
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO VOTER EDUCATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that voters must be
2 sufficiently knowledgeable and well-informed to participate
3 meaningfully in elections. In every election, voter education
4 helps ensure that all constituents understand their rights, the
5 political system, the voting process, and the contests that the
6 constituency is being asked to decide. To that end, ballot
7 questions should be put into context for voters through an
8 explanation of the proposal's purpose, the potential
9 ramifications, and the relevant issues and arguments.

10 The legislature further finds that Act 8, Session Laws of
11 Hawaii 2003, repealed a requirement that the chief election
12 officer coordinate the preparation of voter education materials
13 providing a summary and explanation of proposed constitutional
14 amendments, including arguments for and against ratification of
15 the proposal. However, it has since become apparent that a
16 restoration of this former requirement is warranted in light of
17 the benefits to democracy of a well-informed electorate.



1 The purpose of this Act is to empower voters and enhance
2 the efficacy of elections by reestablishing the duty of the
3 chief election officer to coordinate the preparation of voter
4 education materials for proposed constitutional amendments and
5 requiring the delivery of these materials to all registered
6 voters.

7 SECTION 2. Section 11-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

9 "(d) The chief election officer shall be responsible for
10 public education with respect to voter registration and
11 information. Upon the certification of any bill that sets forth
12 a proposed constitutional amendment for vote by the electorate,
13 the chief election officer shall be responsible for the
14 dissemination of appropriate voter education materials prepared
15 by the legislative reference bureau.

16 The legislative reference bureau shall assist the chief
17 election officer with the interpretation of the proposed
18 constitutional amendment contained in the bill. The legislative
19 reference bureau shall submit to the chief election officer, no
20 later than ninety days prior to the general election, a summary
21 of the proposed constitutional amendment, written in lay terms,



1 explaining the content of the proposed constitutional amendment
2 and including a summary of arguments that have been advanced by
3 the major proponents and opponents of the proposed
4 constitutional amendment.

5 Except in cases of gross negligence or wilful misconduct,
6 the chief election officer, the legislative reference bureau,
7 and their respective officers and employees shall be immune from
8 civil liability for any act, decision, or omission performed
9 pursuant to this subsection, including the use of, or the
10 failure to use, any information that is considered a public
11 record and is submitted by any person or entity supporting or
12 opposing the proposed constitutional amendment when compiling,
13 summarizing, or disseminating the information required under
14 this subsection.

15 The chief election officer shall mail to every registered
16 voter the items described in this subsection no later than
17 thirty days prior to the general election or, in lieu of the
18 foregoing procedure, include the items together with absentee
19 ballots delivered to voters pursuant to section 15-5; provided
20 that in any event, the chief election officer shall post the
21 items:



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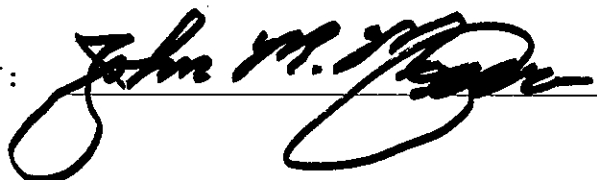
- 1 (1) On the website of the office of elections no later
2 than thirty days prior to the general election; and
3 (2) At or in each voting booth and in conspicuous places
4 outside of each polling place before the opening of
5 the polls at the general election."

6 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

7 SECTION 4: This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 21 2015



H.B. NO. 61

Report Title:

Elections; Proposed Constitutional Amendments; Voter Education

Description:

Requires the Chief Election Officer to coordinate the preparation of voter education materials for proposed constitutional amendments and to deliver the materials to all registered voters.

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

