
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO STUDY THE COST OF
CONVENING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

1 WHEREAS, pursuant to article XVII, section 2, of the
2 Constitution of the State of Hawaii, at least once every ten
3 years, the electorate at any general or special election must
4 vote to determine whether to convene a constitutional convention
5 to propose a revision of or amendments to the state
6 constitution; and

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8 WHEREAS, in 1998, the electorate voted against convening a
9 constitutional convention; and

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11 WHEREAS, the electorate will vote at the November 4, 2008,
12 general election on whether to convene a constitutional
13 convention to propose a revision of or amendments to the state
14 constitution; and

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16 WHEREAS, the last constitutional convention in Hawaii was
17 held twenty-nine years ago; and

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19 WHEREAS, the 1978 constitutional convention was located in
20 the historic old federal building in Honolulu based on location
21 and office space; and

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23 WHEREAS, in addition, the large former Honolulu office of
24 the Internal Revenue Service was used for plenary sessions, the
25 old courtrooms were used for large committee meetings, and the
26 auditorium and conference rooms at the State Capitol were used
27 for committee hearings and informational sessions; and

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29 WHEREAS, there were one hundred two constitutional
30 convention delegates representing fifty-one districts throughout
31 the State; and

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1 WHEREAS, the delegates were compensated \$1,000 per month,
2 which was equal to the legislative salary at that time, and each
3 delegate's salary was capped at \$4,000 for the entire
4 convention; and

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6 WHEREAS, Oahu delegates received a per diem allowance of
7 \$10 and neighbor island delegates received a per diem allowance
8 of \$30; and

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10 WHEREAS, a total of three hundred fourteen delegate staff
11 positions, in a myriad of job descriptions including clerk,
12 receptionist, researcher, and secretary, supported the
13 convention process; and

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15 WHEREAS, in addition to the delegates' staff, there were
16 fifty-three other convention employees; the Chief Clerk,
17 Assistant Clerk, Chief Attorney and four additional attorneys,
18 two parliamentarians, an accountant, Sergeant-at-Arms, Assistant
19 Sergeant-at-Arms, two journal clerks, an engrosser, Records
20 Clerk, Supply Clerk, Accounting Clerk, Chief Legal Stenographer
21 and three additional legal stenographers, the secretary of the
22 Chief Clerk, two information clerks, Chief Messenger and ten
23 additional messengers, three custodians, a parking attendant,
24 Print Shop Manager, Chief Machine Operator and two additional
25 machine operators, five file clerks, and four miscellaneous
26 employees; and

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28 WHEREAS, the Legislature appropriated \$2,500,000 towards
29 the expenses of the 1978 constitutional convention, with the
30 actual expenditures totaling a little over \$2,032,401; and

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32 WHEREAS, however, that appropriation does not reflect the
33 cost of the election or the substantial effort that was made,
34 beginning in 1976, to educate the public on the possible
35 constitutional issues and the importance of the delegate
36 election; and

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38 WHEREAS, for instance, an additional \$485,599 was
39 appropriated to conduct the election of constitutional
40 convention delegates and \$8,500 was appropriated to supervise
41 campaign contributions and expenditures; and

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43 WHEREAS, the Legislative Reference Bureau received \$72,000
44 as a separate appropriation (in addition to an amount allocated



1 as an expense of the convention) to provide assistance and
2 services to the convention, including updating the Hawaii
3 Constitutional Convention Studies; and
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5 WHEREAS, \$2,500 was also appropriated to prepare and
6 publish a taxation and finance manual for the convention; and
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8 WHEREAS, if the expenses of the 1978 constitutional
9 convention (e.g. \$2,032,401) were simply adjusted for inflation
10 to 2008, the cost would be approximately \$6,579,742; however,
11 the issue of the cost of a constitutional convention is more
12 complicated than simply adjusting costs to reflect the effects
13 of inflation; and
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15 WHEREAS, it is important to provide the public with an
16 estimate of the cost to taxpayers to convene a constitutional
17 convention so voters can make an informed decision on the issue
18 at the 2008 general election; now, therefore,
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20 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
21 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
22 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative
23 Reference Bureau is requested to study the costs of convening a
24 constitutional convention and provide an estimate of the
25 projected total cost; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in completing the study, the
28 Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to consider, among
29 other things, that the constitutional convention would:
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- 31 (1) Convene not less than five months prior to the next
32 regularly scheduled general election;
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- 34 (2) Be held at a leased facility in Honolulu large enough
35 to accommodate the general operations of the
36 constitutional convention, including plenary sessions,
37 large committee meetings, and informational sessions
38 and to house offices for the delegates;
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- 40 (3) Be likely to have one hundred two delegates;
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- 42 (4) Require appropriate staff to ensure public input and
43 facilitate operation of the constitutional convention;
44 and



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(5) Involve adequate compensation for both delegates and staff; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings, including an estimate of the projected cost of convening a constitutional convention, to the Senate and House of Representatives no later than September 1, 2008; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau.

