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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DIVISION OF STATE PARKS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO ASSESS POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS OCEAN CONDITIONS AT BEACH PARKS AND ENSURE THAT SAFETY CONCERNS ARE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS THAT WILL INCREASE USE, AND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AT STATE BEACH PARKS ON THE DIVISION'S WEBSITE AND IN ITS PRINTED MATERIALS.

1           WHEREAS, the Division of State Parks of the Department of  
2 Land and Natural Resources is tasked with the management,  
3 maintenance, and development of park facilities, including beach  
4 parks; and

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6           WHEREAS, beach park improvements, such as paved access  
7 roads, restrooms, showers, and picnic tables, tend to greatly  
8 increase the use of those parks, particularly by visitors who  
9 are less likely to go to remote beaches that are not easily  
10 accessible and have no amenities; and

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12           WHEREAS, improvements were made in 2005 at Kua Bay in North  
13 Kona on the Island of Hawaii, and these improvements greatly  
14 increased the use of this beach, particularly by visitors who  
15 are inexperienced with the ocean; and

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17           WHEREAS, although it is common knowledge among local  
18 residents that Kua Bay can experience rip tides, strong  
19 currents, rough shore break, and generally dangerous conditions,  
20 the environmental impact statement for the access road and other  
21 improvements to Kua Bay did not include any consideration of  
22 potentially hazardous ocean conditions; and

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24           WHEREAS, the Division of State Parks website describes  
25 Hapuna Beach as having "dangerous rip currents and pounding  
26 shore breaks during periods of high surf. Waves over 3 feet  
27 high are for experts--all others should stay out of the water



1 and out of the shoreline", but describes Kua Bay as "a section  
2 at the north end of the park that has been developed with a  
3 paved access road, parking lot, and comfort station with an  
4 outdoor shower", with no mention of the frequent rough and  
5 dangerous conditions at Kua Bay; and

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7 WHEREAS, there have been three drownings and twenty-eight  
8 emergency calls from the Kua Bay area since 2013, as well as  
9 seven spinal cord injuries between 2009 and 2013; and

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11 WHEREAS, Kua Bay is one example of the types of safety  
12 concerns that are common at state beach parks in every county;  
13 and

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15 WHEREAS, drownings at state beach parks accounted for five  
16 percent of the total fatal injuries in Hawaii for residents and  
17 forty-nine percent of the fatal injuries for non-residents  
18 between 2010 and 2014; and

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20 WHEREAS, conducting a thorough assessment of potential  
21 hazards before making remote beaches more accessible could  
22 provide insight that would save lives; and

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24 WHEREAS, these safety assessments should include input from  
25 residents who can provide local knowledge about potential  
26 hazards, information regarding the distance from hospitals, as  
27 well as medical data from emergency medical services to advise  
28 the Division of State Parks regarding high-risk locations and  
29 past incidents; and

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31 WHEREAS, a safety assessment of a location should also  
32 include a recommendation of whether a lifeguard is necessary  
33 there, whether access should be improved if a lifeguard cannot  
34 be stationed there, and whether improved access is not  
35 advisable; now, therefore,

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37 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
38 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
39 of 2018, the Senate concurring, that the Division of State Parks  
40 of the Department of Land and Natural Resources is urged to  
41 conduct an assessment of potentially hazardous ocean conditions  
42 at beach parks prior to undertaking access improvements that  
43 will increase use, and to provide information about potentially



1 hazardous conditions at state beach parks on the Division's  
2 website and in its printed materials; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
5 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the  
6 Board of Land and Natural Resources, the Administrator of the  
7 Division of State Parks of the Department of Land and Natural  
8 Resources, the Chief of the Emergency Medical Services and  
9 Injury Prevention System Branch of the Department of Health, the  
10 Director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency of the  
11 Department of Defense, and the President of the Hawaiian  
12 Lifeguard Association.

