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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

*REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO STUDY THE COST OF  
CONVENING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.*

1 WHEREAS, pursuant to article XVII, section 2, of the  
2 Constitution of the State of Hawaii, at least once every ten  
3 years, the electorate at any general or special election must  
4 vote to determine whether to convene a constitutional convention  
5 to propose a revision of or amendments to the state  
6 constitution; and

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8 WHEREAS, in 2008, the electorate voted against convening a  
9 constitutional convention; and

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11 WHEREAS, the electorate will vote at the November 6, 2018,  
12 general election on whether to convene a constitutional  
13 convention to propose a revision of or amendments to the state  
14 constitution; and

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16 WHEREAS, the last constitutional convention in Hawaii was  
17 held thirty-nine years ago; and

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19 WHEREAS, the 1978 constitutional convention was located in  
20 the historic old federal building in Honolulu based on location  
21 and office space; and

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23 WHEREAS, in addition, the large former Honolulu office of  
24 the Internal Revenue Service was used for plenary sessions, the  
25 old courtrooms were used for large committee meetings, and the  
26 auditorium and conference rooms at the State Capitol were used  
27 for committee hearings and informational sessions; and

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29 WHEREAS, there were one hundred two constitutional  
30 convention delegates representing fifty-one districts throughout  
31 the State; and



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2 WHEREAS, the delegates were compensated \$1,000 per month,  
3 which was equal to the legislative salary at that time, and each  
4 delegate's salary was capped at \$4,000 for the entire  
5 convention; and

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7 WHEREAS, Oahu delegates received a per diem allowance of  
8 \$10 and neighbor island delegates received a per diem allowance  
9 of \$30; and

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11 WHEREAS, a total of three hundred fourteen delegate staff  
12 positions, in a myriad of job descriptions including clerk,  
13 receptionist, researcher, and secretary, supported the  
14 convention process; and

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16 WHEREAS, in addition to the delegates' staff, there were  
17 fifty-three other convention employees; the Chief Clerk,  
18 Assistant Clerk, Chief Attorney and four additional attorneys,  
19 two parliamentarians, an accountant, Sergeant-at-Arms, Assistant  
20 Sergeant-at-Arms, two journal clerks, an engrosser, Records  
21 Clerk, Supply Clerk, Accounting Clerk, Chief Legal Stenographer  
22 and three additional legal stenographers, the secretary of the  
23 Chief Clerk, two information clerks, Chief Messenger and ten  
24 additional messengers, three custodians, a parking attendant,  
25 Print Shop Manager, Chief Machine Operator and two additional  
26 machine operators, five file clerks, and four miscellaneous  
27 employees; and

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29 WHEREAS, the Legislature appropriated \$2,500,000 towards  
30 the expenses of the 1978 constitutional convention, with the  
31 actual expenditures totaling a little over \$2,032,401; and

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33 WHEREAS, however, that appropriation does not reflect the  
34 cost of the election or the substantial effort that was made,  
35 beginning in 1976, to educate the public on the possible  
36 constitutional issues and the importance of the delegate  
37 election; and

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39 WHEREAS, for instance, an additional \$485,599 was  
40 appropriated to conduct the election of constitutional  
41 convention delegates and \$8,500 was appropriated to supervise  
42 campaign contributions and expenditures; and



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WHEREAS, the Legislative Reference Bureau received \$72,000 as a separate appropriation (in addition to an amount allocated as an expense of the convention) to provide assistance and services to the convention, including updating the Hawaii Constitutional Convention Studies; and

WHEREAS, \$2,500 was also appropriated to prepare and publish a taxation and finance manual for the convention; and

WHEREAS, if the expenses of the 1978 constitutional convention (e.g. \$2,032,401) were simply adjusted for inflation to 2017, the cost would be approximately \$7,626,113; however, the issue of the cost of a constitutional convention is more complicated than simply adjusting costs to reflect the effects of inflation; and

WHEREAS, it is important to provide the public with an estimate of the cost to taxpayers to convene a constitutional convention so voters can make an informed decision on the issue at the 2018 general election; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to study the costs of convening a constitutional convention and provide an estimate of the projected total cost; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in completing the study, the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to consider, among other things, that the constitutional convention would:

- (1) Convene not less than five months prior to the next regularly scheduled general election;
- (2) Be held at a leased facility in Honolulu large enough to accommodate the general operations of the constitutional convention, including plenary sessions, large committee meetings, and informational sessions and to house offices for the delegates;



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- 1           (3) Be likely to have one hundred two delegates;
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- 3           (4) Require appropriate staff to ensure public input and
- 4           facilitate operation of the constitutional convention;
- 5           and
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- 7           (5) Involve adequate compensation for both delegates and
- 8           staff; and
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10           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference  
11 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings,  
12 including an estimate of the projected cost of convening a  
13 constitutional convention, to the Senate and House of  
14 Representatives no later than September 1, 2018; and  
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16           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this  
17 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the  
18 Legislative Reference Bureau.  
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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



FEB 21 2018

