
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU, IN COLLABORATION
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH A
STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has an abundance of geologic resources,
2 such as soil, rock, and mineral resources; groundwater; and
3 geothermal resources; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii faces a wide range of geologic hazards,
6 including coastal erosion, landslides, flash flooding,
7 earthquakes, volcanism, and ocean hazards; and
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9 WHEREAS, sediment-laden surface water runoff is an
10 environmental hazard that threatens nearshore water quality; and
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12 WHEREAS, watershed management planning is recognized as the
13 best approach to identify where to implement best management
14 practices to reduce surface runoff into nearshore receiving
15 waters; and
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17 WHEREAS, hazard mitigation planning is needed to reduce the
18 risk to island communities from landslides, flash flooding, and
19 wildland fires; and
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21 WHEREAS, geologic maps are essential tools for watershed
22 mapping and the development of effective watershed management
23 plans and hazard mitigation plans; and
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25 WHEREAS, Hawaii's mapping capability for purposes of
26 watershed management and hazard mitigation is insufficient
27 because of the lack of a centralized scientific office to
28 provide expertise, conduct research, and map the State's



1 resources and hazard zones for public safety and for resource
2 management planning; and
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4 WHEREAS, many other states have an established geological
5 survey responsible for producing maps of natural processes,
6 assessing threats, compiling and centralizing data, coordinating
7 with other agencies, and adding a scientific dimension to
8 planning; and
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10 WHEREAS, these state geological surveys are able to receive
11 federal funding to meet their states' geological mapping
12 priorities through the United States Geological Survey's
13 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program; and
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15 WHEREAS, the United States Geological Survey created the
16 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program to produce
17 accurate geologic maps and three-dimensional framework models in
18 the United States to be used for land-use management, threat
19 assessment, conservation of natural resources, groundwater
20 management, natural-hazard mitigation, and environmental
21 protection; and
22

23 WHEREAS, the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program
24 is the primary source of funds for the production of geologic
25 maps in the United States; and
26

27 WHEREAS, one component of the National Cooperative Geologic
28 Mapping Program is the STATEMAP program, which provides federal
29 funds to state geological surveys to enable new geologic mapping
30 projects determined to be vital to the economic, social, or
31 scientific welfare of individual states; and
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33 WHEREAS, geologic maps produced through the National
34 Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program provide useful data for
35 decision-makers in interpreting and evaluating their state's
36 unique natural resources and hazards and in creating effective
37 management plans; and
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39 WHEREAS, as of 2020, STATEMAP has invested more than
40 \$150,000,000 in forty-eight state geological surveys to complete
41 geologic mapping projects critical to the health and security of
42 the residents and natural resources of individual states; and



1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is currently unable to participate in the
2 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program and therefore
3 unable to receive STATEMAP funds because it has no state
4 geological survey; and
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6 WHEREAS, Hawaii is the only state in the nation without a
7 geological survey and is one of only two states in the nation
8 that has never received federal funds to perform geological
9 studies; and
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11 WHEREAS, without a geological survey, Hawaii is currently
12 monitoring and researching natural resources and hazards through
13 an unorganized combination of federal, state, and county
14 engineers and consultants; and
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16 WHEREAS, this unorganized system has led to a gap in
17 mapping for Hawaii, thereby limiting its mapping capability,
18 especially for purposes of watershed management and hazard
19 mitigation; and
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21 WHEREAS, a state geological survey in Hawaii would unify
22 the State's mapping capability, make Hawaii eligible to compete
23 for applicable federal funds, and provide a broader range of
24 geological information for the public and state decision-makers
25 to use in mitigation and management planning; now, therefore,
26

27 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
28 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
29 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative Reference
30 Bureau, in collaboration with the Department of Land and Natural
31 Resources and University of Hawaii, is requested to develop a
32 plan to establish a state geological survey in Hawaii; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
35 Bureau is requested to evaluate in the plan:
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- 37 (1) Proposed scopes of work for the state geologic survey,
38 including proposed ways to consolidate existing
39 functions into a state geological survey;



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- 1 (2) Proposed organizational structures of the state
2 geological survey, including advantages and
3 disadvantages of each proposed structure;
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- 5 (3) Proposed staff positions that would be needed for the
6 state geological survey, including salary levels;
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- 8 (4) Proposed sources for funding or other necessary
9 resources; and
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- 11 (5) Enabling legislation to create the state geological
12 survey; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
15 Bureau is requested to consult also with the United States
16 Geological Survey, state Office of Planning, and any other
17 organization or person that the Bureau deems appropriate; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
20 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and
21 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
22 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
23 the Regular Session of 2022; and
24

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
26 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
27 of the Legislative Reference Bureau, Chairperson of the Board of
28 Land and Natural Resources, Chairperson of the University of
29 Hawaii Board of Regents, and President of the University of
30 Hawaii System.
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OFFERED BY: 

MAR 11 2021

