
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC MEETINGS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature recognizes that the core
2 purpose of public meeting agendas is to inform the public of the
3 specific matters to be addressed by government agencies, thereby
4 ensuring transparency and promoting civic participation.
5 The legislature finds that current agency practice often
6 places extensive administrative and procedural provisions,
7 including quorum requirements, rules governing remote
8 participation, and testimony procedures, before the substantive
9 agenda items. This practice requires members of the public to
10 review several pages of introductory text before determining a
11 meeting's relevance. The legislature believes that this lengthy
12 structural arrangement creates an unnecessary barrier to public
13 review and disproportionately affects individuals with
14 disabilities, including persons with mobility impairments and
15 persons using screen reading software, who must navigate
16 excessive non-substantive text to access the core content.
17 Crucial information regarding reasonable accommodation



1 instructions is often obscured, sometimes appearing on the final
2 page of lengthy documents. This may prevent persons with
3 disabilities from requesting necessary assistance in a timely
4 manner.

5 The legislature finds that simplifying the structure of
6 public meeting notices by prioritizing substantive content and
7 accommodation instructions will ensure that the most critical
8 information is immediately available to all members of the
9 public and promote equitable access and open government.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require certain
11 information to appear at the beginning of notices for public
12 meetings.

13 SECTION 2. Section 92-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

15 "(a) The board shall give written public notice of any
16 regular, special, emergency, or rescheduled meeting, or any
17 executive meeting when anticipated in advance. The beginning of
18 the notice shall include an agenda that lists all of the items
19 to be considered at the forthcoming meeting; the date, time, and
20 place of the meeting; a statement of where the board packet, as
21 described in section 92-7.5, may be viewed in person and the



1 location of the board packet on the Internet; the board's
2 electronic and postal contact information for submission of
3 testimony before the meeting; instructions on how to request an
4 auxiliary aid or service or an accommodation due to a
5 disability, including a response deadline, if one is provided,
6 that is reasonable; and in the case of an executive meeting, the
7 purpose shall be stated. If an item to be considered is the
8 proposed adoption, amendment, or repeal of administrative rules,
9 an agenda meets the requirements for public notice pursuant to
10 this section if it contains a statement on the topic of the
11 proposed rules or a general description of the subjects
12 involved, as described in section 91-3(a)(1)(A), and a statement
13 of when and where the proposed rules may be viewed in person and
14 on the Internet, as provided in section 91-2.6. The means
15 specified by this section shall be the only means required for
16 giving notice under this part notwithstanding any law to the
17 contrary."

18 SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
19 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
20 begun before its effective date.



- 1 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.
- 2 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2525.



S.B. NO. 2849
S.D. 1

Report Title:

Public Agencies; Meetings; Notices; Disabilities; Readability

Description:

Requires certain information to appear at the beginning of notices for public meetings. Effective 1/1/2525. (SD1)

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