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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO THE HAWAII CONSTITUTION TO PROMOTE  
ACCOUNTABILITY IN ELECTED OFFICIALS.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that accountability and  
2 trust in public servants are essential to maintaining a healthy  
3 democracy.

4       The purpose of this Act is promote accountability in state  
5 elected officials by proposing to amend the Constitution of the  
6 State of Hawaii to:

7       (1) Provide that any state elected official charged with a  
8 criminal offense relating to the official's duties  
9 shall be suspended without pay from serving in the  
10 official's state elected office pending the final  
11 adjudication of the charge;

12       (2) Provide that any elected official convicted of a  
13 criminal offense relating to the official's duties  
14 shall be permanently barred from holding any elected  
15 or appointed office within the State, and shall



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- 1           forfeit any pension, benefits, or privileges  
2           associated with public office;
- 3           (3) Impose a term limit of ten consecutive years for  
4           members of the state house of representatives;
- 5           (4) Impose a term limit of twelve consecutive years for  
6           members of the state senate;
- 7           (5) Provide that service as governor or lieutenant  
8           governor for longer than one half of one term shall be  
9           considered service for one full term for the purpose  
10          of term limits; and
- 11          (6) Provide that a state legislator, governor, or  
12          lieutenant governor who has reached the applicable  
13          consecutive term limit may run for election to the  
14          same elected office after a four-year absence from the  
15          office.

16          SECTION 2. Article XVI of the Constitution of the State of  
17          Hawaii is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately  
18          designated and to read as follows:

19          "Section        . Any state elected official charged with a  
20          criminal offense relating to the official's duties shall be



1 suspended without pay from serving in the official's state  
2 elected office pending final adjudication of the charge.

3 Any state elected official convicted of a criminal offense  
4 relating to the official's duties shall be permanently barred  
5 from holding any elected or appointed office within the State,  
6 and shall forfeit any pension, benefits, or privileges  
7 associated with public office."

8 SECTION 3. Article III, section 4, of the Constitution of  
9 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

10 **"ELECTION OF MEMBERS; TERM**

11 **Section 4.** Each member of the legislature shall be elected  
12 at an election. If more than one candidate has been nominated  
13 for election to a seat in the legislature, the member occupying  
14 that seat shall be elected at a general election. If a  
15 candidate nominated for a seat at a primary election is  
16 unopposed for that seat at the general election, the candidate  
17 shall be deemed elected at the primary election. The term of  
18 office of a member of the house of representatives shall be two  
19 years ~~[and the]~~; provided that for terms beginning on or after  
20 the general election of 2026, no person shall serve as a member  
21 of the house of representatives for more than ten consecutive



1 years; provided further that a person who has reached this limit  
2 may seek election to the house of representatives after a  
3 four-year absence from membership in the house of  
4 representatives. The term of office of a member of the senate  
5 shall be four years[-]; provided that for terms beginning on or  
6 after the general election of 2026, no person shall serve as a  
7 member of the senate for more than twelve consecutive years;  
8 provided further that a person who has reached this limit may  
9 seek election to the senate after a four-year absence from  
10 membership in the senate. The term of a member of the  
11 legislature shall begin on the day of the general election at  
12 which elected or if elected at a primary election, on the day of  
13 the general election immediately following the primary election  
14 at which elected. For a member of the house of representatives,  
15 the term shall end on the day of the general election  
16 immediately following the day the member's term commences. For  
17 a member of the senate, the term shall end on the day of the  
18 second general election immediately following the day the  
19 member's term commences."

20 SECTION 4. Article V, section 1, of the Constitution of  
21 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:



## 1 "ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE

2       **Section 1.** The executive power of the State shall be  
3 vested in a governor. The governor shall be elected by the  
4 qualified voters of this State at a general election. The  
5 person receiving the highest number of votes shall be the  
6 governor. In case of a tie vote, the selection of the governor  
7 shall be determined as provided by law.

8       The term of office of the governor shall begin at noon on  
9 the first Monday in December next following the governor's  
10 election and end at noon on the first Monday in December, four  
11 years thereafter.

12       No person shall ~~[be elected to]~~ serve in the office of  
13 governor for more than two consecutive full terms. After the  
14 general election of 2026, service in the office for longer than  
15 one half of one term shall be considered service for one full  
16 term. A person who has reached the term limit in this section  
17 may seek election to the office of the governor after a  
18 four-year absence from the office of the governor.

19       No person shall be eligible for the office of governor  
20 unless the person shall be a qualified voter, have attained the



1 age of thirty years and have been a resident of this State for  
2 five years immediately preceding the person's election.

3 The governor shall not hold any other office or employment  
4 of profit under the State or the United States during the  
5 governor's term of office."

6 SECTION 5. Article V, section 2, of the Constitution of  
7 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

8 **"LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

9 **Section 2.** There shall be a lieutenant governor who shall  
10 have the same qualifications as the governor. The lieutenant  
11 governor shall be elected at the same time, for the same term  
12 and in the same manner as the governor; provided that the votes  
13 cast in the general election for the nominee for governor shall  
14 be deemed cast for the nominee for lieutenant governor of the  
15 same political party. No person shall ~~[be elected to]~~ serve in  
16 the office of lieutenant governor for more than two consecutive  
17 full terms. After the general election of 2026, service in the  
18 office for longer than one half of one term shall be considered  
19 service for one full term. A person who has reached the term  
20 limit in this section may seek election to the office of the  
21 lieutenant governor after a four-year absence from the office of



1 the lieutenant governor. The lieutenant governor shall perform  
2 such duties as may be provided by law."

3 SECTION 6. The question to be printed on the ballot shall  
4 be as follows:

5 "Shall the Constitution of the State of Hawaii be amended  
6 to:

7 (1) Provide that any state elected official charged with a  
8 criminal offense relating to the official's duties  
9 shall be suspended without pay from serving in the  
10 official's state elected office pending the final  
11 adjudication of the charge;

12 (2) Provide that any elected official convicted of a  
13 criminal offense relating to the official's duties  
14 shall be permanently barred from holding any elected  
15 or appointed office within the State of Hawaii, and  
16 shall forfeit any pension, benefits, or privileges  
17 associated with public office;

18 (3) Impose a term limit of ten consecutive years for  
19 members of the state house of representatives;

20 (4) Impose a term limit of twelve consecutive years for  
21 members of the state senate;



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(5) Provide that service as governor or lieutenant governor for longer than one half of one term shall be considered service for one full term for the purpose of term limits; and

(6) Provide that a state legislator, governor, or lieutenant governor who has reached the applicable consecutive term limit may run for election to the same elected office after a four-year absence from the office.

SECTION 7. Constitutional material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is underscored.

SECTION 8. This amendment shall take effect upon compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

JAN 17 2025





# H.B. NO. 488

**Report Title:**

Constitutional Amendment; Elected Officials; Term Limits  
Accountability

**Description:**

Proposes to amend the state constitution to suspend or bar  
criminally charged or convicted elected officials from office  
and impose term limit requirements on elected officials.

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

