

JAN 18 2019

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE METRIC SYSTEM.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that strong reasons exist  
2 for Hawaii and other states to switch to the metric system, also  
3 known as the International System of Units or SI. By using its  
4 customary system of inches, feet, ounces, and pounds, the United  
5 States is an outlier. Only two other countries—Burma and  
6 Liberia—do not utilize the metric system as their predominant  
7 means of measurement. The metric system is the language of  
8 science, medicine, international commerce, and most sports.  
9 Furthermore, learning two measurement systems is time-consuming,  
10 can be confusing, and can result in costly and dangerous  
11 conversion errors. The costs of not utilizing the metric system  
12 are quickly increasing with the trend toward globalization,  
13 which could result in the United States losing its competitive  
14 edge in science and technology and continuing to create  
15 bilateral trade impediments with other countries. The economic  
16 benefits of global interoperability greatly outweigh the  
17 challenges of converting to the metric system. Product design,



1 manufacturing, marketing, and labeling are all made more  
2 difficult by having to convert measurements from one system to  
3 another. Switching to the metric system could result in the  
4 creation of many jobs and enable the current and future  
5 workforce of the United States to be more prepared to work in  
6 the international marketplace.

7 The purpose of this Act is to establish a task force to  
8 explore certain topics associated with the use of the metric  
9 system in Hawai'i.

10 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
11 of transportation for administrative purposes a task force to:

- 12 (1) Explore the use of the metric system for distance and  
13 speed measurements on public signs; and  
14 (2) Evaluate whether any problems have occurred for  
15 tourists from metric system-based countries.

16 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

- 17 (1) The director of transportation or the director's  
18 designee, who shall serve as the chairperson of the  
19 task force;  
20 (2) The director of business, economic development, and  
21 tourism or the director's designee;



1           (3) The president and chief executive officer of the  
2           Hawaii tourism authority or the president and chief  
3           executive officer's designee;

4           (4) The administrator of the quality assurance division of  
5           the department of agriculture, or the administrator's  
6           designee;

7           (5) A member of the senate, to be designated by the  
8           president of the senate; and

9           (6) A member of the house of representatives, to be  
10          designated by the speaker of the house of  
11          representatives.

12 Task force members may recommend additional members with  
13 appropriate relevant expertise to the task force, with the  
14 approval of the chairperson.

15           (b) Members of the task force shall serve without  
16 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses  
17 incurred, including travel expenses.

18           (c) The department of transportation shall provide  
19 administrative and clerical support required by the task force.

20           (d) The task force shall submit a report to the  
21 legislature of its findings and recommendations, including



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1 proposed legislation, no later than sixty days prior to the  
2 convening of the regular session of 2020.

3 (e) The task force shall be dissolved on June 30, 2020.

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much  
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 for the  
7 task force established pursuant to this Act.

8 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
9 transportation for the purposes of this Act.

10 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

11 INTRODUCED BY: *Paul Akana*



# S.B. NO. 428

**Report Title:**

Measurements; Metric System; Signage Task Force; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a task force within the department of transportation to explore certain topics associated with the use of the metric system in Hawaii. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

