

Citizens' Jury Statement for the Constitutional Convention Ballot Question

This Citizens' Jury Statement was developed by an independent panel of eighteen Hawai'i voters who participated in the Citizens' Jury for the Constitutional Convention Ballot Question. Details on the process can be found at <http://www.publicpolicycenter.hawaii.edu>. The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the members of the Citizens' Jury. They are *not* official opinions or positions endorsed by the State of Hawai'i or any government agency. This statement is intended to raise awareness about the Constitutional Convention issue; it is *not* intended to endorse any specific position. The vote tallies reported here reflect only the positions of the members of the Citizens' Jury and should *not* be interpreted as a poll reflecting how the entire electorate thinks or will vote.

Key Findings: The following are the Jury's primary findings about the Constitutional Convention question:

- *The scope and application of government transparency rules such as the Sunshine Law and the Uniform Information Practices Act would need to be determined for a Constitutional Convention.*
- *Campaign spending laws and regulations, including those applying to super PACs, would apply to the Constitutional Convention.*
- *The state legislature would have significant influence and discretion over the number of Constitutional Convention delegates, when they are elected, the Constitutional Convention budget, and other factors.*
- *No proposed amendment from a Constitutional Convention could be enacted unless a majority of voters ratify it at an election.*
- *Blank or flawed ballots count as "no" votes in the Constitutional Convention election.*

Statements Supporting the Constitutional Convention

12 of the 18 Jury members support holding a Constitutional Convention. These are their most commonly-expressed reasons.

- *A Constitutional Convention would help reestablish public trust in government by allowing everyday citizens to contribute actively to the creation of effective laws.*
- *A Constitutional Convention provides an opportunity to take a comprehensive and holistic approach to improve government and address critical issues that are unresolved by the legislature.*
- *A Constitutional Convention could impose term limits for state legislators and enable other institutional reforms that the legislature has not passed.*
- *A Constitutional Convention provides the opportunity to expand and/or clarify Native Hawaiian rights that came out of the 1978 Constitutional Convention.*
- *A Constitutional Convention provides an opportunity to allow voter initiatives and referendums to be placed on the state ballot.*

Statements Opposing the Constitutional Convention

6 of the 18 Jury members oppose holding a Constitutional Convention. These are their most commonly-expressed reasons.

- *There would not be enough safeguards to prevent a Constitutional Convention from being dominated by extreme or special interests.*
- *A Constitutional Convention could result in a significant loss of rights that Hawai'i's citizens now enjoy, including Native Hawaiian rights, environmental rights, collective bargaining, use of natural resources, and others.*
- *A Constitutional Convention is not worth holding until our Hawai'i citizenry hold our elected officials accountable to ensure they follow what is currently written in law.*
- *There's no guarantee of a process to include the public's participation in submitting testimony or observing a Constitutional Convention.*
- *Most Hawai'i voters are unlikely to spend the time and effort to become sufficiently informed on proposed amendments.*