
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INFORMED VOTING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that as part of the
2 ratification process for any amendment to the Hawaii state
3 constitution or the respective counties' charters, each proposed
4 amendment shall appear on a state or county ballot during an
5 election. As the ratification requirement gives voters the
6 chance to accept or reject the proposed amendments, it acts as a
7 mechanism to prevent elected officials from changing core
8 foundational documents on a whim and makes the public a crucial
9 part of the amendment process.

10 The legislature also finds, however, that the general
11 voting public may not fully understand what the proposed
12 amendments intend to accomplish, especially if they are
13 particularly complex or technical. Further, members of the
14 public may not be familiar enough with the issues underlying the
15 proposed amendments to take a position on the wisdom of the
16 amendments.



1 The purpose of this Act, therefore, is to assist voters in
2 making informed decisions on proposed amendments by requiring
3 the office of elections to:

- 4 (1) Publish ballot pamphlets that contain "plain language"
5 summaries of all proposed constitutional and charter
6 amendments that appear on a ballot; and
7 (2) Maintain a website that incorporates the information
8 contained in the ballot pamphlets.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
10 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
11 read as follows:

12 "§11- Ballot pamphlets for proposed amendments. (a)
13 No later than thirty days prior to any election day, the chief
14 election officer shall publish a ballot pamphlet if at least:

15 (1) One proposed amendment to the Hawaii state
16 constitution appears on a ballot issued by the chief
17 election officer; or

18 (2) One proposed amendment to a county charter appears on
19 a ballot issued by the county clerk.

20 (b) Each ballot pamphlet shall contain, at a minimum:

21 (1) A complete copy of each proposed amendment;



1 (2) A complete copy of the specific constitutional or
2 charter provision that would be amended or repealed by
3 the proposed amendment; and

4 (3) An accurate summary that is reasonably understandable
5 to the average layperson, explaining the content of
6 the proposed amendment without supporting or opposing
7 the proposed amendment; provided that the summary
8 shall be prepared by:

9 (A) The legislative reference bureau in the case of a
10 proposed amendment to the Hawaii state
11 constitution; or

12 (B) The county clerk or the county clerk's designee
13 in the case of a proposed amendment to a county's
14 charter;

15 provided further that any summary prepared by the
16 legislative reference bureau, or the county clerk or
17 the county clerk's designee, pursuant to this section
18 shall be delivered to the office of elections by the
19 ninetieth day prior to the general election.

20 (c) The office of elections shall maintain a website that
21 shall include, at a minimum, all the information from any ballot



1 pamphlet on proposed amendments published pursuant to this
2 section."

3 SECTION 3. If any provision of this Act, or the
4 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held
5 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or
6 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the
7 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions
8 of this Act are severable.

9 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Report Title:

State Constitution; County Charters; Information on Amendments

Description:

Requires the publication of information on proposed constitutional or proposed charter amendments that appear on an election ballot in pamphlet and electronic form. (HB300 HD1)

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

