

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 221**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 2, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman JEAN STANFIELD

District 8 (Atlantic, Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Requires Legislature to make bills and joint resolutions available to public on Legislature's website at least seven days before final vote.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** proposing to amend Article IV,
2 Section IV, paragraph 6 of the Constitution of the State of New
3 Jersey.

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5 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
6 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

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8 1. The following proposed amendment to the Constitution of the
9 State of New Jersey is agreed to:

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11 PROPOSED AMENDMENT

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13 Amend Article IV, Section IV, paragraph 6 to read as follows:

14 6. All bills and joint resolutions shall be read three times in each
15 house before final passage. No bill or joint resolution shall be read a
16 third time in either house until after the **【intervention of one full**
17 **calendar day】** bill or joint resolution is made available to the public
18 on the website of the Legislature for at least seven full calendar days
19 following the day of the second reading 【; but if】. Each time a bill or
20 joint resolution is read a second time, the bill or joint resolution shall
21 be made available to the public on the website of the Legislature for
22 at least seven full calendar days following the day of each second
23 reading and prior to the third reading. If either house shall resolve by
24 vote of three-fourths of all its members, signified by yeas and nays
25 entered on the journal, that a bill or joint resolution is an emergency
26 measure, it may proceed forthwith from second to third reading
27 without having first been made available to the public for at least
28 seven full calendar days. No bill or joint resolution shall pass, unless
29 there shall be a majority of all the members of each body personally
30 present and agreeing thereto, and the yeas and nays of the members
31 voting on such final passage shall be entered on the journal.
32 (cf: Art.IV, Sec.IV, par.6)

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34 2. When this proposed amendment to the Constitution is finally
35 agreed to pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 1 of the Constitution, it
36 shall be submitted to the people at the next general election occurring
37 more than three months after the final agreement and shall be
38 published at least once in at least one newspaper of each county
39 designated by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General
40 Assembly and the Secretary of State, not less than three months prior
41 to the general election.

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43 3. This proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be
44 submitted to the people at that election in the following manner and
45 form:

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】 in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.**

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

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- There shall be printed on each official ballot to be used at the general election, the following:
- a. In every municipality in which voting machines are not used, a legend which shall immediately precede the question as follows:
- If you favor the proposition printed below make a cross (X), plus (+), or check (✓) in the square opposite the word "Yes." If you are opposed thereto make a cross (X), plus (+) or check (✓) in the square opposite the word "No."
- b. In every municipality the following question:

		<p>CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO REQUIRE THE LEGISLATURE TO MAKE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS BEFORE A FINAL VOTE?</p> <p>Do you approve amending the Constitution to require the Legislature to provide bills and joint resolutions online for at least seven days before a final vote?</p> <p>The bill or joint resolution could not be voted on unless the final text of the document is on the internet for at least seven days.</p> <p>The Legislature could vote on a bill or joint resolution without waiting seven days with a three-fourths vote.</p>
	YES	

		<p>INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT</p> <p>This constitutional amendment would require the Legislature to make bills and joint resolutions available to the public online for at least seven days before a final vote.</p> <p>Under the Constitution, a bill or joint resolution has to be read three times before a final vote is taken. A bill or joint resolution is given first reading when introduced, second reading generally when voted out of committee, and third reading before the final vote.</p> <p>The Constitution currently requires that there be one day between second reading and third reading.</p> <p>The amendment would change the Constitution to instead require at least seven days between second reading and third reading. Each time a bill or joint resolution is read a second time the bill or joint resolution must be made available on the Legislature’s website for at least seven days after each second reading and prior to the third reading.</p> <p>The amendment would permit a final vote to be taken on a bill or joint resolution without the seven day period if three-fourths of the members vote to decide that it is an emergency.</p> <p>A “yes” vote will amend the Constitution to require the Legislature to make bills and joint resolutions available to the public online for at least seven days before a final vote.</p> <p>A “no” vote will leave the Constitution unchanged. This means there will not be a requirement to make bills and joint resolutions available to the public online for at least seven days before a final vote.</p>
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STATEMENT

This constitutional amendment would require the Legislature to make bills and joint resolutions available to the public on the Legislature’s website at least seven days before a final vote.

Under the Constitution, a bill has to be read three times before it can be passed. A bill is given first reading when introduced, second

ACR221 STANFIELD

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1 reading generally when voted out of committee, and third reading
2 before the final vote. The Constitution also requires one full calendar
3 day between second reading and a final vote on a bill or joint
4 resolution with an emergency exception.

5 This amendment would change the Constitution to instead require
6 at least seven days between second reading and third reading. Under
7 the bill, each time a bill or joint resolution is read a second time the
8 bill or joint resolution must be made available on the Legislature's
9 website for at least seven days after each second reading and prior to
10 the third reading. The exception in the Constitution that a bill or joint
11 resolution may have a final vote without the seven day period if three-
12 fourths of the members in that House decide that the bill or joint
13 resolution is an emergency measure remains unchanged.

14 It is the sponsor's belief that this amendment would ensure that
15 the public has access to most bills and joint resolutions for at least
16 seven days before a final vote and limit the ability of bills and joint
17 resolutions to be voted on without proper transparency to the public.