## H.C.R. NO. 119

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO BEGIN REBUILDING THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH BY 2012.

WHEREAS, over three thousand five hundred graduates of the University of Hawaii School of Public Health programs in epidemiology, environmental health, nutrition, maternal and child health, gerontology, international health, health administration, and community health development and education now play vital roles in protecting the health of Hawaii's population and the health of those in the Asia, Pacific, and United States regions; and

WHEREAS, over the decades, the health workforce of Hawaii and the Asia-Pacific region has consisted largely of the graduates of former University of Hawaii School of Public Health, which once educated hundreds of public health professionals a year, as the second largest graduate program in the University of Hawaii system; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the University of Hawaii School of Public Health lost its accreditation; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the University of Hawaii School of Public Health was incorporated into the John A. Burns School of Medicine as the Office of Public Health Studies; and

WHEREAS, upon closure of the School of Public Health, the University of Hawaii administration proposed, and the Board of Regents approved, a plan to rebuild it within five years; and

WHEREAS, the medical school and the Department of Health have made significant strides towards the rebuilding of public health education, research, and training since the closure of the School of Public Health, most significantly in gaining

recent seven-year full accreditation from the Council on Education in Public Health for a program in public health; and

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WHEREAS, the Department recently completed a school of public health business plan, as well as increased the public health faculty size from fourteen to twenty; and

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WHEREAS, a new, independent school of public health could become a reality within three to five years, pending the availability of necessary funding resources; and

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WHEREAS, Hawaii is at a crossroads for emerging public health issues, as there is both significant public health needs as well as interest by prospective students to sustain a new school; and

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WHEREAS, a new school of public health must provide distance training to prospective students living in all geographic areas of Hawaii; and

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WHEREAS, studies have shown that a substantial percentage of the public health workforce, especially those in leadership and mid-level management positions, has retired or is on the verge of exiting the workforce to retire; and

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WHEREAS, currently, Hawaii is facing a health workforce crisis that will be even more critical if public health training and education is not reinstated; and

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WHEREAS, the potential for obtaining research funds has grown tremendously over the last few years, and a new school of public health would provide more flexibility to respond to Hawaii's public health needs including issues relating to a pandemic influenza, substance use, disparities in health status, environmental health problems, diabetes, elder health, injury prevention, childhood obesity, bioterrorism, SARS, and other local and global health challenges; and

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WHEREAS, without a fully accredited school of public health, Hawaii is ineligible to receive maximum federal research money; and

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WHEREAS, other states and universities are considering increasing public health training and research in Hawaii and the

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Asia-Pacific region because of the absence of a Hawaii school of public health; and

WHEREAS, because there is no public health school in the State, Hawaii is losing revenue, recognition, and its essential role of educational public health leadership in the Asia-Pacific region; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the University of Hawaii is urged to begin the rebuilding of a school of public health by 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Hawaii is urged to work with the Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other key public health partners to collaborate on the rebuilding of the University of Hawaii School of Public Health, with new opportunities for research, education and community service that broaden the public health infrastructure for Hawaii, the Pacific and Asia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President and Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, the Director of the Office of Public Health Studies, the Director of Health, Hawaii's congressional delegation, the Director of the Public Health Practice Program Office of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Presidents of the University of Hawaii Public Health Alumni Association and the Hawaii Public Health Association.

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