

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM

A division of the Legislative Reference Bureau

NEWSLETTER

Hawaii State Capitol ♦ 415 South Beretania Street ♦ Room 401 ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 587-0478 ♦ Fax: (808) 587-0793 ♦ URL: www.hawaii.gov/lrb/par

2009 Legislative Timetable

February

- 16th Holiday: Presidents' Day
 20th First Lateral (Bills): Must be moved to final committee in originating chamber
 26th to March 4th: Mandatory 5-Day Recess

March

- 6th First Decking: Last day to file non-budget bills for Third Reading in originating chamber
 12th First Crossover (Bills)
 16th Budget Decking
 18th Budget Crossover
 18th Last day to introduce Substantive Resolutions
 26th Holiday: Kuhio Day
 27th Second Lateral (Bills): Must be moved to final committee in non-originating chamber

April

- 3rd (Senate) & 7th (House): First Lateral for Concurrent Resolutions
 9th Second Decking (Bills): Last day to file bills in non-originating body
 10th Holiday: Good Friday
 16th Second Crossover (Bills) & Last day to disagree
 17th First Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
 24th Constitutional Amendments: Deadline for final form
 27th Second Crossover for Concurrent Resolutions
 30th Last day to file Non-Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading

May

- 1st Last day to file Fiscal Bills to deck for Final Reading
 7th Adjournment Sine Die

Quote:

"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

- Mark Twain

CONTACT US!

Public Access Room

Phone (808) 587-0478

Fax..... (808) 587-0793

TTY.... (808) 587-0749

Email.....par@capitol.hawaii.gov (Fax from these islands using ext. 7-0793)

Neighbor Islands (Toll Free)

Hawai'i.....974-4000, ext. 7-0478

Maui.....984-2400, ext. 7-0478

Kaua'i.....274-3141, ext. 7-0478

Moloka'i/Lana'i.(800) 468-4644, ext. 7-0478



A-B-C's on Adding your Voice to the Mix

You've found the bill, and know what you want to say... now what?

- A) How to find a hearing notice (p. 1)
- B) A new way to submit testimony online (p. 2)
- C) A testimony outline, and some tips on speaking at hearings (pp. 3 & 4)

How to find a hearing notice online...

Website: www.capitol.hawaii.gov

Then go to this page: Bill Status and Documents

1. Click on "Get Current Hearing Notices" (second box down).
2. Find your bill number. (Tip: Try using your browser's "find" feature.)
3. Click on the date/time hyperlink to view the hearing notice. Information on how and when you may submit testimony appears at the bottom of the notice.

Note: If you can't find your bill number, there may not be a hearing scheduled – to check, go to the top section of the Bill Status and Documents page, enter your bill number, and view the status sheet.

Hearing Notices

If you bring a laptop to your next hearing, you can use the Capitol's free wireless network to pull up the hearing notice during the hearing and find helpful hyperlinks. In addition to links to the measures being considered and their status sheets, the Senate posts the written testimony to the hearing notice just before the hearing convenes.

New way to submit testimony online...

The folks at data systems have designed an online form that anyone on a computer can use to submit testimony – without having to access your email account!

Website: www.capitol.hawaii.gov
Then go to this page: Bill Status and Documents

1. In the **2009 Regular Session Hearing Notices** box, click on **“Submit Testimony Online.”**
2. Enter **your bill number** and click **‘Get Latest Hearing’** to retrieve hearing notice information.

This information is filled in by the computer, based on the bill number you entered.

3. Fill out the form:

Enter your name and email address. This is required for use of this form.

Provide additional information.

To attach (or “upload”) the file in which you’ve saved your testimony: 1) click “browse,” 2) locate the file, and 3) click “open.”

If needed, you can upload a second file with proposed amendments.

Alternative: If you’d like to submit your testimony in the body of the email, rather than attaching a file, just enter it here.

Don’t forget to click “submit” to send your testimony on its way! You’ll get an email confirmation that it has been received.

Learn More!

(Already know a lot? Come on in and learn something new!)

Introductory workshops on Tuesdays at 12 noon and Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.

Advanced tutorials are offered by appointment.

Workshops are free of charge –

Held through March in the PAR (Room 401 of the State Capitol).

Workshops provide valuable, time-saving tips and instruction on using online resources, writing good testimony, searching for and deciphering legislative documents, and new and efficient methods for researching and tracking legislation. Participants are provided take-home guides that prove useful to newcomers as well as experienced advocates. As scheduling permits, PAR also offers individual consultation and workshops tailored to meet interested groups' needs and experience; contact PAR to coordinate a date, time and place.

ABOUT PAR (Public Access Room) – The Public Access Room (PAR) is *the public's* office at the State Capitol. The office is devoted to assisting people engaging in State legislative government. The office is open year-round; its resources (including knowledgeable staff) are available and accessible to all residents. There is never a fee for services.

1-2-3 ... Quick Outline for Written Testimony

Quick! The hearing notice is posted and the deadline for testimony fast approaching! Here's a handy outline to assist you. Less is sometimes more – written testimony summed up in a page or less is ideal. A simple block layout will do. Read it over for typo's and get it in.

Chair Name ←

Committee Name ←

In Support of (or In Opposition to) (or Comments on) Bill Number

Hearing date, time and place ←

Note:
All of this information
can be found on the
hearing notice.

Testimony from: Name, Organization, Contact Information

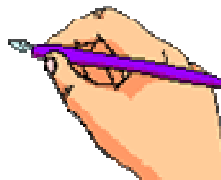
I would like to state my (strong) (support of /opposition to) bill number.

In the testimony, state the reasons for your position. Start with the most important or compelling. To enhance your testimony, include facts and/or experiences that support your position.

If you have an alternative or an amendment to suggest, try to be as clear and concise as possible.

In closing, repeat your position on the issue.

Signed





Tips on Speaking to Committees

Guidelines for Offering Oral Testimony

“Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee, I’d like to state my support of...”

1. If you plan to testify on a specific bill, read the bill carefully and be familiar with the issues. Know what you wish to say.
2. Generally speaking, do not read your written testimony. Speak conversationally. It’s much more compelling. Remember to breathe! Speak into the microphone.
3. Keep your testimony as short and simple as possible, unless you are asked to elaborate. A two- to three-minute presentation will usually suffice.
4. If you submitted written testimony, the chair will call your name when it’s your turn to testify. Since departmental officials may have to testify daily before numerous committees, most committee chairs will invite them to speak first, as a courtesy. If you did not submit written testimony, check in with the committee clerk when you first arrive. (The clerk is the staff person at the corner table, making sure the committee members have everything they need.)
5. Address your testimony to the committee chair and vice-chair. “Chair ____, Vice Chair ____ and members of the committee...” is a great way to start. Find their names on the hearing notice.
6. Start by introducing yourself and the group or organization (if any) that you represent.
7. State your position – are you in favor of the bill? Opposed? Just offering comments? If you favor some parts of it but not others, say so. Offer alternatives to the parts you oppose, if possible.
8. Be courteous, respectful, and professional – not adversarial.
9. In offering reasons for taking your position, start with the most important or compelling.
10. If you are asked to summarize your oral testimony, comply with the committee chair’s request. There may be a large number of bills scheduled and many testifiers.
11. Be prepared to answer questions from committee members about your testimony or your position on the bill. You could become a helpful resource to them. If you do not know the answer to a question, just say so and offer to get the information to the committee later.
12. Tell the truth and do not exaggerate.

What to wear!?

No need for a suit and tie, unless you like. When presenting testimony or attending a committee hearing, attire may be comfortable, but should be appropriate to the occasion. You may want to consider bringing a jacket or a wrap – committee rooms can be quite chilly.

Quote:

“It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret.”

- Jackie Joyner-Kersey

Internet Computer with JAWS® Software installed at the Public Access Room (PAR)

To assist users who have difficulty seeing screen content, the popular screen reader JAWS® has been installed on one of the computer terminals available to the public in the PAR. Using headphones, users can listen as JAWS reads aloud what is on the screen. The computer is connected to the internet, and available to anyone wishing to research legislative measures, type testimony or follow activity at the State legislature.