

MAR 17 2009

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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URGING STATEWIDE NEWS MEDIA AND MEMBERS OF THE PRESS TO INCREASE  
COVERAGE OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ISSUES.

1 WHEREAS, active participation by an informed electorate is  
2 essential to the preservation of democracy; and  
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4 WHEREAS, according to data reported by the United States  
5 Census Bureau, voter participation in Hawaii is among the lowest  
6 in the nation, reaching its lowest point in 2004 when Hawaii had  
7 the lowest participation rate in the nation; and  
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9 WHEREAS, according to the Pacific Business News, Hawaii's  
10 voter turnout rate for the 2008 general election was 65.9 per  
11 cent, representing a decrease in electoral participation since  
12 the prior presidential election year; and  
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14 WHEREAS, a robust and active local news media plays an  
15 important role in informing citizens about the workings of their  
16 government; and  
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18 WHEREAS, according to a recent study by the University of  
19 Delaware, news media consolidation over the last decade has  
20 resulted in decreased coverage of local news; and  
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22 WHEREAS, television stations and newspapers in this State  
23 have laid off experienced staff, including reporters, editors,  
24 and producers, over the past year and have either not hired  
25 replacements or have hired replacements with little to no  
26 experience, thus negatively impacting the stations' and  
27 newspapers' ability to produce high-quality news reporting; and  
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29 WHEREAS, many of the local issues that face reduced  
30 coverage involve state and local governmental matters; and  
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32 WHEREAS, the citizens of Hawaii deserve the opportunity to  
33 become informed about their state and local governments so that  
34 they can fully participate in the political process; now,  
35 therefore,  
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth  
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009,  
3 that members of the press, including reporters, writers,  
4 editors, and support staff of television, radio, print, and  
5 electronic media are encouraged to make free, fair, and thorough  
6 coverage of state and local government issues a priority in  
7 their work; and

8  
9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that management and ownership  
10 interests of Hawaii's media outlets are encouraged to provide  
11 balanced, accurate, and comprehensive coverage of state and  
12 local government and policy issues to ensure an informed and  
13 engaged citizenry; and

14  
15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
16 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of  
17 Hawaii, the Mayors of the respective counties, the presiding  
18 officer of each county council, and major media outlets  
19 throughout the State of Hawaii.

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21  
22 OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

By Request

