

Monday, February 22, 2021 to suspend the “30-day in print” rule contained in the state Constitution, for the 2021 Legislative Session

The following is the motion adopted by the State Senate:

MEMBERS,

THERE IS A RESOLUTION AT THE DESK REQUESTING PERMISSION TO SUSPEND ARTICLE IV, Sec., 8(a) OF THE CONSTITUTION AND JOINT RULE 55 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING SENATE BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE YEAR 2021 TO BE AMENDED, HEARD AND ACTED UPON BY

THE SENATE BEFORE 30 CALENDAR DAYS HAVE ELAPSED. THESE REQUESTS HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE RULES COMMITTEE.

Article IV, Section 8(a) was put into the state Constitution in 1911 when the Legislature was required to recess for 30 days so that the State Printer had time to publish the bills and provide the public adequate time to review bills before they could be considered. The voters in 1958 adopted Proposition 9, which repealed the 30-day recess, but the 30-day in print rule remains in the state Constitution.

In 2008, the State Assembly adopted an interpretation that this constitutional provision precludes a bill from being heard in committee or voted upon for 30 days after the bill has been introduced; however, a bill can be amended during this time period and referred to committee. As such, the Assembly has allowed authors to amend their bill during this 30-day in print period. On the other hand, the Senate has not followed this approach.

With the bill introduction deadline of February 19, few new bills will be introduced after this date. Committee bills, for example, are not subject to this deadline. As a result of the Senate voting to suspend this constitutional provision, a bill introduced in mid-February, could be heard anytime before the 30 days in print rule expires.

2/27/2021