SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE PROPER CLEANING OF PRODUCE.

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Health is responsible for
2 administering programs designed to protect, preserve, care for,
3 and improve the health of the people of the State, including
4 food safety; and
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6 WHEREAS, food safety encompasses the preparation of
7 uncooked foods, such as fruits and vegetables; and
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9 WHEREAS, in December 2008, three Big Island residents were
10 hospitalized because of a rare ailment, commonly called rat
11 lungworm disease; and
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13 WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease arises from parasitic worms
14 that can be ingested when eating raw produce containing a small
15 snail or slug, that migrates through the body; and
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17 WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease can cause significant pain
18 and trauma, including paralysis, blindness, and death; and
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20 WHEREAS, a study identified twenty-four cases of rat
21 lungworm disease in Hawaii from January 2001 to February 2005;
22 and
23
24 WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease is only one of the serious
25 diseases that affect raw produce consumption; and
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27 WHEREAS, proper cleaning of produce may also reduce the
28 incidence of emerging and known pathogens and contaminates that
29 may affect raw produce consumption; and
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31 WHEREAS, a growing number of Hawaii residents are consuming
32 home-grown produce, thereby increasing the importance of

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1 educating the public on the proper cleaning of fruits and
2 vegetables; now, therefore,
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4   BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
6 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
7 Health is urged to make it a priority to educate the public on
8 the proper cleaning of produce to reduce the incidence of rat
9 lungworm disease and all emerging and known pathogens and
10 contaminates that may affect raw produce consumption; and
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12   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
13 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health.