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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STRONGLY URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO WORK WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON UNDERWATER MUNITIONS' INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD ON UNDERWATER MUNITIONS TO SEEK AND SECURE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE NON-DESTRUCTIVE DISPOSAL OF THOUSANDS OF TONS OF UNDERWATER MUNITIONS DUMPED, LOST, OR ABANDONED IN HAWAIIAN WATERS.

1           WHEREAS, international scientific findings suggest an  
2 urgent need for awareness, research, and the non-destructive  
3 disposal of thousands of tons of underwater munitions dumped,  
4 lost, or abandoned in Hawaiian waters; and  
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6           WHEREAS, lost or abandoned munitions at sea are commonly  
7 referred to as "underwater munitions", which includes  
8 conventional, chemical, radiological, and biological munitions,  
9 as well as their propellants, fuses, and booster and bursting  
10 explosives; and  
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12           WHEREAS, there is cause for concern regarding chemical and  
13 conventional munitions present in the marine environment,  
14 whether as unexploded ordnance or discarded military munitions,  
15 because they pose a threat to the health and safety of humans as  
16 well as marine life; and  
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18           WHEREAS, through corrosion and chemical changes, these  
19 devices might become more volatile, thus increasing the danger  
20 of unexpected explosions; and  
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22           WHEREAS, underwater munitions are point source emitters of  
23 pollution, both as chronic contamination of the marine  
24 environment through leakages and sudden release of toxic  
25 substances through explosions; and



1 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Islands served as a staging area in  
2 both world wars and the Vietnam War, and vast quantities of  
3 unused munitions were dumped throughout the island chain; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, the steel casements for these munitions are now  
6 undergoing rapid corrosion due to prolonged exposure to  
7 seawater, creating a special urgency to find, retrieve, and  
8 destroy these underwater munitions before their breakdown  
9 products continue to spread toxins across the sea floor; and  
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11 WHEREAS, until the 1960s, sea dumping was believed to be  
12 one of the safest and most cost-effective ways to dispose of  
13 munitions; and  
14

15 WHEREAS, however, in 1969, the United States National  
16 Academy of Sciences recommended the discontinuation of sea  
17 disposal of chemical warfare agents, and in 1972, the United  
18 States Congress enacted the Marine Protection Act, recognizing  
19 that "[u]nregulated dumping of material into ocean waters  
20 endangers human health, welfare, and amenities, and the marine  
21 environment, ecological system, and economic potentialities";  
22 and  
23

24 WHEREAS, the coral reefs of Hawaii generate \$835,000,000 in  
25 annual economic activity; create more than 8,000 full-time jobs;  
26 provide shoreline protection from storms and coastal erosion;  
27 and are the source of Hawaii's famous tourist beaches; and  
28

29 WHEREAS, it is difficult for any single organization to  
30 adequately address all aspects of underwater munitions; thus, a  
31 statewide effort is necessary to bring together stakeholders to  
32 cooperate, collect, process, coordinate, prioritize resources,  
33 and distribute information for underwater munitions policy,  
34 science, technology, and responses; and  
35

36 WHEREAS, there is a need for greater involvement and  
37 cooperation on underwater munitions policy, science, technology,  
38 and responses by state departments and agencies, non-  
39 governmental organizations, foundations, charities, local  
40 interest groups, marine operators, coral restoration groups,  
41 fisheries, beachgoers, stakeholders, and the general public; and



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1 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources,  
2 including its Division of Aquatic Resources, works to:

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- 4 (1) Restore Hawaii's coral reefs;
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- 6 (2) Conserve the State's coral reefs for present and  
7 future generations; and
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- 9 (3) Create a resilient and sustainable future for Hawaiian  
10 coral reefs; and
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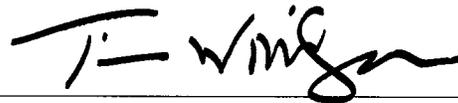
12 WHEREAS, decaying underwater munitions should be removed  
13 from coral reefs when done safely or remediated with non-  
14 destructive disposal technologies to protect the corals and sea  
15 life and to prevent harmful algae blooms; now, therefore,

16  
17 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
18 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
19 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Land and  
20 Natural Resources is strongly urged to work with the  
21 International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions' International  
22 Scientific and Technology Advisory Board on Underwater Munitions  
23 to seek and secure federal funding for the non-destructive  
24 disposal of thousands of tons of underwater munitions dumped,  
25 lost, or abandoned in Hawaiian waters; and

26  
27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
28 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor,  
29 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and  
30 Chairperson of the International Scientific and Technology  
31 Advisory Board on Underwater Munitions.

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OFFERED BY:



MAR 12 2021

