
A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII CONSTITUTION TO LIMIT
LEGISLATIVE TERMS OF OFFICE.

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

1 SECTION1. In the late eighteenth century, while our
2 country was forming, legislatures often followed the "citizen-
3 legislator" model, in which a member of the community would
4 serve in the legislature for a few years and then, civic duty
5 satisfied, return to private employment. In recent years, this
6 model has changed and many legislators now make the legislature
7 their career, remaining entrenched in the same office for
8 decades. This practice has contributed to the feeling by many
9 that legislators may be more concerned with protecting their
10 positions than in serving the public by taking bold, and
11 sometimes unpopular but necessary, stands.

12 A limit on the number of years a legislator may serve in
13 each chamber will promote this citizen-legislator model, provide
14 fresh faces and new thinking, and enable legislators to act as
15 they think best rather than to act cautiously by remaining
16 noncontroversial, bland, and ineffective.



1 It is the purpose of this Act to propose an amendment to
2 the Hawaii constitution to limit the terms that a legislator may
3 serve in each chamber of the legislature, which would allow
4 greater turnover and citizen participation.

5 SECTION 2. Article III, section 4, of the Constitution of
6 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

7 "ELECTION OF MEMBERS; TERM; TERM LIMITS

8 Section 4. Each member of the legislature shall be elected
9 at an election. If more than one candidate has been nominated
10 for election to a seat in the legislature, the member occupying
11 that seat shall be elected at a general election. If a
12 candidate nominated for a seat at a primary election is
13 unopposed for that seat at the general election, the candidate
14 shall be deemed elected at the primary election. The term of
15 office of a member of the house of representatives shall be two
16 years [~~and the~~]; provided that no member shall serve for more
17 than four consecutive two-year terms beginning after January 1,
18 2011. The term of office of a member of the senate shall be
19 four years[-]; provided that no member shall serve for more than
20 two consecutive four-year terms beginning after January 1, 2011.
21 The term of a member of the legislature shall begin on the day
22 of the general election at which elected or if elected at a



1 primary election, on the day of the general election immediately
 2 following the primary election at which elected. For a member
 3 of the house of representatives, the term shall end on the day
 4 of the general election immediately following the day the
 5 member's term commences. For a member of the senate, the term
 6 shall end on the day of the second general election immediately
 7 following the day the member's term commences."

8 SECTION 3. The question to be printed on the ballot shall
 9 be as follows:

10 "Shall state senators be limited to serving two consecutive
 11 four-year terms and representatives be limited to serving
 12 four consecutive two-year terms beginning after January 1,
 13 2011?"

14 SECTION 4. Constitutional material to be repealed is
 15 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is
 16 underscored.

17 SECTION 5. This amendment shall take effect upon
 18 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of
 19 the State of Hawaii.

20

INTRODUCED BY:

[Handwritten signature: J. Wood]
[Handwritten signature: J. Wood]
[Handwritten signature: J. Wood]



Report Title:

Constitutional Amendment; Legislative Term Limits

Description:

Amends the Hawaii Constitution to limit state senators to 2 consecutive terms and representatives to 4 consecutive terms beginning after 1/1/11.

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

