
HOUSE RESOLUTION

DECLARING A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE
AND REQUESTING STATEWIDE COORDINATION TO IDENTIFY, PLAN
FOR, AND CREATE CROSS-SECTOR SOLUTIONS TO STRENGTHEN
HAWAII'S PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

1 WHEREAS, humanity's runaway greenhouse gas emissions have
2 contributed to accelerated climate change, characterized by
3 rising global temperatures, sea level rise, ecological collapse,
4 and the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather
5 events; and

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7 WHEREAS, as stated in House Concurrent Resolution No. 192
8 (2023), scientific consensus indicates public health will be
9 impacted because climate change will increase the incidence of
10 increased heat, vector-borne diseases, crop failure and food
11 insecurity, water insecurity, waterborne diseases, extreme
12 weather events, air pollution, and adverse mental health impacts
13 due to these climate stressors and collective eco-grief, which
14 refers to the deep sense of loss and overwhelming emotional
15 response felt when learning about and experiencing the
16 catastrophic destruction of the environment due to climate
17 change; and

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19 WHEREAS, climate change adversely impacts the social
20 determinants of health, which include food security, economic
21 stability, strong social and community support networks, healthy
22 environments, and access to quality health care and emergency
23 services; and

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25 WHEREAS, as an island state, Hawaii remains particularly
26 vulnerable to the effects of climate change, thereby endangering
27 the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, warranting
28 preemptive and protective action; and

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30 WHEREAS, climate change and its associated health impacts
31 are not limited to the purview of the Department of Health, but



1 transcend traditionally siloed approaches to state
2 administration and impact all departments, including those that
3 oversee land, water, agriculture, transportation, and emergency
4 services; and

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6 WHEREAS, Hawaii established itself as a national leader in
7 adapting to the climate crisis by becoming the first state in
8 the United States to declare a climate emergency through Senate
9 Concurrent Resolution No. 44 (2021), which recognized that
10 climate change threatens the health, safety, and welfare of the
11 people of Hawaii; and

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13 WHEREAS, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 44 (2021) called
14 for statewide commitment and mobilization of resources to ensure
15 a just transition to a decarbonized economy and facilitation of
16 investments in beneficial projects and infrastructure, but did
17 not declare a public health emergency nor call for the
18 mobilization of resources necessary to adapt and to protect
19 human health in Hawaii from the severe threat of climate change;
20 and

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22 WHEREAS, leading scientific and medical authorities,
23 including the United Nations, World Health Organization, and
24 American Public Health Association, have identified climate
25 change as a major public health crisis; now, therefore,

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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
28 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
29 of 2025, that this body acknowledges that climate change poses a
30 dire threat to public health, declares a public health emergency
31 in the State, and requests entities statewide to actively
32 examine how the climate considerations within their departments
33 impact human health and coordinate with other departments to
34 identify, plan for, and create cross-sector solutions to
35 strengthen Hawaii's public health response to the climate
36 crisis; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
39 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Attorney General;
40 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources; Director
41 of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Director
42 of Health; Director of Transportation; Chairperson of the Board



1 of Agriculture; and mayors of the City and County of Honolulu
2 and counties of Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii.

