

# Proposition 9 Would Streamline California Legislative System

A proposal on the November ballot relating to the duration of general sessions of the Legislature in odd-numbered years will bring a considerable change in some phases of legislative procedure, if it is approved by the voters, according to State Senator Richard Richards.

This is Proposition No. 9, whose major provisions would eliminate the mandatory 30-day recess in February, and exclude Saturdays and Sundays in computing the 120 calendar days to which a general session is presently limited by the Constitution.

Thus, according to the new proposal, the general session would run continuously from the first day of January until the expiration of the 120 calendar day period, not counting Saturdays and Sundays.

THIS WOULD mean that the 1959 General Session would begin on January 5—the first Monday after the first day of January—and adjourn on June 19. The 1957 General Session adjourned on June 12.

The major change in legislative procedure would occur in the introduction and hearing of bills. Under present provisions of the Constitution, a bill introduced in the Legislature is not to exceed 30 days during which bills are introduced, according to Richards.

This period is followed by a mandatory recess of not less than 30 days. Thereafter no bills may be introduced in either house without the consent of three-fourths of the members, and a member may not introduce more than two bills.

THE ORIGINAL intent of the 30-day recess, which was established in 1911, was to give the general public that amount of time to read and analyze the legislation introduced during the first 30 days. The advantages in this procedure, however, have been largely negated by the tremendous increases in legislative problems imposed by the rapid growth and development of our state in the postwar years, Richards claims.

This has brought about such a flood of bills in the introductory period that it has been impossible to get them all into print until the end of the recess, when committee action on these bills actually begins. In addition, many bills are introduced in skeleton form and not amended into final shape until after the session has resumed, he said.

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