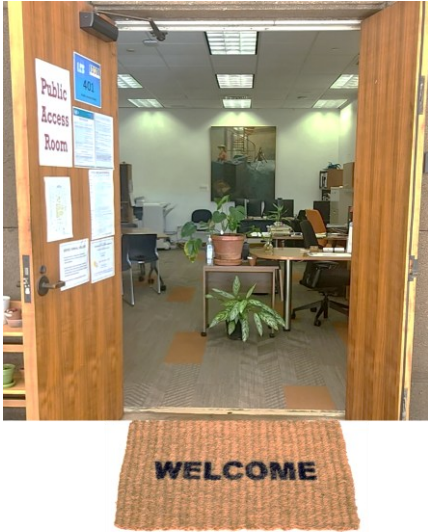


Upcoming PAR Zoom Workshops



Staff are invited to attend PAR public training as well

Public Access Room (PAR)



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State Capitol,
Room 401

par@capitol.hawaii.gov

 Hawaii Public Access Room

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 publicaccessroom

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

Contact us with any questions, or if you'd like more information.

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