

JAN 21 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO
ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS LEGISLATIVE SESSION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's state
2 legislature is in session for only sixty session days per year,
3 generally from the middle of January until early May.

4 The legislature further finds that the efficiency,
5 productivity, and orderliness of the state legislature could be
6 improved by requiring that the legislature be in session during
7 every month of the year. Requiring the legislature to call a
8 special session to address matters outside of regular session
9 causes inefficiencies and delays while also creating uncertainty
10 and limiting public input. Transitioning to a continuous
11 legislature would allow for more proactive lawmaking and
12 increase public engagement in the legislative process.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to propose
14 amendments to the Hawaii State Constitution to establish a
15 continuous legislative session, beginning in January 2031.
16 Specifically, this Act:



- (1) Defines each regular session to be two calendar years;
- (2) Requires the legislature to convene on the first and third weeks of each month except for two months before a general or primary election;
- (3) Repeals language regarding special sessions, adjournment, and recesses;
- (4) Establishes procedures for the carry-over of bills from the first to the second year of a regular session;
- (5) Establishes deadlines for certain bills to be submitted for gubernatorial consideration;
- (6) Standardizes the number of days that the governor must approve or veto a bill submitted for consideration;
- (7) Repeals the governor's ability to appoint an interim position if a vacancy occurs while the senate is not in session; and
- (8) Establishes salaries of the members of the legislature pursuant to recommendations by the commission on salaries submitted during the 2030 regular session, unless those recommendations are amended by law.



1 SECTION 2. Article III, section 10, of the Constitution of
2 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

3 **"SESSIONS; MEETINGS"**

4 **Section 10.** The legislature shall convene annually in
5 regular session at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the third Wednesday in
6 January. Regular sessions shall be limited to a period of two
7 calendar years.

8 ~~[At the written request of two thirds of the members to~~
9 ~~which each house is entitled, the presiding officers of both~~
10 ~~houses shall convene the legislature in special session. At the~~
11 ~~written request of two thirds of the members of the senate, the~~
12 ~~president of the senate shall convene the senate in special~~
13 ~~session for the purpose of carrying out its responsibility~~
14 ~~established by Section 3 of Article VI. The governor may~~
15 ~~convene both houses or the senate alone in special session.~~

16 ~~Regular sessions shall be limited to a period of sixty~~
17 ~~days, and special sessions shall be limited to a period of~~
18 ~~thirty days. Any session may be extended a total of not more~~
19 ~~than fifteen days. Such extension shall be granted by the~~
20 ~~presiding officers of both houses at the written request of two~~



~~thirds of the members to which each house is entitled or may be granted by the governor.~~

~~Each regular session shall be recessed for not less than five days at some period between the twentieth and fortieth days of the regular session. The legislature shall determine the dates of the mandatory recess by concurrent resolution. Any session may be recessed by concurrent resolution adopted by a majority of the members to which each house is entitled. Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, the days in mandatory recess and any days in recess pursuant to a concurrent resolution shall be excluded in computing the number of days of any session.]~~

The legislature shall meet on the first and third week and be in recess on the second and fourth week of each month; provided that the legislature shall be in recess for two months before any general or primary election. Each house shall hold committee meetings on Monday through Thursday and a floor session on Friday of each week the legislature meets.

All ~~[sessions]~~ meetings shall be held in the capital of the State. In case the capital shall be unsafe, the governor may direct that any ~~[session]~~ meeting be held at some other place."



1 SECTION 3. Article III, section 12, of the Constitution of
2 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

3 **"ORGANIZATION; DISCIPLINE; RULES; PROCEDURE**

4 **Section 12.** Each house shall be the judge of the
5 elections, returns and qualifications of its own members and
6 shall have, for misconduct, disorderly behavior or neglect of
7 duty of any member, power to punish [~~such~~] the member by censure
8 or, upon a two-thirds vote of all the members to which [~~such~~]
9 the house is entitled, by suspension or expulsion of [~~such~~] the
10 member. Each house shall choose its own officers, determine the
11 rules of its proceedings and keep a journal. The ayes and noes
12 of the members on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth
13 of the members present, be entered upon the journal.

14 Twenty days after a bill has been referred to a committee
15 in either house, the bill may be recalled from [~~such~~] the
16 committee by the affirmative vote of one-third of the members to
17 which [~~such~~] the house is entitled.

18 Every meeting of a committee in either house or of a
19 committee comprised of a member or members from both houses held
20 for the purpose of making decision on matters referred to the
21 committee shall be open to the public.



1 ~~[By rule of its proceedings, applicable to both houses,~~
2 ~~each house shall provide for the date by which all bills to be~~
3 ~~considered in a regular session shall be introduced.]"~~

4 SECTION 4. Article III, section 15, of the Constitution of
5 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

6 **"PASSAGE OF BILLS**

7 **Section 15.** No bill shall become law unless it shall pass
8 three readings in each house on separate days. No bill shall
9 pass third or final reading in either house unless printed
10 copies of the bill in the form to be passed shall have been made
11 available to the members of that house for at least forty-eight
12 hours.

13 Every bill when passed by the house in which it originated,
14 or in which amendments thereto shall have originated, shall
15 immediately be certified by the presiding officer and clerk and
16 sent to the other house for consideration.

17 Any bill pending at the ~~[final adjournment of a regular~~
18 ~~session in an odd-numbered]~~ end of a calendar year shall carry
19 over with the same status to the next ~~[regular session.]~~
20 calendar year; provided that the next calendar year is in the
21 same regular session; provided further that no bill shall remain



1 pending for more than two calendar years. Before the carried-
2 over bill is enacted, it shall pass at least one reading in the
3 house in which the bill originated. The general appropriations
4 bill or the supplemental appropriations bill for the ensuing
5 fiscal year, as the case may be, or any other appropriations
6 bill shall pass each house and be submitted for gubernatorial
7 consideration no later than forty-five days before the end of
8 the existing fiscal year. Any bill proposing a constitutional
9 amendment shall pass each house and be submitted for
10 gubernatorial consideration no later than June 30 in each
11 even-numbered year. Any other bill shall pass each house and be
12 submitted for gubernatorial consideration no later than July 31
13 of each year.

14 If the last day of the period within which the bill is
15 required to be submitted for gubernatorial consideration falls
16 on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the period shall extend to the
17 next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or holiday."

18 SECTION 5. Article III, section 16, of the Constitution of
19 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

20 **"APPROVAL OR VETO**



1 **Section 16.** Every bill [~~which shall have~~] that has passed
2 the legislature shall be certified by the presiding officers and
3 clerks of both houses and shall thereupon be presented to the
4 governor. If the governor approves it, the governor shall sign
5 it and it shall become law. If the governor does not approve
6 [~~such~~] the bill, the governor may return it, with the governor's
7 objections to the legislature. Except for items appropriated to
8 be expended by the judicial and legislative branches, the
9 governor may veto any specific item or items in any bill [~~which~~]
10 that appropriates money for specific purposes by striking out or
11 reducing the same; but the governor shall veto other bills, if
12 at all, only as a whole.

13 The governor shall have [~~ten~~] thirty calendar days to
14 consider bills presented [~~to the governor ten or more days~~
15 ~~before the adjournment of the legislature sine die~~], and if any
16 [~~such~~] bill is neither signed nor returned by the governor
17 within that time, it shall become law in like manner as if the
18 governor had signed it. If the last day of the period within
19 which the bill presented is required to be signed or returned
20 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the period shall extend
21 to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or holiday.



RECONSIDERATION [~~AFTER ADJOURNMENT~~

~~The governor shall have forty-five days, after the adjournment of the legislature sine die, to consider bills presented to the governor less than ten days before such adjournment, or presented after adjournment, and any such bill shall become law on the forty-fifth day unless the governor by proclamation shall have given ten days' notice to the legislature that the governor plans to return such bill with the governor's objections on that day. The legislature may convene at or before noon on the forty-fifth day in special session, without call, for the sole purpose of acting upon any such bill returned by the governor. In case the legislature shall fail to so convene, such bill shall not become law.] Any [such] bill may be amended to meet the governor's objections and, if so amended and passed, only one reading being required in each house for [such] passage, it shall be presented again to the governor, but shall become law only if the governor shall sign it within ten days after presentation. If the last day of the period within which the amended bill is required to be signed by the governor falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the period~~



1 shall extend to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or
2 holiday.

3 ~~[In computing the number of days designated in this~~
4 ~~section, the following days shall be excluded: Saturdays,~~
5 ~~Sundays, holidays and any days in which the legislature is in~~
6 ~~recess prior to its adjournment as provided in section 10 of~~
7 ~~this article.]"~~

8 SECTION 6. Article V, section 6, of the Constitution of
9 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

10 **"EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**
11 **AND DEPARTMENTS**

12 **Section 6.** All executive and administrative offices,
13 departments and instrumentalities of the state government and
14 their respective powers and duties shall be allocated by law
15 among and within not more than twenty principal departments in
16 ~~[such]~~ a manner as to group the same according to common
17 purposes and related functions. Temporary commissions or
18 agencies for special purposes may be established by law and need
19 not be allocated within a principal department.

20 Each principal department shall be under the supervision of
21 the governor and, unless otherwise provided in this constitution



1 or by law, shall be headed by a single executive. [~~Such~~] The
2 single executive shall be nominated and, by and with the advice
3 and consent of the senate, appointed by the governor. That
4 person shall hold office for a term to expire at the end of the
5 term for which the governor was elected, unless sooner removed
6 by the governor; [~~except~~] provided that the removal of the chief
7 legal officer of the State shall be subject to the advice and
8 consent of the senate.

9 Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, whenever
10 a board, commission or other body shall be the head of a
11 principal department of the state government, the members
12 thereof shall be nominated and, by and with the advice and
13 consent of the senate, appointed by the governor. The term of
14 office and removal of such members shall be as provided by law.
15 [~~Such~~] The board, commission or other body may appoint a
16 principal executive officer who, when authorized by law, may be
17 an ex officio, voting member thereof, and who may be removed by
18 a majority vote of the members appointed by the governor.

19 The governor shall nominate and, by and with the advice and
20 consent of the senate, appoint all officers for whose election
21 or appointment provision is not otherwise provided for by this



1 constitution or by law. If the manner of removal of an officer
2 is not prescribed in this constitution, removal shall be as
3 provided by law.

4 ~~[When the senate is not in session and a vacancy occurs in~~
5 ~~any office, appointment to which requires the confirmation of~~
6 ~~the senate, the governor may fill the office by granting a~~
7 ~~commission which shall expire, unless such appointment is~~
8 ~~confirmed, at the end of the next session of the senate. The~~
9 ~~person so appointed shall not be eligible for another interim~~
10 ~~appointment to such office if the appointment failed to be~~
11 ~~confirmed by the senate.~~

12 ~~No person who has been nominated for appointment to any~~
13 ~~office and whose appointment has not received the consent of the~~
14 ~~senate shall be eligible to an interim appointment thereafter to~~
15 ~~such office.]~~

16 Every officer appointed under the provisions of this
17 section shall be a citizen of the United States and shall have
18 been a resident of this State for at least one year immediately
19 preceding that person's appointment~~[, except]~~; provided that
20 this residency requirement shall not apply to the president of
21 the University of Hawaii."



1 SECTION 7. Article XVI, section 3.5, of the Constitution
2 of the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

3 **"SALARY COMMISSION**

4 **Section [3.5].** There shall be a commission on salaries
5 as provided by law, which shall review and recommend salaries
6 for the justices and judges of all state courts, members of the
7 legislature, department heads or executive officers of the
8 executive departments and the deputies or assistants to
9 department heads of the executive departments as provided by
10 law, excluding the University of Hawaii and the department of
11 education. The commission shall also review and make
12 recommendations for the salary of the administrative director of
13 the State or equivalent position and the salary of the governor
14 and the lieutenant governor.

15 Any salary established pursuant to this section shall not
16 be decreased during a term of office, unless by general law
17 applying to all salaried officers of the State.

18 Not later than the fortieth legislative day of the 2007
19 regular legislative session and every six years thereafter, the
20 commission shall submit to the legislature its recommendations
21 and then dissolve.



1 The recommended salaries submitted shall become effective
2 as provided in the recommendation, unless the legislature
3 disapproves the entire recommendation as a whole by adoption of
4 a concurrent resolution prior to adjournment sine die of the
5 legislative session in which the recommendation is submitted;
6 provided that any change in salary which becomes effective shall
7 not apply to the legislature to which the recommendation for the
8 change in salary was submitted.

9 Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section,
10 the commission on salaries shall convene no later than the month
11 of November 2029 for the sole purpose of making recommendations
12 for the salaries of the members of the legislature, to take
13 effect from January 1, 2031, to December 31, 2034. Members of
14 the commission shall be appointed in the same manner that
15 members are normally appointed as provided by law. No later
16 than the fortieth legislative day of the 2030 regular
17 legislative session, the commission shall submit to the
18 legislature its recommendations and shall then dissolve. The
19 recommended salaries submitted shall become effective as
20 provided in the recommendation, unless amended by law."



1 SECTION 8. Article III, section 11, of the Constitution of
2 the State of Hawaii is repealed.

3 ["~~ADJOURNMENT~~"]

4 ~~Section 11. Neither house shall adjourn during any session~~
5 ~~of the legislature for more than three days, or sine die,~~
6 ~~without the consent of the other."]~~

7 SECTION 9. The question to be printed on the ballot shall
8 be as follows:

9 "Shall the legislature meet continuously throughout the
10 year, beginning in January 2031, with legislators serving
11 full-time and bills being subject to a two-year deadline?"

12 SECTION 10. Constitutional material to be repealed is
13 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is
14 underscored.

15 SECTION 11. These amendments shall take effect upon
16 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of
17 the State of Hawaii during the 2028 general election; provided
18 that sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 shall take effect on
19 January 1, 2031.

20
INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 2380

Report Title:

Continuous Legislative Session; Constitutional Amendment;
Constitutional Repeal

Description:

Establishes a continuous Legislature beginning in January 2031. Defines each regular session to be two calendar years. Requires the Legislature to convene on the first and third weeks of each month except for two months before a general or primary election. Repeals language regarding special sessions, adjournment, and recesses. Establishes procedures for the carry-over of bills from the first to the second year of a regular session. Establishes deadlines for certain bills to be submitted for gubernatorial consideration. Standardizes the number of days that the Governor must approve or veto a bill submitted for consideration. Repeals the Governor's ability to appoint an interim position if a vacancy occurs while the Senate is not in session. Establishes salaries of the members of the Legislature pursuant to recommendations by the Commission on Salaries submitted during the 2030 regular session, unless those recommendations are amended by law.

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

