

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R4883 JSA-D

S.J.R. 31
By: Wentworth
Administration
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, Article III, Section 5(b), Texas Constitution, provides that neither house of the legislature shall take up, consider, or act upon bills during the first sixty calendar days of the regular session. There are exceptions to this rule, including for emergency matters specifically submitted by the governor in special message to the legislature and when either house suspends by an affirmative vote or four-fifths of its membership.

Due to the constitutional rule requiring the legislature to wait 60 days to take up and consider bills during the 140-day regular session, the time period during when either house may act on such bills is significantly limited, often resulting in the necessity of a special session.

S.J.R. 31 proposes a constitutional amendment to reduce this 60-day period to 30 days, thus allowing the legislature 30 additional days to take up and consider bills. The proposed constitutional amendment would be submitted to voters at the November 8, 2011 election.

S.J.R. 31 proposes a constitutional amendment revising the order of legislative business to permit either house to act on bills and resolutions after the first 30 days of a regular session.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 5(b), Article III, Texas Constitution, as follows:

(b) Requires that the first thirty days thereof, when convened in regular session, be devoted to the introduction of bills and resolutions, acting upon emergency appropriations, passing upon the confirmation of the recess appointees of the governor, and such emergency matters as may be submitted by the governor in special messages to the legislature. Requires the various committees of each house during the remainder of the regular session, rather than the succeeding thirty days of the regular session of the legislature, to hold hearings to consider all bills, resolutions, and other matters then pending and such emergency matters as may be submitted to the governor, and requires the legislature to act upon such bills and resolutions as may be then pending and upon such emergency matters as may be submitted by the governor in special messages to the legislature. Makes a conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Requires the proposed constitutional amendments to be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 8, 2011. Sets forth the required language of the ballot.