

MAR 1 6 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII
TO AMEND ITS INTERNAL RULES TO ELIMINATE THE FORMAL VOTE
OPTION OF "WITH RESERVATIONS".

1 WHEREAS, at the start of each biennium, each chamber of the
2 Legislature adopts its own set of procedural rules setting out
3 how votes are taken, what options members have, and how votes
4 are formally recorded; and
5

6 WHEREAS, both chambers of the Hawaii State Legislature
7 currently permit members to vote "aye" or "no" on a measure, in
8 addition to voting "with reservations"; and
9

10 WHEREAS, Rule 71(1) of the 2025-2026 Rules of the Senate
11 states "a member voting "with reservations" shall be counted as
12 a favorable vote"; and
13

14 WHEREAS, Rule 11.6(2) of the 2025-2026 Rules of the House
15 of Representatives specifies for committee decision making "any
16 member voting "with reservations" shall be deemed to be in favor
17 of the recommendation" with the same holding true in practice
18 for floor votes, though not explicitly stated; and
19

20 WHEREAS, while "with reservations" votes allow members to
21 keep a bill alive while still indicating their lack of total
22 support, it oftentimes is employed to avoid having to record a
23 clear stance; and
24

25 WHEREAS, the 76 members of the Hawaii State Legislature are
26 expected by their constituencies to vote for or against
27 policies, yet the lack of a binary vote requirement lets
28 legislators straddle both sides of an issue; and
29

30 WHEREAS, the Hawaii State Legislature is unique in that it
31 is the only state legislature which permits "with reservations"
32 as a formal vote; and
33



S.R. NO. 142

1 WHEREAS, with the start of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature
 2 occurring in a few months' time, this voting method which sets
 3 us apart from the rest of the nation will again be reconsidered;
 4 now, therefore,

5
 6 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
 7 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
 8 that members of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature of the State of
 9 Hawaii, Regular Session of 2027, are requested to amend the
 10 internal rules of both chambers to eliminate the formal vote
 11 option of "with reservations"; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate Chief Clerk and
 14 House Chief Clerk are to send copies of this Resolution upon
 15 official certification of the 2026 general election results to
 16 all duly elected members of the Legislature; and
 17

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate Chief Clerk and
 19 House Chief Clerk are to also send copies of this Resolution to
 20 the 12 members of the Hawaii State Senate whose terms continue
 21 into the Thirty-Fourth Legislature at this same time; and
 22

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 24 Resolution be transmitted to the Senate Chief Clerk and the
 25 House Chief Clerk.
 26
 27
 28

OFFERED BY:


