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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 2 AND ARTICLE XVIII,  
SECTION 12, OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF HAWAII TO  
ESTABLISH LOCAL ELECTED SCHOOL BOARDS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii is the only  
2 state in the nation where a single department of education and a  
3 single statewide board run all public schools. This centralized  
4 school system - a holdover from the plantation era - comes with  
5 several drawbacks. Every public school is required to follow  
6 the same set of state regulations, guidelines, and testing  
7 apparatus. This system leaves little room for flexibility in  
8 introducing new training approaches or trying new instructional  
9 programming. As a result, teachers are unable to adjust  
10 pedagogy to individual learning styles.

11           The legislature finds that entrusting the governance of  
12 public schools to their communities to oversee local school  
13 districts results in a well-functioning education system.  
14 Additionally, elected board members can address the unique  
15 education-related needs of their respective districts for better  
16 tailored improvements in public education. Decentralization in



1 education significantly improves repetition rates, dropout  
2 rates, graduation rates, and test scores. Localized school  
3 boards serve as the community's voice and directly address the  
4 distinct needs of each district. Focused efforts on the school-  
5 level translates to overall improved student achievement.

6 The purpose of this Act is to amend the Constitution of the  
7 State of Hawaii to provide for multiple, local school boards,  
8 that are populated with elected board members, serving no more  
9 than twelve years as a member, in place of the current Board of  
10 Education.

11 SECTION 2. Article X, section 2, of the Hawaii  
12 Constitution is amended to read as follows:

13 **"BOARD OF EDUCATION**

14 **Section 2.** There shall be [a] five [~~board~~] boards of  
15 education[~~. The governor shall nominate and, by and with the~~  
16 ~~advice and consent of the senate, appoint the members of the~~  
17 ~~board of education, as provided by law.] composed of members who  
18 shall be elected in a nonpartisan manner by qualified voters, as  
19 provided by law. No person shall serve as a member for more  
20 than twelve years in their lifetime. One board shall cover the  
21 entire state and be composed of members who reside anywhere~~



1 within the state. The four other boards shall each cover one  
2 county area. Each county school board district shall be divided  
3 into departmental school districts, as may be provided by law.  
4 There shall be at least one member residing in each departmental  
5 school district for the county-specific boards of education."

6 SECTION 3. Article XVIII, section 12, of the Hawaii  
7 Constitution is amended to read as follows:

8 **"BOARD OF EDUCATION TRANSITION**

9 **Section 12.** There shall be a period of transition from the  
10 [~~elected~~] appointed to the [~~appointed~~] elected [~~board~~] boards of  
11 education, as provided by law."

12 SECTION 4. The question to be printed on the ballot shall  
13 be as follows:

14 "Shall the Board of Education be changed from a single  
15 board appointed by the governor to one statewide board and  
16 four countywide boards elected by the qualified voters of  
17 the State, serving no more than twelve years as a member,  
18 as provided by law?"

19 SECTION 5. Constitutional material to be repealed is  
20 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is  
21 underscored.



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1 SECTION 6. This amendment shall take effect upon  
 2 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of  
 3 the State of Hawaii.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 16 2025



# H.B. NO. 287

**Report Title:**

Constitutional Amendment; Elected School Boards; Minority Caucus Package

**Description:**

Proposes a constitutional amendment that would establish local school boards throughout the State to be elected by the voters and to serve no more than twelve years as a member.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

