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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII CONSTITUTION RELATING TO  
THE LEGISLATURE.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the legislature's  
2 current opening day on the third Wednesday in January is too  
3 close to the beginning of the new year and does not give  
4 legislators sufficient time to discuss ideas for legislation  
5 with constituents and the appropriate department officials.  
6 Beginning the regular legislative session a few weeks later  
7 would provide legislators with a better opportunity to draft  
8 more meaningful bills after giving the departments' reports and  
9 studies a thorough review and speaking with constituents at  
10 length.

11           The legislature also finds that the current legislative  
12 session is limited by the Hawaii Constitution to sixty days and  
13 does not provide the public with sufficient time to thoroughly  
14 consider and provide their comments to bills. A longer  
15 legislative session would allow more time for both legislators  
16 and the public to more carefully consider the provisions and  
17 merits of proposed legislation.



1 The purpose of this Act is to propose an amendment to the  
2 Constitution of the State of Hawaii to, beginning with the  
3 regular session of 2012:

4 (1) Change the convening of the legislature from the third  
5 Wednesday in January to the first Wednesday in  
6 February; and

7 (2) Extend the length of the regular legislative session  
8 from sixty to ninety days.

9 SECTION 2. Article XVIII of the Constitution of the State  
10 of Hawaii is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately  
11 designated and to read as follows:

12 "EFFECTIVE DATE FOR LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

13 Section . The amendments to Section 10 of Article III  
14 shall take effect on January 1, 2012, following the ratification  
15 of such amendments, and be applicable to regular legislative  
16 sessions beginning with the regular session of 2012."

17 SECTION 3. Article III, section 10, of the Hawaii  
18 Constitution is amended to read as follows:

19 "SESSIONS

20 Section 10. The legislature shall convene annually in  
21 regular session at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the [~~third Wednesday in~~  
22 ~~January.~~] first Wednesday in February.



1 At the written request of two-thirds of the members to which  
2 each house is entitled, the presiding officers of both houses  
3 shall convene the legislature in special session. At the  
4 written request of two-thirds of the members of the senate, the  
5 president of the senate shall convene the senate in special  
6 session for the purpose of carrying out its responsibility  
7 established by Section 3 of Article VI. The governor may  
8 convene both houses or the senate alone in special session.

9 Regular sessions shall be limited to a period of [~~sixty~~  
10 ninety days, and special sessions shall be limited to a period  
11 of thirty days. Any session may be extended by a total of not  
12 more than fifteen days. Such extension shall be granted by the  
13 presiding officers of both houses at the written request of two-  
14 thirds of the members to which each house is entitled or may be  
15 granted by the governor.

16 Each regular session shall be recessed for not less than  
17 five days at some period between the twentieth and fortieth days  
18 of the regular session. The legislature shall determine the  
19 dates of the mandatory recess by concurrent resolution. Any  
20 session may be recessed by concurrent resolution adopted by a  
21 majority of the members to which each house is entitled.

22 Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, the days in mandatory recess and



1 any days in recess pursuant to a concurrent resolution shall be  
2 excluded in computing the number of days of any session.

3 All sessions shall be held in the capital of the State. In  
4 case the capital shall be unsafe, the governor may direct that  
5 any session be held at some other place."

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

8 "Shall the length of the regular legislative session be  
9 extended from sixty to ninety days, and opening day of the  
10 regular session of the legislature be changed from the third  
11 Wednesday in January to the first Wednesday in February,  
12 beginning with the regular session of 2012?"

13 SECTION 5. Constitutional material to be repealed is  
14 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is  
15 underscored.

16 SECTION 6. This amendment shall take effect upon  
17 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Hawaii  
18 Constitution.

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INTRODUCED BY:

*Rep. Hanohano*  
*Guthrie Heleu*  
*Jean Welch*

*[Signature]*  
*[Signature]*  
*[Signature]*

HB HMS 2009-1319



*Mark Haba...* *Paul Wood*

JAN 27 2009

**Report Title:**

Legislature

**Description:**

Proposes a constitutional amendment to change the Opening Day of the regular session of the Legislature from the third Wednesday in January to the first Wednesday in February and extend the limit on the length of the regular session from sixty to ninety days, beginning with the regular session of 2012.

