HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO REVIEW THE STATE'S LANDING FEES AND DETERMINE WHETHER THE LANDING FEES AT STATE AIRPORTS SHOULD BE INCREASED.

WHEREAS, Hawaii is an island state dependent upon air travel when commuting between islands and the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's airports play a pivotal role in servicing our most critical economic driving force, tourism, because as the gateways to the islands, they serve as a tourist's first and last Hawaiian experience; and

WHEREAS, with infrastructure dating to the 1970s and earlier, many facilities at Hawaii's airports are outdated and in need of major upgrades or wholesale change to return the essence of these airports to a Hawaiian "sense of place"; and

WHEREAS, dissatisfaction and complaints about the airport system, including a lack of eating and shopping establishments, general lack of comfort, and a lack of the "aloha spirit" have been on the rise, especially among Japanese and European visitors; and

WHEREAS, although the state Department of Transportation (DOT) has had ambitious plans for multimillion dollar upgrades of airport facilities in the past, many of these plans were cut short due to the economic downturn Hawaii faced in the 1990s, the effects of the first Gulf War, and the events of September 11th; and

WHEREAS, while DOT officials have begun addressing the problems by spending more than \$30,000,000 this year on maintenance and other improvements to Honolulu International Airport, including better wayfaring signs inside and out of the terminal, more shopping areas, improved air conditioning in the main Honolulu terminal, a new \$5,000,000 security checkpoint, expanded retail opportunities, and a new food court and bar

complex near the gates where international flights arrive, much more needs to be done; and

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WHEREAS, landing fees are one means of generating revenues for improvements to the state airport system; and

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WHEREAS, while the authority to collect landing fees is statutorily established, the formula used for calculating landing fees is established by the administrative rules of DOT;

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WHEREAS, the Director of DOT has been given the authority and flexibility to adjust landing fees, as long as the rates, rentals, fees, and charges set forth by the Director are at least sufficient to meet the expenditures of the statewide system of airports, including expenditures for capital improvement projects approved by the Legislature; and

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WHEREAS, the last adjustment made to the airport landing fees by DOT was in 1998; now, therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006, that DOT is requested to review the State's landing fees and determine whether these fees should be increased; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DOT is requested to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2007; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Department of Transportation.

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OFFERED BY: Tyle B. Berg

HR HMS 2006-1428