

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

560

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 , 2021

RE: H.B. No. 337

H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 337 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the language and meaning of any proposed constitutional amendment and ratification question to be simple, concise, and direct to the extent practicable;
- (2) Allow the presiding officers of the Legislature to request a written opinion of the Supreme Court regarding the legality of a proposed amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution and the corresponding constitutional ratification question;
- (3) Require the Supreme Court to provide a written opinion within forty-eight hours of receipt of the request;
- (4) Require, for any written opinion by the Supreme Court that invalidates a constitutional ratification question, a detailed and specific explanation of the reasons for this opinion; and

2021-1887 HB337 HD1 HSCR HMSO



(5) Prohibit any appeal of a written opinion.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii State Teachers Association and Honolulu County Republican Party. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Judiciary.

Your Committee finds that constitutional ratification questions should be posed in simple, concise, and direct language. Your Committee further finds that it is an appropriate exercise of the powers of the Hawaii Supreme Court to issue written opinions on the legality of a proposed constitutional ratification question when asked to by the Senate President or the Speaker of the House of Representatives. This measure provides a mechanism to ensure the legality of constitutional ratification questions are addressed by the highest court in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3021, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 337, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 337, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary &
Hawaiian Affairs,


MARK M. NAKASHIMA, Chair



