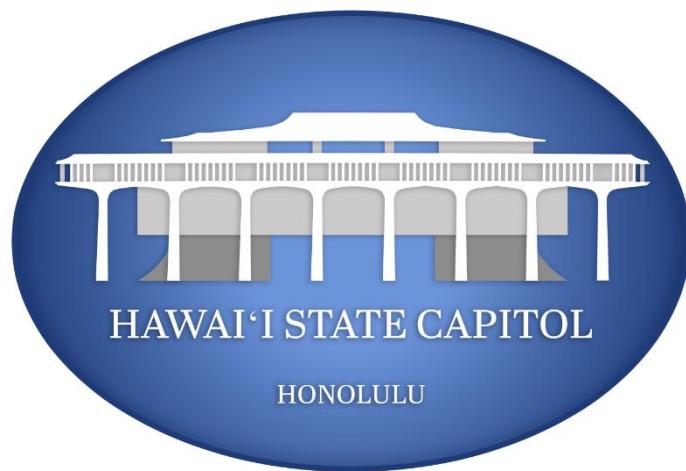


The Advocate's Guide to the Hawaii State Legislature: Overview



January 2026

Part 1 of 2



The Public Access Room has produced *The Advocate's Guide* to be a resource to anyone that wants to learn more about the legislative process in the State of Hawaii. This resource is made up of two parts. *Part 1: Overview* of the Hawaii State Legislature and the legislative process and *Part 2: Actions* that advocates or interested parties can take to get involved. We hope this two-part approach makes the resource more manageable. When looking for information in this document: you can do a Find/Search by using the keyboard shortcut Control+F or Command+F and type the keyword to see where the word or concept appears. There are also references at the end of the document, to provide links to sources of information shared, or places to look for more information.

Disclaimer: This document reflects a layperson's perspective of the legislative process as overviewed by the Public Access Room (PAR) and should not be viewed as a legal authority. PAR is part of a legislative services agency, separate from the Hawaii House of Representatives and Hawaii Senate. For specific questions regarding steps taken by either legislative chamber, please contact the respective body directly.

PAR is part of the non-partisan Legislative Reference Bureau (<https://lrb.hawaii.gov/>) and is a statutorily established office which aims to help residents participate in the legislative process. We focus on the process, rather than policy—and are here to help people on all sides of an issue to encourage public participation. We provide handouts, workshops, and more to help people get more familiar with the ins and outs of the Hawaii State Legislature.

Follow PAR on social media for session information, additional resources, and to hear about upcoming workshops. You can also view past Zoom workshops on our YouTube channel.

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We hope you find the information in this guide helpful! If you have any questions, contact us or stop by the Public Access Room (PAR) at the Hawaii State Capitol. Credit for this document goes to current and former PAR staff: Virginia Beck, Lacey Chu, Ashley Kaono, Andy Langhurst, and Keanu Young.

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Part 1, Chapter 1: Hawaii State Legislature



The government of the State of Hawaii is structured with a system of checks and balances so that power is not confined to just one branch. There are three separate but equal branches whose powers are outlined in the [Constitution of the State of Hawaii](#).¹ Roughly speaking:

The [Legislative Branch](#) makes the laws.²

The [Executive Branch](#) implements the laws.³

The [Judicial Branch](#) interprets the laws.⁴



Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813



Senate
25 members
4-year terms

Legislative Branch

Makes the laws

Leaders: President of Senate
Speaker of House of Representatives

Legislators (Senators, Representatives)



House of Representatives
51 members
2-year terms

Executive Branch

Implements the laws

Leader: Governor
Executive Departments

Judicial Branch

Interprets the laws

Leader: Chief Justice of Supreme Court
Hawaii Courts



Overview

As a representative democracy, the registered voters in Hawaii choose the people to serve as their voices in legislative government. The Hawaii State Legislature is bicameral, meaning it has two distinct legislative bodies: the Senate and the House of Representatives.⁵

Hawaii is divided into 25 Senatorial districts and 51 House districts. To find your district and the legislators who represent you, use the [Find Your Legislator tool](#) on the legislature's website.⁶

- The Senate has 25 elected members who serve four-year terms.
- The House of Representatives has 51 elected members who serve two-year terms.

To serve as a member of the legislature, a person must be:⁷

- At least 18 years old,
- A resident of Hawaii for at least three years, and
- A qualified voter of the district in which they seek election.

Elections are held in even-numbered years and are overseen by the [Office of Elections](#).⁸ The district divisions are established every ten years by the [State Reapportionment Commission](#).⁹

After redistricting, the Commission will assign a two-year term for 12 of the 25 State Senate seats and a four-year term for the remaining 13 State Senate seats. The 12 seats up for re-election after the initial two-year term has ended will resume the four-year term going forward. This allows for stability in the Senate, with roughly half the seats up for election every two years (except in the election immediately after reapportionment).¹⁰ In the House of Representatives, members serve two-year terms, and all seats are up for election every two years.

As governed by the Hawaii State Constitution, both chambers establish rules governing their procedures, and organize themselves into various leadership roles and standing committees to allocate power and responsibility.¹¹

Hawaii operates on a biennial (two-year) legislative cycle and only meets for part of the year. Legislators may hold non-public sector positions of employment in addition to their elected office. The Hawaii State Legislature convenes in Regular Session from the third Wednesday in January through

late April or early May (a total of 60 session days, which doesn't include weekends, holidays, and recess days).¹²

The rest of the year is referred to as "the interim." While legislators are not in session during the interim, their offices continue working as they research issues, help constituents, discuss proposals, and draft legislation for future sessions.

Items that go through the legislative process are called measures. Measures include:

- Bills (including constitutional amendments)
- Resolutions
- Communications
- Messages

Bills are only introduced by legislators at the beginning of each legislative session, in mid-January. If successful, the bill becomes law.¹³

A calendar of deadlines requires legislation to move efficiently through committee hearings—where groups of lawmakers hear testimony and opinions from the public, lobbyists, executive branch agencies, and other interested stakeholders. Proposed legislation must also pass mandatory floor votes by the full Senate and the full House, called "readings."

There are legislative service agencies that also belong to the legislative branch of government. They are:

- The Office of the Auditor,
- The State Ethics Commission,
- The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB), and
- The Office of the Ombudsman.

The Legislative Session

The Hawaii State Legislature convenes in Regular Session for a period of 60 days to consider the passage of legislation. Annually, opening day of the legislative session is the third Wednesday of January, starting at 10:00 a.m.¹⁴

The Hawaii State Legislature operates on a biennial, or two-year, cycle.

"Session" refers to:

An annual session of the legislature

The biennial (two-year) legislative session

The meetings held on the chamber floor with all members

- The biennial session takes place between elections held in even-numbered years, providing continuity of legislators.
- The biennium starts with the legislative session beginning in odd-numbered years and ending in even-numbered years (e.g. 2025 – 2026).

Bills introduced during the first year of the biennium carry over to the second year from the point they left off the year before (where they may have the opportunity to move forward). At the end of the second year, all bills that haven't passed out of the legislature are dead. Any ideas legislators want to keep working on need to be introduced as new measures in the next biennial legislative session.

During the designated 60 legislative days, the Senate and House of Representatives convene to hold meetings in their respective chambers; these meetings are known as "floor sessions." Usually, the Hawaii State Senate convenes at 11:30 a.m. and the Hawaii State House of Representatives convenes at 12:00 p.m. The meeting times are established by each chamber's internal rules.¹⁵

The Senate President and House Speaker preside over their respective floor sessions in compliance with the Constitution of the State of Hawaii, the *Rules of the Senate/Rules of the House of Representatives*, and if needed, *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure*.

The agenda for a given floor session is referred to as the "Order of the Day," and is produced by each chamber's chief clerk. The House Order of the Day (HOD) and Senate Order of the Day (SOD) are usually posted on the legislature's website (capitol.hawaii.gov) shortly before the floor session begins. (On the website, look under Events > [Order of the Day](#);¹⁶ there's also a calendar feature to see past Orders of the Day.)

All official announcements, floor debates, and votes during the floor sessions are recorded and published in either the *House Journal* or *Senate Journal*, as the case may be. These journals are uploaded to the legislature's website on the respective [House](#) and [Senate](#) pages,¹⁷ and later compiled and published for reference in hard copy form. A mini or advance version of the *Journal* may be posted until the final version is complete.

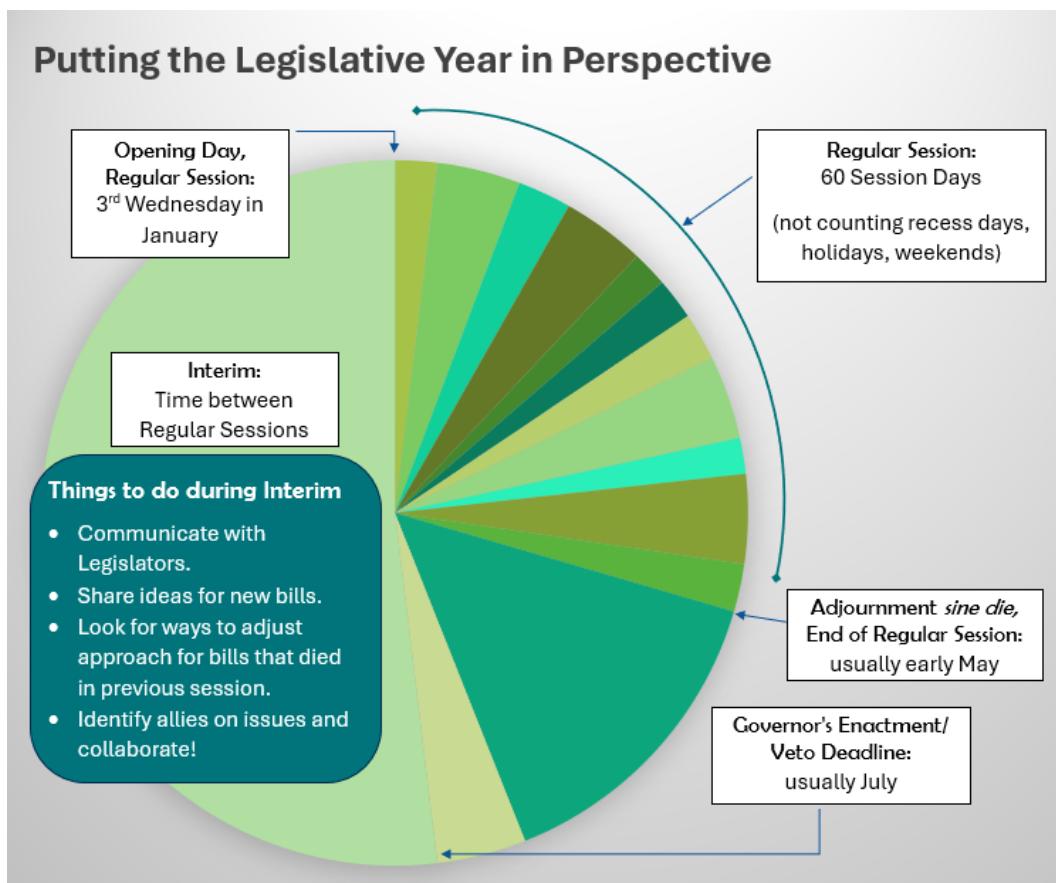
All floor sessions can be viewed live or as a video recording using either the Senate's or House of Representatives' YouTube channels. To access recordings, visit [capitol.hawaii.gov](#) and click on "[Live and On-Demand Video](#)."¹⁸

The Legislative Year

Regular Session

Each year, the Senate President, House Speaker, and their staff agree on a legislative timetable for the regular session—typically finalized at the end of the calendar year before the upcoming session.

The “session calendar”¹⁹ typically begins with opening day, includes 60 legislative days (excluding weekends, holidays, and mandatory recess days), and ends with adjournment at the end of the 60-day period.



[Image 1 - Putting the Legislative Year In Perspective](#)

Throughout the regular session there are various deadlines for legislation, which ensures that legislation is being deliberated upon in an efficient and timely manner. Both chambers agree to certain deadlines so they can work in concert with one another. There are also internal legislative deadlines applying to the movement of legislation within one of the chambers. Most often, the internal deadlines

in one chamber (like filing deadlines), will correspond to the internal deadlines in the other chamber, but not always.²⁰

Outside of the law-making period of a regular session (the interim), there is still work to be done!

Special Session

A "special session" refers to a period when the legislature convenes outside of its regularly scheduled sessions.

- The legislature can call a special session to override the governor's vetoes.²¹
- The legislature (by two-thirds majority vote in each chamber) or the governor can call a special session to address urgent or specific issues that require immediate legislative action (such as statewide emergencies, natural disasters, or budgetary crises).
- A special session may also be called by the Senate alone by a two-thirds majority vote for the confirmation of appointed justices and judges.²²

Special sessions may be limited in scope, meaning the legislature can only address the specific issues outlined in the call for the session. For example, a special session called to override vetoes will be confined to dealing with the bills returned by the governor.

Special sessions are limited to a period of thirty days. Any session may also be extended by up to fifteen days. Such an extension may be granted by the presiding officers of both chambers at the written request of two-thirds of the members, or may be granted by the governor.

Leadership

The members of the Hawaii State Senate and House of Representatives elect their presiding officers from amongst themselves. These votes are usually taken and then entered into the record (by resolution or formal vote) at the start of a new session.

- The presiding officers of the Senate are the Senate President and Vice President.
- The presiding officers of the House of Representatives are the Speaker of the House and the Vice Speaker.

They serve in these positions unless voted out by a majority of the members of their chamber.²³ In turn, leadership names the chairs, vice-chairs, and members of the various committees formed by the chamber.²⁴ These positions may have been negotiated for prior to the leadership vote.

Senate President and Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Senate President and House Speaker are the presiding officers of their respective chambers. Their duties are prescribed by the *Rules of the Senate* and the *Rules of the House of Representatives*.²⁵ The functions of these leadership positions include:

- Chairing the meetings of their chamber (floor sessions)
- Maintaining order in the chamber
- Controlling and routing the flow of business and communications in their respective chambers
- Clarifying rules and deciding on questions of order
- Other duties as required by law or by the rules of their respective chambers
- Communicating committee referrals for bills and resolutions
- Administering official legislative business on behalf of their respective chamber during the interim

Vice President and Vice Speaker

In the absence of the President or Speaker, the Vice-President and Vice-Speaker assume their powers and duties.

Standing Committees

Standing Committees are formed in both the Senate and House of Representatives. These committees are named for the subject matter that falls within their purview, as determined by Senate and House Leadership.

Standing committees review legislation, programs, financial plans, and other matters within the scope of their responsibility. They also conduct public hearings and informational briefings. The purview of each committee, the power and responsibility of the chairs and vice chairs, and how the committees will function are prescribed by the *Rules of the Senate* and the *Rules of the House of Representatives*.

Standing committees can vary in name, number, and membership for each legislative session, although they usually remain the same throughout the biennium between elections. Senate and House leadership will appoint the chair, vice-chair, and the members of the committees in their respective chambers.

The committee chair is responsible for:

- Selecting and scheduling measures that have been referred to the committee for public hearings (including bills, resolutions, and governor's messages)
- Presiding over these meetings
- Making recommendations on what to do with each measure scheduled for a hearing by the committee

Certain responsibilities may vary between the committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives. For example, in the House, it's generally the responsibility of the vice-chair of a committee to collect and distribute testimony; however, in the Senate, that responsibility rests with the chair of the committee.

Additionally, each chair and vice-chair will assign committee clerks in their offices to assist with tasks like organizing committee meetings. In certain cases, such as the House Finance committee and the Senate Ways and Means committee, an entirely separate set of full-time staff members is dedicated to the function of that committee alone. This is also the case with the House and Senate Judiciary committees.

Other types of legislative committees include:

- Conference committees, which are appointed towards the end of a legislative session to reconcile differences between each chamber's draft of a bill²⁶
- Special committees, temporarily appointed to consider and report on special matters referred to them by leadership
- Interim committees, which function between regular sessions
- Investigating committees

- The committee of the whole, where the entire body of the Senate or House of Representatives acts as a single committee

Majority and Minority Leadership

The political party with the most members in the chamber is considered the “majority party,” and the other political party is considered the “minority.” Both parties can establish leadership positions within each chamber, such as Leader, Floor Leader, Policy Leader, and Whip.

The State Senate and House of Representatives organize themselves along partisan lines into what are known as the Majority Caucus and Minority Caucus. A “caucus” refers to a conference or grouping of legislators either affiliated with the same political party (as in this case), or with a particular political objective (for example: Keiki Caucus, Kupuna Caucus, and Women’s Legislative Caucus).

In Hawaii, the Democrats have been the Majority for some time, due to the overwhelming percentage of members in both chambers belonging to the Democratic Party. Within each caucus, members work together to advance their party’s legislative priorities. Each caucus operates according to their own internal rules, which usually include the election of leadership positions by a popular vote of its members. Caucus leadership positions generally include a Majority and Minority Leader, an Assistant Majority and Minority Leader, a Majority and Minority Floor Leader, Whip and Assistant Whip, and/or Policy Leader.

The Majority and Minority Caucus in each chamber has its own office to assist its members with research, drafting legislation, and other legislative tasks. These offices are often referred to as the “research offices” and include the House Majority Staff Office (HMSO), House Minority Staff Office (HMIR), Senate Majority Staff Office (SMA), and Senate Minority Staff Office (SMO). Legislators may also turn to the non-partisan Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB)²⁷ for assistance with legislative drafting and research.

Each chamber adapts their own rules, which also document the duties and responsibilities of various leadership positions and offices.

Appointed Roles

The following roles are appointed by the House Speaker and Senate President for their respective chambers. Their duties and responsibilities can be found in the *Rules of the Senate* and the *Rules of the House of Representatives*.²⁸

Chief Clerks

The Senate and House clerks are the custodians of the records of their respective chambers. In addition, the clerks and their staff perform a variety of supportive and fiscal responsibilities, such as filing and routing of communications and resolutions, and paying approved bills and accounts.

Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms of each chamber and their staff maintain order at each floor session of the Senate and House of Representatives, supervise the distribution of incidental supplies, and perform other duties as requested by the presiding officers.

Part 1, Chapter 2: How a Bill Becomes a Law

Refer to this diagram as you use the 12-step guide that follows.²⁹

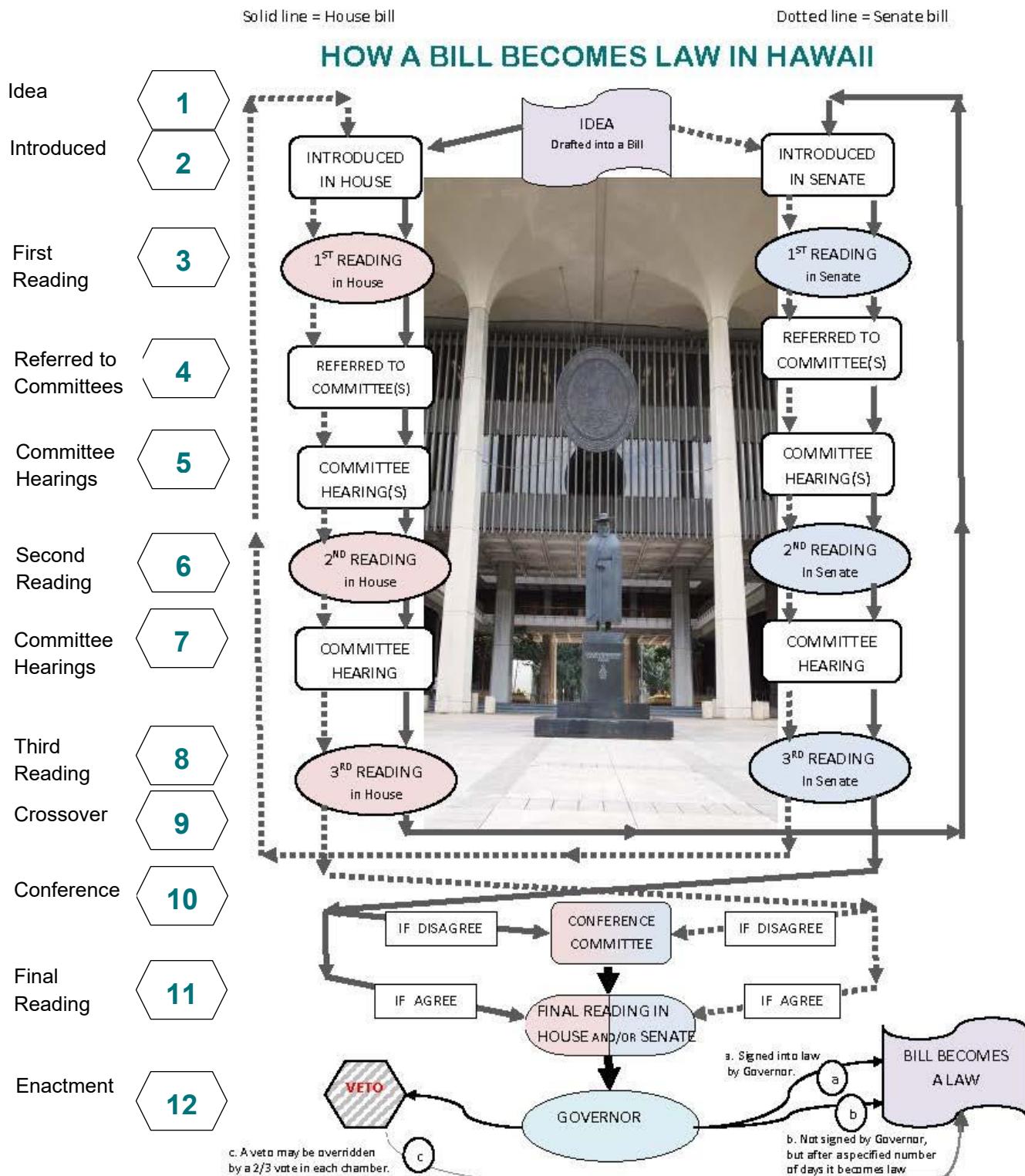


Image 2 - Flowchart: How a Bill Becomes a Law in Hawaii

1: Idea



Most of the work that legislators do at the State Capitol during the legislative session is focused on considering changes to the state's laws. Ideas range from the creation of new laws, to seeking to amend or delete an existing law. These ideas come from a multitude of sources: legislators, state agencies, special interest groups, community groups, and constituents.

To be formally considered, the idea must be introduced in the form of a bill. Bills can only be introduced by a senator or representative, and only during the bill introduction period of each legislative session (usually the first week of a new session). Out of the thousands of bills introduced yearly, only a few hundred bills will survive the legislative process each year and become law.

Most bills will miss a legislative deadline³⁰ and die. To become law, all bills must pass three votes, called "readings," on the floor of each chamber:³¹

- First Reading happens at the beginning of the process, before a bill gets its referrals
- Second Reading happens somewhere in between First and Third Readings
- Third Reading happens after a bill moves past its last committee in one legislative chamber

2: Introduced in the House or Senate



A bill is introduced by a senator or representative when it is submitted to the chief clerk's office in its originating chamber and assigned a number. The bill number (HB____ or SB____) will stay with the bill as it makes its way through both chambers.

If a bill gets changed along the way, draft numbers are added to the bill number (HD____ or SD____).³²

3: First Reading



After introduction, the bill will go for its First Reading (floor vote) in its chamber of origin. This is the first floor vote on the bill by the entire House or Senate (one of three required votes for a bill to clear a legislative chamber). Typically, there is no floor discussion with the First Reading, and every bill passes its first vote.

4: Referred to Committee(s)



After First Reading, leadership in the House or Senate (depending on which chamber the bill is in) refers the bill to committees that have jurisdiction over the subjects addressed in the bill—as determined by the rules of their chambers as well as past referral decisions.

The first committee a bill is assigned to is usually referred to as its “subject matter committee;” and that committee has primary jurisdiction over the bill. The subsequent committees listed usually have broader jurisdiction. For example, a House bill concerning physical exercise with financial implications may be referred to Health (HLT), then Finance (FIN). Each committee usually only focuses on the portion(s) of the bill that’s under its jurisdiction or area of focus.

For the bill to survive the process and become law, it must pass every committee it’s referred to in the order listed. The more committee referrals a bill has, the more deadlines it has to meet.³³

5: Committee Hearings



Once the subject matter committee receives the bill, the fate of the bill is in that chair’s hands. If the chair of the committee wants the bill to move forward, or thinks it’s important to have a discussion on the issue, they will schedule the bill for a public hearing.

During the committee hearing, members of the public may be able to offer their written and oral testimony on whether or not they support the bill.³⁴ At the conclusion of the hearing, the chair makes a recommendation on what to do with a bill. The committee may vote to pass the bill as is or with changes, and the chair will have a committee report drafted to summarize the bill’s contents, amendments (if any), and the committee’s recommendations, and report it out of the committee by the relevant deadline.³⁵

If the committee doesn’t take any action on the bill (defers the bill), votes a bill down, or doesn’t report it out by the applicable deadline, the bill will die in committee. This is the fate of many bills.

6: Second Reading



If a bill is reported out of its first committee, it goes to the chamber floor: either for Second Reading (its second vote before the entire chamber), or to have its committee report adopted and sent on to its next committee.

It's not set in stone when Second Reading occurs. If a bill is changed in its first committee, it may go for Second Reading right away. If a bill is passed without changes in its first committee, it may go to the floor to have its committee report adopted and be moved to its next committee before Second Reading.

Watch out for the First Lateral deadline: the deadline for the bill to move to its last committee in the originating chamber (called Second Lateral deadline when the bill is in the non-originating chamber).

7: Further Committee Hearings



Subsequent committees must schedule the bill for a hearing, pass the bill, have a report drafted, and file it with the respective Clerk's office before the next applicable deadline.

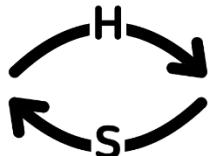
Watch out for the First Decking deadline: the deadline for the bill to move out of its last committee in the originating chamber and be scheduled for Third Reading (called the Second Decking deadline when the bill is in the non-originating chamber).

8: Third Reading



Then it's back to the floor for Third Reading: the last of the three required votes for the bill to move through the chamber. If the bill has changed at all since the last time the chamber had the bill, the amended bill must be made available to members at least 48 hours before taking the third vote on the floor. It must pass that vote by the First Crossover deadline. While the House allows for floor debates on measures during a Second Reading vote, Third Reading is when it's mostly likely that discussion on a measure happens by legislators in the entire chamber.

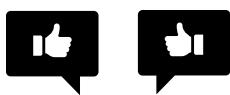
9: Crossover



A bill that survives the process in its originating chamber (i.e. it's voted on three times on three separate days by the entire chamber and moves through all the committees it's been referred to), will cross over to the other chamber and go through the whole process again (steps 3 through 8 are repeated in the non-originating chamber).

Deadlines for bills in their non-originating chamber are labeled as "Second;" e.g., Second Lateral, Second Decking, and Second Crossover (as opposed to First Lateral, First Decking, and First Crossover, which all happen in the originating chamber).

10: Agree or Disagree; Conference Committee



A bill that passes all three readings in the non-originating chamber without changes goes back to its chamber of origin and is transmitted from there to the governor.

If a bill is amended by the non-originating chamber, it goes back to the originating chamber, where that chamber will decide either to:

- Agree with the changes (and vote on the changed bill and send it on to the governor); or
- Disagree with the changes (this is the usual path).

Conference

If the originating chamber disagrees with amendments made by the non-originating chamber, the House and Senate can try to reconcile their differences via conference committees.³⁶

For each bill reaching this point, House and Senate leadership select members (called conferees or managers) to serve on committees that meet to resolve disagreements between each chamber's version of the bill. Usually, the subject matter chairs (the first committee to hear the bill in each chamber) will be assigned as conference committee chairs to take the lead in discussions to find a

compromise. Generally speaking, legislators who voted “no” on any version of the measure do not serve on the conference committee.

While conference committee meetings are public and livestreamed on YouTube, no public testimony (written or oral) is permitted. Conference is the time for legislators to attempt to come to an agreement on the final draft of a bill. Advocates may contact the members (especially chairs) of the conference committees as well as other legislators who might be able to influence the discussion.

Rules governing the conference process are agreed upon and published each year before the start of the conference period. The conference committees must end their deliberations and reach agreement by the Final Decking deadlines.³⁷

Reconsideration

Instead of conference, another (less common) option would be for the originating chamber to “reconsider” their initial disagreement with the other chamber’s draft, allowing the amended measure to move forward in the final version in which it was returned.

Note: this wouldn’t happen if a bill has a “defective” effective date, as reconsideration requires the last draft of the bill to be the final version, with no additional adjustments made to it.

11: Final Reading and Off to the Governor



If the conferees reach an agreement on the final version of the bill, they will issue a Conference Draft (CD) of the bill and a committee report, which goes before the full House and full Senate for one last vote in each chamber. This ensures that every representative and senator has the opportunity to vote on the final version of the bill that will be sent to the governor. Those votes must take place before the end of session, referred to as “adjournment *sine die*.”

Note: While bills proposing changes to the Constitution of the State of Hawaii go through a similar process, instead of being approved by the governor, constitutional questions are placed on the ballot for voters to decide whether the state constitution should be amended.

12: Enactment

The governor has constitutionally mandated deadlines to act on bills transmitted by the legislature.³⁸



- If the governor signs the bill, it becomes law.
- If the governor neither signs nor vetoes the bill by a certain date, the bill becomes law without the governor's signature.
- If the governor vetoes the bill, the legislature may override the governor's veto by a two-thirds majority vote in each chamber by a specified time, or amend the vetoed bill to address the governor's concerns.

If the legislature amends a vetoed bill and transmits it to the governor for approval, the governor has ten days to approve the bill. If the governor fails to act on the amended bill within ten days, the bill does not become law.

To find out when a law takes effect, look at the end of the bill for its effective date.

Enacted bills become acts of law and are given an act number. Permanent laws will appear in the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). Bills enacted within a particular legislative session, or acts, including those that don't have permanent provisions, are printed in the Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH).³⁹

Part 1, Chapter 3: What's in a Bill?

Bills range in length from one page to hundreds of pages, and the content may cover a broad range of topics. Some ideas come up year after year, while others are new and have never been considered before.

In looking at a bill on the capitol website (capitol.hawaii.gov), it may be helpful to use the .pdf file rather than the more quick-to-load .html file. While both files are identical in content, the .pdf file shows line and page numbers, which is useful when communicating with others regarding the bill's content.⁴⁰

The screenshot shows the top portion of a bill status page. On the left, the bill number 'HB1800 HD1 SD1 CD1' is displayed in large blue text. Below it, the 'Measure Title' is 'RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.' To the right of the title are several icons: a PDF icon, an RSS icon, and a question mark icon. To the far right, a blue box titled 'All Versions of this Measure' lists five versions: 'HB1800_CD1_HFA13', 'HB1800_CD1', 'HB1800_SD1', 'HB1800_HD1', and 'HB1800'. Each version name is followed by a small PDF icon.

Image 3 - Top of Bill Status Page for a Bill with PDF icons

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024
STATE OF HAWAII

H.B. NO. 1800
H.D. 1
S.D. 1
C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

- 1 SECTION 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2024.
- 2 SECTION 2. This Act amends Act 164, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, and other appropriations and authorizations effective during fiscal biennium 2023-2025.
- 3 SECTION 3. Part I of Act 164, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023,

Image 4 - PDF of HB1800 (2024) with line numbers

The most common types of bills include:

- Bills to amend laws in the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS)
- Bills for general laws not intended or not appropriate for inclusion in the HRS (often bills of a temporary nature)
- Appropriation bills
- Bills proposing constitutional amendments

Bills may do more than one of these things.

The Constitution of the State of Hawaii, Article III, Section 14 states that:

No law shall be passed except by bill. Each law shall embrace but one subject, which shall be expressed in its title. The enacting clause of each law shall be, "Be it enacted by the legislature of the State of Hawaii." ⁴¹

Beyond that, specific forms for various types of bills have not been prescribed by the Constitution or statute, but the elements of a bill generally follow the format provided here.

Masthead

The masthead of a bill includes, on the left, the name of the chamber (the Senate or House of Representatives), the number of the legislature and the year, and "State of Hawaii." The bill number appears in the upper right.

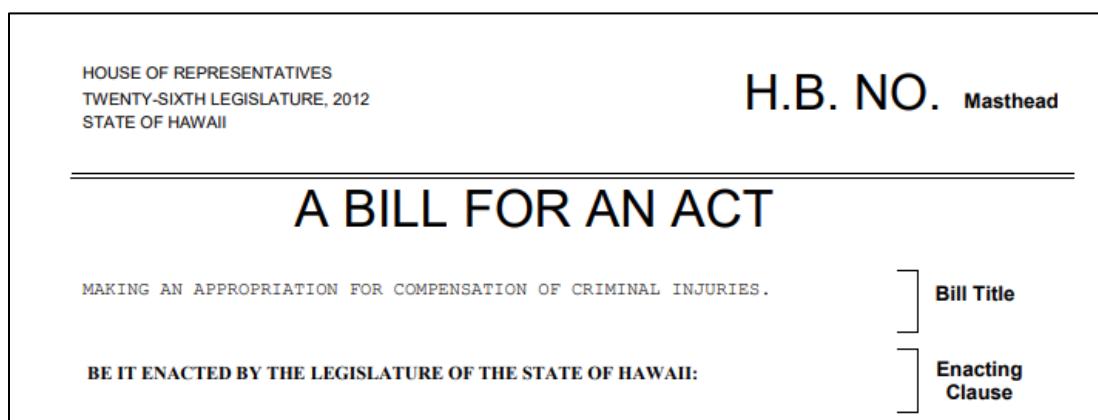


Image 5 - Bill Masthead Example

Bill Numbers

A bill number is assigned when the original draft is filed with the Senate or House chief clerk's office for introduction. Bill numbers are generally assigned in the order in which they are received.

The designation of a bill is abbreviated to either "HB" for House Bill or "SB" for Senate Bill, depending on whether a representative or a senator is introducing it for consideration. The HB or SB designation and the bill number assigned will remain unchanged during the bill's path through the legislature.

In a bill's journey, it must be considered and moved through both chambers. During the second half of session, after First Crossover, you'll see HBs being discussed in the Senate, and SBs discussed in the House. Remember that the bill number indicates the birthplace of the bill, not where it's being considered.

If the bill is revised or amended, it will be indicated by a new draft number (e.g., HD 1, SD 1, etc.) immediately following the bill number.

Here's an example: a bill is introduced as SB145.

- The first time it gets changed by a committee while it's in the Senate, it becomes SB145 SD1 (i.e. SB145 Senate Draft 1).
- If it gets changed again in the Senate, it becomes SB145 SD2 (i.e. SB145 Senate Draft 2).
- This changed bill then crosses over to the House for consideration. If it gets changed while in the House, it becomes SB145 SD2 HD1.
- If it gets changed during conference, it becomes SB145 SD2 HD1 CD1.

Bill acronyms:

House Bill (HB __)

Senate Bill (SB __)

House Draft (HD __)

Senate Draft (SD __)

Conference Draft (CD __)

The numbering of drafts helps ensure that we know which version of the bill we're looking at. A lot can change along the way! You can always view previous drafts on the bill's status page under "All Versions of this Measure."

2024 Archives

You are viewing archived information from 2024

SB2085 SD2 HD1 CD1

Measure Title: RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL.

Report Title: Fire Protection; Office of the State Fire Marshal; State Fire Council; Report; Appropriations (\$)

All Versions of this Measure

- SB2085_CD1
- SB2085_HD1
- SB2085_SD2
- SB2085_SD1
- SB2085

Image 6 - Bill Status Page example with versions

Bill Title

As noted earlier, Article III, Section 14 of the State Constitution of Hawaii states in part that "No law shall be passed except by bill."⁴² As such, the title of a legislative proposal to establish or amend State law is referred to as "A Bill for an Act." This phrase signals that if a bill passes the State Legislature and is enacted, it then becomes an "act of law" and receives an act number.

The same section of the Constitution mandates that: "Each law shall embrace but one subject, which shall be expressed in its title." As a result, a bill's title must include a distinct reference to the subject matter covered in the bill, and the bill should pertain to only that subject. Even if the bill's contents are amended, the bill's title remains unchanged throughout the bill's journey.

Consideration of the title is given when the bill is drafted. Often, the title is intentionally broad to allow more leeway for changes in the content of the bill.

The Enacting Clause

Article III, Section 14 of the Hawaii State Constitution⁴³ also requires an enacting clause to be included with each measure proposed, specifying: "BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII." You'll see this on every bill.

Sections

Bills are divided into numbered sections. Sections may describe the purpose of the bill, provide definitions, specify mandated action, spell out how a previous law is to be amended, describe penalties or remedies, note when the law would take effect, and contain other content.⁴⁴

The bill's sections will often quote a portion of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) or the Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH); if so, quotes will be presented using the Ramseyer format, as noted below.

Ramseyer Format and Provision

The rules of the Senate and House of Representatives require that every bill that amends an existing section or subsection of the HRS or SLH set forth the section or subsection in full, and:

- All matter to be deleted be ~~[enclosed in brackets and stricken]~~
- Any new matter added to the section or subsection be underscored

This is known as the Ramseyer format. A provision noting this format is included in its own section of the bill, typically above the effective date, specifying: "Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored."

18 SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed 19 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored. 20 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Ramseyer Provision Effective Date </div>
---	--

Image 7 - Ramseyer format provision as documented in a bill

7 (5) Makes a gift in violation of section 97-5.5 ~~[+]~~,
8 shall be subject to an administrative fine imposed by the state
9 ethics commission that shall not exceed ~~[\$1,000]~~ \$5,000 for each
10 violation of this chapter. All fines collected under this
11 section shall be deposited into the general fund."

Image 8 - Ramseyer format example with amount deleted and new amount added

The Ramseyer format makes it very clear to the Revisor of Statutes precisely which words in the HRS should be taken out and what language should be added when the HRS are updated after each legislative session.

Effective Date

The effective date is usually found in the bill's last section. In many bills it's provided as: "This Act shall take effect upon its approval." These bills would take effect on the date the bill is enacted: when the governor signs the bill, the legislature overrides a veto, or on a constitutionally designated date if neither of those happen.⁴⁵

Other bills may provide a specific effective date. Consideration of how long it will take to prepare for the change of law is often taken into account.

- Often for appropriation bills, this date will be "July 1" since that's the start of the state's fiscal year.
- For other bills, "January 1" may be used—it provides some lead time before the law takes effect, and the first of the year provides a clear dividing line.

Delayed or "Defective" Dates

During the legislative session, a bill may be amended to include an effective date that is far, FAR into the future (e.g. July 1, 3000). This is popularly known as a delayed or "defective" effective date.

Though any such date would be binding if the bill was enacted with that date intact, such a date is inserted to "ensure further discussion" (as is often noted in committee reports). There is no intention of the bill being presented to the governor with that date intact.

The "defective" date, by its very nature, demands that it be changed—and this can strategically be used to force a bill into a conference committee. In conference, committee chairs that have already discussed the bill have an opportunity to negotiate the bill's final form, and the date can then be changed to a valid effective date once an agreement has been reached.

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Bills can be used to propose changes to the Constitution of the State of Hawaii. A proposal to amend the Constitution must be reflected in the title of the bill, and the bill should have a section which clearly presents the language to be included on the ballot.

If a bill proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Hawaii successfully emerges from the legislature, rather than being presented to the governor for action, it will be put on the ballot for the next general election by the Office of Elections for voters to decide whether the proposed change to the Constitution should be made.⁴⁶

Bill Introducers

When viewing a bill's status page on capitol.hawaii.gov:

- The first name listed is that of the legislator who authored the bill, called the "first primary introducer," with their entire name CAPITALIZED.
- The names that follow are those of other primary introducers (strong supporters), listed alphabetically in all CAPITALS.
- The final names listed alphabetically in mixed case are known as "co-signers" or supporters.

Introducer(s): MATAYOSHI, BELATTI, CHUN, HOLT, KAHALOA, KILA, KUSCH, LEE, M., LOWEN, SAYAMA, TAKENOUCHI, TARNAS, Amato, Tam

Image 9 - Introducers example from bill status page

Some Notes on Particular Types of Bills

Appropriations

The executive budget is the largest of the four operating budgets enacted by the legislature. The governor, through the Department of Budget and Finance and in discussion with the Executive (State) departments, drafts the executive budget. The bill is provided to the legislature before the start of the legislative session and is introduced by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House "upon request" of the governor as part of the governor's package of bills. This budget outlines the appropriations which fund the activities and departments of the State.⁴⁷

The two money committees (House Finance and Senate Ways and Means) typically schedule informational briefings with the State departments in January. This provides an opportunity to hear from the departments about their requests and gives legislators an opportunity to ask questions and obtain more detailed information. During session, the money committees will each hear the bill and make adjustments (amend the bill). Because the executive budget bill is so complicated, the committees use budget worksheets⁴⁸ to record details about their work.

Like other bills, the budget bill will go to conference⁴⁹ to allow the chambers a chance to work out differences between versions and agree upon the bill's final language and appropriations. The budget bill must pass Final Reading in both chambers and be sent to the governor before other bills with fiscal impact can move forward (including Grant-in-Aid decisions⁵⁰).

There are also appropriations bills introduced to the legislature each year. These can be short-term or one-time funding outside of ongoing operating budgets which are passed through in separate appropriations bills. View a list of appropriation bills on the [Reports and Lists webpage](#) by selecting "Appropriations" on the left-side menu.⁵¹

Removing Appropriations

Similar to "defective dates" (discussed earlier in this section), committees will often remove a specific dollar amount from an appropriation bill as a tool to keep the bill moving and ensure further discussion. Bills with a fiscal impact to the State will need to have approval from the money committees (the House Finance and Senate Ways and Means committees) to move forward.

While committees may include the originally requested appropriation amount in the committee report so that the amount is documented, some bills may also be introduced with a blank appropriation. As

bills are finalized at the end of session, and the money committees determine how much money is available to allocate, the amount requested (or amount available) may be put back into the bill before Final Reading.

Companion Bills

Companion bills are introduced in separate chambers but have identical language at introduction—although one will be an HB and the other an SB with different bill numbers. They proceed independently and may change independently of one another along the way. Only one of the bills needs to pass all the way through the legislature to become law.

The thinking behind companion bills is that they may increase the chances of the proposal making it through the legislative process—if one bill gets tied up in a committee, perhaps by the time the other one makes it to that committee a compromise will have been reached.

For companion bills to be noted on the bill status page, the introducers must file the information with the appropriate clerks. Many companion bills are not noted on the bill status page, so a careful search for identical bills is usually required to make sure you don't miss tracking or testifying on something. To find identical bills, copy and paste language from the bill title or description into the "Subject Search" feature on the [Reports and Lists](#) page.⁵²

Short Form Bills

A short form bill is an abbreviated bill that usually has a broad title and states in very general terms the purpose to be accomplished by the bill. A short form bill is a device which gives leadership, or a committee chair, the opportunity to respond to emerging needs after the bill introduction deadline.

Short form bills can be introduced during the bill introduction period, and subsequently be changed into a bill of substance. Both the House and Senate limit who can introduce short-form bills, and determine how hearings for public input on the new content are to be scheduled. Short form bills must still follow legislative deadlines, so these bills will die by the First Decking deadline if the bill hasn't been changed, referred to, and passed by the appropriate committees.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024
STATE OF HAWAII

H.B. NO. 1822

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

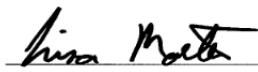
1 SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to effectuate the
2 title of this Act.

3 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended to
4 conform to the purpose of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

6

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 18 2024

[Image 10 - Short Form Bill example HB1822 \(2024\)](#)

Part 1, Chapter 4. On the Floor: Chamber Proceedings

Required Readings

The Constitution of the State of Hawaii, Article III, section 15, states that:

"No bill shall become law unless it shall pass three readings in each house on separate days. No bill shall pass third or final reading in either house unless printed copies of the bill in the form to be passed shall have been made available to the members of that house for at least forty-eight hours." ⁵³

What does this mean? For a bill to become law:

1. It needs to successfully pass at least three votes (called readings) in the House and three votes in the Senate.
2. It can't pass two of those votes in the same chamber on the same day.
3. Before legislators are asked to vote for the third or final time on a bill, it must be presented to them 48 hours ahead of time, with the exact language to be voted on.

Why is it called a "reading" if it's simply a vote to move the current version of a bill forward? The term "Readings" has been used by legislative assemblies for centuries, emphasizing that the bill in its entirety has been presented to members and could be read aloud to inform members of its content. While there are still provisions for a bill to be read in its entirety, most legislatures, including Hawaii's, allow for bills to be "read by title." For example, "HB100 Relating to Education."

During a reading, a motion will be made to pass bills on the reading, that motion will be "seconded," and a vote will be taken from all members of the chamber.

Both chambers provide different ways in which members can vote:

- By voice
- Raising of hands
- Rising
- Roll call of the members
- By unanimous consent

The method of voting is specified by the presiding officer before the vote. All members are required to vote unless they are excused by absence. Members may also be excused from voting if the presiding officer determines that a conflict of interest exists between the member and the legislation being considered.

Members may vote:

- “Aye:” an affirmative vote,
- “Aye with reservations:” a yes vote but with concerns; or
- “No.”
- Members may also vote “kanalua” when the clerk calls their name on a roll call vote. This is a temporary deferment of voting. In this case, the clerk recording the votes will come back to the member after all other members have been called to vote. If the member continues to vote “kanalua” (twice on a measure in the Senate, three times in the House) rather than voting “aye” or “no,” their vote will count as a “yes” vote.

First Reading

The first of the three required readings occurs after a bill is filed for introduction at the originating chamber’s chief clerk’s office and introduced on the floor of the House or Senate. This first vote takes place before the bill has been referred to any of the chamber’s committees.

To pass First Reading, a bill needs a majority of “aye” votes from members who are present at the floor session. (An “aye with reservations” counts as an “aye” when counting votes.) Often, the House and Senate will vote on multiple bills at the same time.

After a bill passes First Reading, its next step is to receive a committee referral by leadership in the bill’s chamber of origin. Whether the bill continues to move forward is up to the first committee chair—it needs to be scheduled for a hearing and pass out of the committee by the applicable deadline.⁵⁴

Second Reading

The timing of a bill’s Second Reading may vary, but will usually occur after the bill has passed out of its first committee (referred to as its “subject matter committee” or “first referral”). For single referral bills,

it's not uncommon for Second Reading to be scheduled just before Third Reading (back-to-back days after making it through its only committee).

Generally speaking, the House of Representatives allows for debate in a bill on Second Reading. The Senate does not.

Both chambers' rules allow for a bill to be "read" by title only. While legislators may offer remarks or debate the merits of the bill, they are likely to wait until Third Reading (should the bill advance that far).

Third Reading

Third Reading takes place after a bill has passed its last assigned committee.

The Constitution of the State of Hawai'i requires that legislators have access to the exact language of the bill at least 48 hours before they are asked to vote on it for a third or final time. So, if a bill has been changed at all (amended) since its Second Reading, a 48-hour notice must be given prior to the bill's Third Reading to give legislators time to review the bill before voting on it.

On Third and Final Reading days, the business agenda (the Order of the Day—see below) will be separated between two calendars: the Consent Calendar, where the Chamber passes bills without discussion, and the Ordinary Calendar, where discussion and debate is allowed.

Debate on a bill typically happens at Third Reading.

Legislators may propose amendments to a bill on the floor, and amendments may be adopted by a majority floor vote. If an amendment is adopted during a Third Reading discussion, the Third Reading vote will be scheduled at least two days later, providing another 48 hours for legislators to review the amended bill.⁵⁵

Order of the Day

There's an order to the floor business conducted in the House and Senate chamber each session day. The "Order of the Day" (O.D.) serves as an agenda to let members know what's scheduled. Both the House and Senate produce an O.D. for each session day and post them online, usually about an hour prior to the start of floor session.⁵⁶

The Order of the Day for each chamber will differ slightly because the House and Senate do things a bit differently. The arrangements are specified in the *House Rules* and *Senate Rules*.

Floor Sessions

During the designated 60 legislative days,⁵⁷ the Senate and House of Representatives convene to hold meetings in their respective chambers; these meetings are known as floor sessions.⁵⁸

Floor sessions may begin with an invocation or “moment of contemplation” for members before the House Speaker or Senate President gavels the session to order. Presence by members in the chamber during this time is entirely voluntary.

Unusual Procedures⁵⁹

Waiver of Notice for Hearings

While committees are usually required to provide at least 48 hours’ notice for public hearings (72 hours’ notice for Senate bills’ first committees), in some cases, these hearing notice requirements may be waived. Upon good cause shown, the chair (or vice chair) of the committee may request the Senate President or House Speaker for permission to waive or shorten the notice period for a hearing (as detailed in the *Senate* and *House Rules*). The request for a waiver would be made on the House or Senate floor, and would happen during the Announcements portion at the end of the chamber session. While this is infrequently done, it may happen in order to meet a legislative deadline.⁶⁰

Recommittal

Things don’t always move forward. When a bill is reported out of a committee, it usually goes to the floor of the chamber to be voted on or moved to its next committee. Recommital is the act of sending a bill back to its previous committee. A motion to “recommit” may be offered when the bill is under consideration on the floor of the chamber; it requires a floor vote of members on the motion to recommit in order to succeed.

Why would a bill be recommitted? Perhaps the bill needs to go back to the committee for further work (for example, a short form bill may have been amended but its content still needs to be heard by the committee), or a problem with a bill is identified after it has been reported out of committee.

Recall from Committee

Bills may be recalled from a committee twenty days after referral to the committee if a third of the members of that chamber vote in favor of the recall. This would force action on a bill that's stalled in a committee in an attempt to move the bill forward.

Part 1, Chapter 5: Other Measures: Resolutions, Communications and Reports to the Legislature

It's not just bills that are being considered by the legislature each session. Here, we'll provide a little information on the different types of measures and their connection to the legislature.

To find any of the measures noted here—resolutions (HR, HCR, SR, SCR), governor's messages (GMs), judicial communications (JCs), departmental communications (DCs), or miscellaneous communications (MCs)—use the same website search features you use in looking for bills.⁶¹

To call up a particular measure and its status page, enter the measure number (HCR4 or GM280, for example) in the Primary Search box at the upper right on the [legislature's website](#).⁶²

Resolutions⁶³

A resolution is a measure that expresses the will, intent, or direction of the legislature or one of its chambers. Like bills, they are entered into the legislative system (in this case, "offered") by senators and representatives, and are usually referred to committees. As changes are made, resolutions receive draft numbers just like bills do.

The odds are against any given bill becoming law—roughly 90% of the bills introduced each year die along the way. While a resolution won't have the force and effect of law, it can be a mechanism to further your issue. Resolutions do not carry over from one year to the next in the biennium, usually do not go to conference to resolve differences, and only need to pass one floor vote in each chamber rather than three.

A resolution can either be a single chamber resolution (HR or SR) or a concurrent resolution (HCR or SCR). While single chamber resolutions are offered, they don't have the same stature as a concurrent resolution.

- Single chamber resolutions must be adopted in their originating chamber only and express the will/intent of the respective chamber, not the entire legislature.

- Concurrent resolutions express the will and intent of the entire legislature, and the same language must be adopted in both the originating and non-originating chambers by passing a single vote on the floor of each chamber.

A request of both chambers via a concurrent resolution could be more compelling when asking an entity or a department to take action than a request through a single chamber resolution. If asked to do something by the entire legislature, it would be more likely to occur.

Examples of resolutions include:

- Calling for a study
- Setting up a task force
- Asking an agency to focus efforts
- Stressing an issue's timeliness and urgency to other entities

Resolutions can also keep discussion on a particular subject moving forward; and may serve to establish common starting points for future work on the issue.

Single chamber and concurrent resolutions can also be used by the chambers to establish leadership or committees, set calendars, or proclaim parliamentary actions or events.

Resolution Acronyms

Single chamber resolutions: Senate Resolution (SR)

House Resolution (HR)

Concurrent resolutions: Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR)

House Concurrent Resolution (HCR)

Resolutions' Timeline

The deadline for substantive resolutions to be offered usually falls in mid-March. Unlike bills, the language of resolutions can be changed entirely—title and all—as they are considered.

It may be wise to ask a legislator to offer a resolution in case your bill runs into trouble, for example if the bill looks like it won't survive a deadline like First Decking—if the bill moves forward, they can always leave the resolution behind. On the other hand, if the chair of a committee sees a resolution on the table, they may choose to defer action on a bill and go with the resolution instead. This all falls under the art of legislating: which approach will work in which situation with which legislators?

Resolutions typically get referred to committees for consideration; and the House and Senate agree on deadlines for “substantive” concurrent resolutions to be offered and to cross over to the other chamber. Substantive resolutions are concurrent resolutions that request action or state the legislature’s position on an issue.

Crossover deadlines for concurrent resolutions are agreed upon by House and Senate leadership, while internal filing deadlines are set by each chamber to specify the dates that resolutions must move out of their committees. Note that the Second Crossover deadline only applies to concurrent resolutions that have been changed in the non-originating chamber.

In addition to Crossover deadlines for concurrent resolutions, other internal deadlines are also set (e.g. lateral filing deadlines) to ensure timely movement through a chamber and its committees. Deadlines are noted on the “Session Calendar” posted on [PAR’s Current Legislature webpage](#).⁶⁴ All resolutions need to be adopted before the end of session, known as “adjournment *sine die*.”

Structure of a Resolution

Resolutions consist of a series of “Whereas” clauses, beginning with the broadest passages, and followed by more specific, definitive statements. A resolution ends with one or more “Be it resolved” clauses. The last clause will specify where the resolution will be transmitted upon adoption.

Unlike a bill, the title of a resolution, as well as its subject matter and content, may change. In other words, everything in a resolution can be altered while it moves through the legislative process. (Bills’ content must stay consistent with their unchanging titles.)

Concurrent Resolutions

Requests, Task Forces, and Studies

What does a concurrent resolution do?

Concurrent resolutions express the will and intent of the legislature, which can propel action in State departments, other government entities, and various private organizations. While your bill may have “required” a state department to implement a program, a concurrent resolution may “request” that the program be implemented. Budgetary and workforce considerations are aspects which may influence

how departments respond to legislative requests. Departments approach the legislature for funding at the beginning of each legislative year, which is also an opportunity for the legislature to ask for an update on previously adopted resolutions.

A concurrent resolution can ask that a study be done on an issue. This can be particularly helpful if, during discussion of a bill, there was some dispute regarding the scope or degree of a situation. A study may help clarify the issue, preparing the way for a subsequent bill addressing the problem, or taking advantage of the opportunity identified.

Concurrent resolutions have also been used to set up task forces or working groups. As with studies, such groups can help refine the scope of the problem or opportunity, as well as explore possible legislative remedies.

Additionally, the "Whereas" statements in a concurrent resolution can serve to legitimize background information, points of view, and the reasons for action. Among other things, they can help introduce concepts and arguments for future legislation, identify events and people who have been instrumental in moving a situation forward, and provide preliminary data justifying the legislation.

What does a concurrent resolution not do?

It doesn't force or compel anyone to do anything. No one will be arrested for not following a concurrent resolution, although it may be in their best interest to comply. Concurrent resolutions do not provide funding, personnel, or other resources.

When a concurrent resolution is offered, it's not uncommon for an identical single chamber resolution to be offered simultaneously. The two resolutions are usually considered together in a hearing, appear together on the hearing notice, and are usually voted on together. The reason? If the concurrent resolution and single chamber resolution are both adopted by the originating chamber, but subsequently the concurrent resolution fails to be adopted in the non-originating chamber, they would still have the single chamber resolution as a statement of the chamber's position. While single chamber resolutions don't carry the same weight as concurrent resolutions, they are not without merit.

Adoption of Resolutions

To be adopted, a resolution must pass just one majority vote on the floor of the chamber in which it's being considered.

- A single chamber resolution only needs to be voted on once in its chamber to be adopted.
- A concurrent resolution needs to pass one vote in its final form in both chambers to be adopted.

For most resolutions, the vote is scheduled after the resolution has successfully passed through its assigned committees.

For concurrent resolutions to be successfully adopted, the same version of the resolution must be considered and voted upon in each chamber. If different drafts are adopted by the chambers, the concurrent resolution is not a statement of the full legislature. In such a case, the originating chamber may agree to the changes made by the opposite chamber and vote to adopt the revised resolution—it can then be issued as a unified statement of the full body.

While resolutions may go to conference, it is extremely rare. Resolutions changed in the non-originating committee are usually agreed upon by the originating chamber or will be allowed to die. Unlike bills, resolutions do not carry over from the first year of the legislative biennium to the second. The resolution must be redrafted and offered anew each year.

While there's no provision that members be given notice that they will vote on a resolution, it's common for "one day's notice" to be provided (indicated on the resolution's status page and on the preceding Order of the Day).

Resolutions are not enrolled (sent) to the governor. Upon adoption, resolutions are usually transmitted via certified mail to the individuals, officers, agencies, or other parties cited in the resolution. Look at the last paragraph of a resolution to see which recipients are specified. Transmittal of resolutions is performed by the chief clerk of the originating chamber.

Advise and Consent

When a new governor is elected, they name their cabinet (the people chosen to lead each of the

departments that make up the Executive branch). The governor may also make changes to these appointments throughout their term.

In addition to nominating Department directors and deputies, the governor may nominate judges and a wide variety of positions on boards and commissions. These nominations are subject to the “advise and consent” function of the Senate which serves as part of the “checks and balances” between the three branches of government.⁶⁵

Certain judicial nominations made by the Chief Justice are also subject to Senate confirmation.⁶⁶

As a result, in addition to the legislation that is debated at the legislature, Senate confirmation hearings will be held for the governor’s appointments. The rules of the Senate specify how the governor’s nominations will be handled. Traditionally, they have stated that:

- Public hearings will be held for all nominees and appointees prior to confirmation or consent by the Senate.
- The standing committee to which a nomination is referred must report to the Senate with a recommendation to advise and consent, confirm, or reject, on or before the 59th day of the session.
- Appointments and nominations will be referred to the standing committee that has jurisdiction over the department.⁶⁷

The public can offer their testimony for these hearings, which are announced similarly to bill hearings. If you’re signed up to receive hearing notifications by committee, you’ll receive these hearing notifications as well.

Once a standing committee holds a hearing, they will vote and report to the full Senate their recommendation to confirm or reject the nominee. The nomination will then be scheduled for a vote by the entire Senate.

Other Communications and Reports to the Legislature

The messages conveyed to the legislature from other branches of government are labeled and numbered. They include Governor’s Messages (GMs) and Judiciary Communications (JCs), which may appoint or nominate members to the cabinet, judges, and numerous board and commission positions.

- Governor's Messages (GM): In addition to appointments, GMs may be used for a variety of purposes including presenting the executive budget request and amendments to that request, conveying the governor's request for action on legislation, notifying the legislature of the status of Collective Bargaining Unit (CBU) negotiations, and informing the legislature of the governor's action on legislation.
- Judiciary Communications (JC): In addition to presenting nominees, JCs are most often used to present reports to the legislature from the judicial branch.
- Departmental Communications (DC): Most often used to present reports to the legislature from executive departments and agencies.
- Miscellaneous Communications (MC): A rarely used label for miscellaneous communications of import to the legislature.

Looking for a report to the legislature? The "[Reports and Lists](#)" page⁶⁸ on the legislature's website opens in "Deadline Tracking" mode. In the "Measure Introduction" section, you'll find a link labeled "[Reports to the Legislature](#)."

On the same page, you can also access lists of [Governor's Messages](#), and [Judicial, Departmental, and Miscellaneous Communications](#). When you open one of the lists, you can search within the results by using <Ctrl> + <F> on your keyboard to highlight a particular word or phrase. (*These links point to 2025 content since that's what was available when this document was produced. Go to the Reports and Lists page to see results for future or past years.*)

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	Deadline Tracking
Advise and Consent	
Appropriations	Measure Introduction
Committee Referrals	
Conference Committee	
Daily Updates	
Hearing Notices	
Measures by Introducer	
Measures by Package	
Pending Actions	
Standing Committee Reports	
Subject Search	
	House Bills Introduced
	Senate Bills Introduced
	House Concurrent Resolutions
	House Resolutions
	Senate Concurrent Resolutions
	Senate Resolutions
	Judiciary, Departmental, and Miscellaneous Communications
	Governor's Messages
	Reports to the Legislature



Image 11 - Screenshot of Deadline Tracking page of Reports and Lists, Measure Introduction list options

Part 1, Chapter 6: What Happens When a Bill Becomes Law?

What happens after the legislature passes a bill? Where does it go? There are a couple of things that will happen. First, the bill will go to the governor for action (unless it proposes a constitutional amendment—in which case it's put on the ballot for the electorate to decide).

Governor's Role

The governor plays an important role in the enactment of State legislation. When a bill successfully passes through both chambers of the legislature, it needs to be presented to the governor (except constitutional amendments).⁶⁹

The procedure for enactment is defined in the Constitution of the State of Hawaii, Article III, Section 16.⁷⁰ The timeline varies depending on when the bill is delivered to the governor.

- The governor can sign the legislation for it to become law.
- The governor may also do nothing; if by a certain date the governor has neither signed nor vetoed the bill, it becomes law without a signature.
- The governor may veto it. In that case, the bill won't become law unless the legislature successfully overrides the veto or amends the bill to the governor's satisfaction.⁷¹

During the governor's review, you can ask the governor to support or oppose a bill under consideration via the contact form: governor.hawaii.gov/contact-us. Article III, Section 16 of the Hawaii State Constitution outlines the expectations for the governor's approval or veto, including the potential for line-item veto.⁷²

If the governor vetoes a bill, legislators could vote to override a veto by a two-thirds majority vote in each chamber. They could also amend a bill to answer the governor's objections—there would then be a required 48-hour notice before legislators would vote on the amended bill. For the bill to become law, a majority of the members in each chamber need to vote in favor of the amended bill, and the governor would then have 10 days to sign it. If the governor does not sign the amended bill within ten days, the bill does not become law.

No appropriation bills (except those recommended by the governor for immediate passage or to cover the legislature's expense) may pass Final Reading until the budget bill has been transmitted to the governor.⁷³ It's important to note that any legislatively-approved appropriations that are made for executive branch agencies are subject to the governor's release of appropriated funds.

A Bill's Effective Date

Bills that make it through the legislative process become law on the date specified in the body of the bill. The last section of a bill identifies the day on which a bill becomes an act—through approval by the governor, passage over the governor's veto (via a veto override), or failure of the governor to act by the required deadline (in which case the bill automatically becomes law on its effective date).

The effective date of a bill may be a specific date (say January 1, 2026) or may read, "This Act shall take effect upon its approval."⁷⁴

Session Laws, Hawaii Revised Statutes, & Administrative Rules⁷⁵

Each year, all the bills that become law are compiled in the Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH). If the new law adds to or amends any of the codified laws of the State of Hawaii, it will also be reflected in the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), where laws of a general and permanent nature reside.⁷⁶

Not all new laws impact the HRS. For example, if the law is applicable only for a limited amount of time, or contains temporary provisions (as is the case with legislative appropriations), it will be published in the SLH but not codified in the HRS.

There are also rules adopted by the State departments governing how the new laws will be implemented: those are the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR).

Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH)⁷⁷

The Session Laws of Hawaii is an annual compilation of all the laws enacted by the Hawaii State Legislature in a session, arranged by act number (in the order they became law by year).

The compilation includes both laws that amend the HRS and those that do not (for example: budgets, appropriations, and temporary laws), as well as proposed constitutional amendments.

The text of each enacted bill is printed in full (with a few exceptions). This can be helpful for several reasons. Some legislation starts with a purpose clause, which may provide background information or a statement of legislative intent but would not be included in the HRS. Also, one act may have numerous sections, affecting various laws or issues, and here you'll be able to see the act in its entirety.

The SLH also includes a useful index, tables showing which sections of the Hawaii Revised Statutes are affected by the acts, as well as lists of each measure's committee report numbers.

SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII

[Executive Budgets](#) | [Judiciary Budgets](#) | [OHA Budgets](#) | [Improvements Acts](#)

1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984
1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

SLH 2024

[2024 Index and Effect of Acts](#)

[PDF of All 2024 Acts](#)

[Regular Session Acts](#)

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 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87
88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125
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227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253

[Budget Bills](#)

[2024 Act 230 \(HB1800\) Exec](#)

[2024 Act 233 \(HB1911\) Jud](#)

Image 12 - Screenshot of Session Laws of Hawaii webpage

Citations

When referring to a session law, note the act number and the year: e.g. "Act 77, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014" or "Act 77, SLH 2014."

Finding It Online

The SLH is published online! You can find the list of acts for each session (as well as the index and other information) by selecting "[Session Laws](#)" from the drop-down menu under the "Laws & Research" tab on the legislature's website.⁷⁸ Then, just select the year and the act number you're looking for.

Note: the Legislative Reference Bureau's "Supplemental Information Relating to Bills Passed," available on its [Session Reports](#) page,⁷⁹ provides a table of laws affected by the bills passed (not necessarily

enacted) during a particular session, and is helpful for the current year before the SLH is published and posted.

To search for a word or phrase in the SLH, use the Primary Search box in the upper right of capitol.hawaii.gov,⁸⁰ and select “Documents” as your search (content) type—this searches the entire PDF files of documents. Within the results, use the category filter option to narrow the search to “Session Laws.”

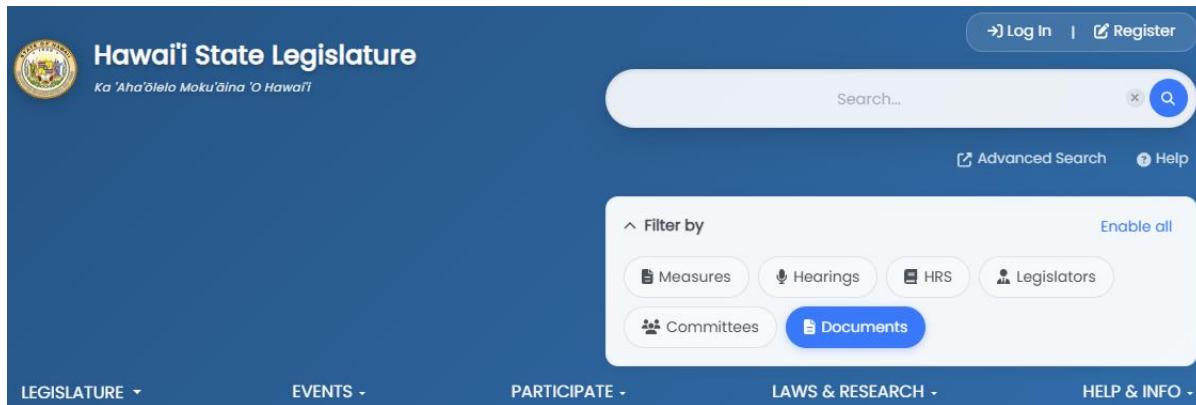


Image 13 - Screenshot of capitol.hawaii.gov top banner with Primary Search menu expanded and “Documents” highlighted

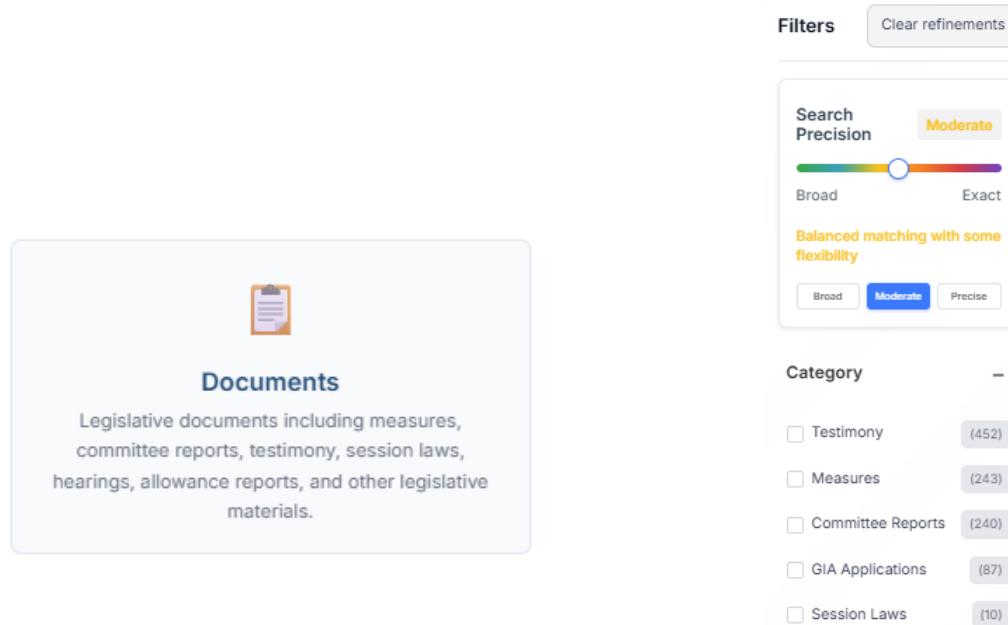


Image 14 – Screenshot of capitol.hawaii.gov Primary Search features including Documents description from Help menu and Documents filter options which can be used to filter search results

Published Volumes

Hard copies of the SLH are published in late November/early December and can be purchased from the [lieutenant governor's office](#).⁸¹ The LRB Library (Room 005 on the chamber level of the State Capitol) has hard copies of all the SLH that can be viewed.

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS)⁸²

The Hawaii Revised Statutes consist of 14 hardcover volumes and cumulative paperback supplements that contain Hawaii's codified laws. ("Codified" means the laws have been arranged into a systematic code or plan.)

The HRS can also be thought of as a collection of all the permanent laws of the State, and it incorporates changes dictated by bills that are enacted each year.

The HRS is organized by "titles." There are 38 titles, each containing laws pertaining to a discrete subject area. If you know the subject matter, the HRS includes a helpful Index. There are also the Tables of Disposition, which show where sections of Acts are codified in the HRS.

HAWAI'I REVISED STATUTES 2024																																	
	HRS Home																																
	Browse Contents																																
	Table of Contents																																
	Tables of Disposition																																
	Index																																
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By Volume	By Division																																
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VOLUME 9	431-435H																																
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VOLUME 11	476-490																																
VOLUME 12	501-588																																
VOLUME 13	601-676																																
VOLUME 14	701-853																																
Chapters																																	

Image 15 - Screenshot of Hawaii Revised Statutes 2024 webpage

The changes made to the HRS are dictated by the text of the enacted bills. Remember how confusing all those ~~cross-outs~~ and underlines were when you first saw a bill that attempted to change an existing section of the HRS? Well, that Ramseyer format⁸³ makes it very clear to the Revisor of Statutes precisely which words in the HRS should be taken out and what language should be added. If you have worked long and hard to have a law changed, it's gratifying to look at the updated HRS and see how all those strike outs and underlines have been compiled.

Wondering how a certain HRS section was established? At the end of each HRS section in square brackets, you'll find notations indicating the enabling legislation.⁸⁴

Citations

When referring to a section of the HRS, the common nomenclature is to use the section symbol (§); for example, "Section 329-122, Hawaii Revised Statutes" or "§329-122, HRS."

Finding It Online

An online unofficial version of the HRS is available on the legislature's website.⁸⁵ To go to a volume or section, select "[Hawaii Revised Statutes](#)" from the drop-down menu of the "Laws & Research" tab, and the volume you're interested in. There are also links to the Table of Contents, Index, and the Tables of Disposition at the top of the page.

To look for a word or phrase in all of the volumes, use the Primary Search box at the upper right of the [legislature's website](#), and select "HRS" as your search type.

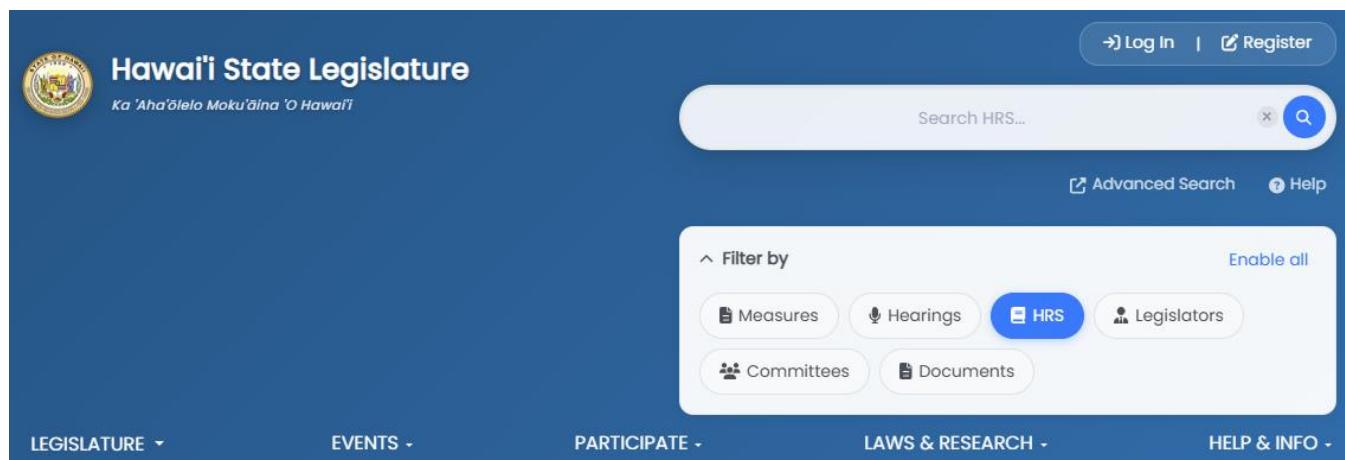


Image 16 - Screenshot of capitol.hawaii.gov top banner with Primary Search menu expanded and "HRS" highlighted

Published Volumes

The HRS annual updated volumes and supplements are published near the end of the calendar year and can be purchased from the [lieutenant governor's office](#).⁸⁶

Note: The entire HRS is not reprinted every year. Instead, one printed hardbound volume will be updated and reprinted in its entirety each year, and annual supplements will be printed for the volumes that have not been updated. When using the printed HRS, check a volume's "supplement" first to see if there have been updates since the hard-bound volume was published. If the section you're interested in doesn't appear in the supplement, that means the section in the hard-bound volume is current.

Hawaii Administration Rules (HAR)⁸⁷

Administrative Rules are rules and regulations established by State agencies via rulemaking to implement and enforce laws passed by the legislature. Individual agency administrative rules are not officially codified but are published as the Code of Hawaii Rules.

Links to Administrative Rules are compiled on the [lieutenant governor's website](#)⁸⁸ and can also be found on the individual agency (department) websites.⁸⁹

References

¹ Constitution of the State of Hawaii: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/> which can also be found as part of the Hawaii Revised Statutes: https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01_Ch0001-0042F/05-Const/CONST.htm. In this document, we'll be using the Legislative Reference Bureau website's links to individual items

² <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

³ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlev>

⁴ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlevi>

⁵ Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁶ <https://search.capitol.hawaii.gov/?type=legislator-addresses>

⁷ Article III, Section 6 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁸ <https://elections.hawaii.gov/>

⁹ <https://elections.hawaii.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/reapportionment/>

¹⁰ The Senate's terms are designed to be staggered following reapportionment, as provided by Article IV, Section 7 and 8 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiv>

¹¹ Find the link to the *House Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> and the link to the *Senate Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

¹² "Recess days" are days that legislators don't formally convene in their respective floor sessions in the House and Senate

¹³ See Part I, Chapter 2 of this resource for "How a Bill Becomes a Law"

¹⁴ Article III, Section 10 of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

¹⁵ *House Rules*: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> and *Senate Rules*: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

¹⁶ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/od.aspx>

¹⁷ Find the link to the *House Journal* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> and the link to the *Senate Journal* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

¹⁸ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/livevideo.aspx>

¹⁹ Find a PDF of the Session Calendar here: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>. The House and Senate will finalize the legislative timetable in late November or early December. PAR's session calendar typically becomes available early-mid December for the legislative session starting in January. We would expect the PAR-produced 2026 legislative session calendar to be available in December 2025.

²⁰ See Part 2, Chapter 2 of this resource for more on deadlines

²¹ By a 2/3 majority vote in each chamber; see Part 1, Chapter 6 of this resource for more on the governor's vetoes

²² In accordance with Article III, Section 10 of the Hawaii State Constitution: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii> which references Article VI, Section 3 <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlevi>

²³ Such a vote can be taken any time during session by a majority of the members

²⁴ The power of the chairs of committees are discussed in Part 1, Chapter 4 and Part 2, Chapter 2 of this resource

²⁵ Find the link to the *House Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> and the link to the *Senate Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

²⁶ Find more on conference committees in Part 1, Chapter 2 of this resource

²⁷ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/>

²⁸ Find the link to the *House Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> and the link to the *Senate Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

²⁹ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/a-bills-journey/>

³⁰ Look for the PAR session calendar on PAR's Current Legislature webpage: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature>

³¹ Requirements for bill readings are found in the Constitution of the State of Hawaii, Article III, Section 15: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

³² HB = House Bill; SB = Senate Bill. HD = House Draft; SD = Senate Draft. Discussed more in Part 1, Chapter 3 of this resource

³³ To determine which deadlines apply to a specific bill, see PAR's handout "Which Deadlines Apply to my Bill?" <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>

³⁴ See Part 2, Chapter 3 of this resource for more information on providing testimony

³⁵ I.e. file the committee report and any amended version of the bill with the clerk's office

³⁶ For more on conference committees, see: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/conference-committees-and-governors-deadlines/>

³⁷ There are two Final Decking deadlines: one for fiscal bills and one for non-fiscal bills. If a bill received a referral to the Senate Ways and Means or House Finance committees, the fiscal deadline applies

³⁸ Constitution of the State of Hawaii, article III, Section 16: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

³⁹ See Part 1, Chapter 6 of this resource for more information on the HRS and SLH

⁴⁰ When viewing a bill's status page on <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/>, click the PDF icon for the PDF file, and click the hyperlinked bill number to see the .html version of the bill

⁴¹ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁴² <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁴³ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁴⁴ For more on the sections of a bill, see: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/types-of-measures-bills-resolutions-messages/anatomy-of-a-bill/>

⁴⁵ The date that a bill becomes law without signature is generally 10 session days; or, for bills delivered to the governor within the last 10 days of session, on the 45th days after adjournment *sine die*. See Article III, Section 16 of the Constitution: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁴⁶ Requirements for the readings and votes for such a bill can be found in Article XVII, Section 3: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlexvii>

⁴⁷ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/the-budget-process/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/budget.aspx>

⁴⁹ See Part 1, Chapter 2 of this resource for more information on the conference process

⁵⁰ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/gia.aspx>

⁵¹ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/advreports/main.aspx>

⁵² <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/advreports/main.aspx>, more on Subject Search in Part 2, Chapter 4 of this resource

⁵³ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁵⁴ See Part 2, Chapter 2 and 3 of this resource for more on committee referrals, requesting hearings, and how measures move through committees.

⁵⁵ View the *Senate Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx> and the *Houses Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx>; do a control+f search for "third reading"

⁵⁶ View the Order of the Day here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/od.aspx?date=today>

⁵⁷ Discussed in Part 1, Chapter 1 of this resource "The Legislative Session"

⁵⁸ View PAR's webpage "Floor Sessions and the Order of the Day" here: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/floor-sessions-order-of-the-day/>

⁵⁹ Visit <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/house.aspx> for the link to the *House Rules* and <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx> for the *Senate Rules*

⁶⁰ Also discussed in Part 2, Chapter 2 of this resource

⁶¹ See Part 2, Chapter 4 of this resource "Finding and Tracking Bills"

⁶² <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/>

⁶³ For more on resolutions, see <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/types-of-measures-bills-resolutions-messages/resolutions/>

⁶⁴ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>

⁶⁵ See Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlev>

⁶⁶ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlevi>

⁶⁷ Find the *Senate Rules* here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/senate.aspx>

⁶⁸ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/advreports/main.aspx>

⁶⁹ For more on constitutional amendments, see Part 1, Chapter 3 of this resource

⁷⁰ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁷¹ View the PDF document "Governor's Deadlines" on PAR's webpage <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/current-legislature/>

⁷² <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articleiii>

⁷³ See Article VII, Section 9 <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/constitution/#articlevii>

⁷⁴ For more on effective dates, see Part 1, Chapter 3 of this resource.

⁷⁵ See also PAR's webpage: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/finding-the-laws/>

⁷⁶ The HRS are laws arranged in a systematic code

⁷⁷ Find the Session Laws of Hawaii online here: <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/slh.aspx>

⁷⁸ <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/slh.aspx>

⁷⁹ <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/publications/session-reports/>

⁸⁰ <https://search.capitol.hawaii.gov/>

⁸¹ <https://ltgov.hawaii.gov/publication-list/>

⁸² <https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrsall/>

⁸³ See Part 1, Chapter 3 of this resource for more on Ramseyer format

⁸⁴ The key to deciphering them can be found in this list of abbreviations:

<https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/docs/HRSabbreviations.pdf>

⁸⁵ Printed copies are considered the official version of the HRS. Find the online version here:

<https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrsall/>

⁸⁶ <https://ltgov.hawaii.gov/publication-list/>

⁸⁷ A list of Department Administrative Rules for the State of Hawaii can be found on the lieutenant governor's website:

<https://ltgov.hawaii.gov/the-office/administrative-rules/>

⁸⁸ <https://ltgov.hawaii.gov/the-office/administrative-rules/>

⁸⁹ For more on the Administrative Rules, see Chapter 91 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes:

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscopycurrent/Vol02_Ch0046-0115/HRS0091/HRS_0091-.htm

Appendix – Image Descriptions

Image 1 - A pie chart titled: Putting the Legislative Year in Perspective. The chart highlights Opening day at the top of the chart as the 3rd Wednesday in January. About a quarter of the chart on the upper right side is broken into unlabeled slices which indicate the various bill deadlines of the legislative session. A little less than a quarter of the chart on the lower right of the image indicates the governor's time to consider bills passed by the legislature to approve them with signature, allow them to become law without signature, or veto the bill. The remaining half of the pie chart on the left side is the interim period. PAR recommends that people can meet with legislators about new ideas, updated approaches for bills that died, and look to identify and collaborate with allies on an issue during the interim period.

[Return to Part 1, Chapter 1, Legislative Year section](#)

Image 2 – A flowchart of how a bill becomes a law in Hawaii. At the top middle of a chart the flowchart starts with Idea is Drafted into a Bill. Then the Bill will be introduced either in the House (left side of flow chart) or Senate (right side of flow chart). Part I, Chapter 2 explains the twelve steps of the overall process. Nine points of description are offered between bill drafted and introduced, through readings and hearings, and if the bill makes it through all those steps, it can crossover to the non-originating chamber to go through the process in the second chamber. Step 10 is Conference, which is described in the chapter, followed by a final reading by each chamber if a final version of the bill is agreed upon as Step 11. Step 12 is the Enactment step, where the bill goes to the Governor. This is also described in more detail in the chapter.

This document is also outlined on PAR's a Bill's Journey webpage: <https://lrb.hawaii.gov/par/overview-of-the-legislative-process/a-bills-journey/>

[Return to Part 1, Chapter 2, How a Bill Becomes a Law](#)

Image 9 – An screenshot of an example of a short form bill, HB1822 from 2024 legislative session. The upper left of the screenshot says House of Representatives with the year. The upper right says HB1822. The Language of the bill is:

A Bill for an Act

Relating to Human Services

Be it enacted by the legislature of the State of Hawaii

Section 1: The purpose of this Act is to effectuate the title of this Act.

Section 2: The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended to conform to the purpose of this Act.

Section 3: This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

[Return to Part 1, Chapter 3 What's in a Bill?](#)