
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU, IN CONSULTATION
WITH THE JOHN A. BURNS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF HAWAII AT MANOA AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO CONDUCT A
STUDY ON THE CUMULATIVE HEALTH EFFECTS OF PERSISTENT URBAN
NOISE IN HONOLULU.

1 WHEREAS, comprehensive research has shown that there is a
2 direct link between excessive noise and health issues, such as
3 stress-related illnesses, high blood pressure, hearing loss,
4 sleep disruption, and lost productivity; and

5
6 WHEREAS, the federal Centers for Disease Control and
7 Prevention found that hearing loss can result from a single loud
8 sound, like firecrackers, near a person's ear, or more often,
9 can result gradually from damage caused by repeated exposure to
10 loud sounds -- the louder the sound, the shorter the amount of
11 time it takes for hearing loss to occur and the longer the
12 exposure, the greater the risk for hearing loss; and

13
14 WHEREAS, when noise is considered in its entirety and not
15 solely by individual measurements or considerations, it can have
16 a detrimental cumulative effect; and

17
18 WHEREAS, aggregated unrestrained noises occurring around
19 the clock can significantly affect the quality of life of
20 Honolulu's urban dwellers and detract from a sustainable,
21 livable urban environment; and

22
23 WHEREAS, the residents of urban Honolulu experience noise
24 as part of an increasingly loud urban soundscape; and

25
26 WHEREAS, some of the frequent and pervasive urban noise
27 derived from various sources include:



- 1 (1) Buses "kneeling" along the Beretania Street, Hotel
- 2 Street, and King Street routes, which generate a
- 3 hydraulic noise followed by a beeping noise;
- 4
- 5 (2) The high-pitched and extremely piercing sirens of
- 6 police vehicles, fire trucks, and ambulances;
- 7
- 8 (3) The downshifting of fire trucks traveling down Nuuanu
- 9 Avenue to King Street;
- 10
- 11 (4) Garbage trucks circling through Chinatown and downtown
- 12 Honolulu with their back-up beepers and rattling large
- 13 containers beginning at 4:30 a.m. and sometimes as
- 14 early as 2:30 a.m.;
- 15
- 16 (5) Honking car horns and car alarms at unpredictable
- 17 times;
- 18
- 19 (6) Tourist trolley bells clanging three to four jingles
- 20 in a row;
- 21
- 22 (7) Squealing noises that are particularly penetrating and
- 23 intense from poorly maintained brakes of buses,
- 24 garbage trucks, and tourist trolleys;
- 25
- 26 (8) Loud motorcycle engines that can also trigger more
- 27 noise by setting off car alarms;
- 28
- 29 (9) Mopeds without mufflers or with modified mufflers; and
- 30
- 31 (10) Back-up beepers on various vehicles that can be heard
- 32 from blocks away, which are especially noticeable at
- 33 night and in the early morning; and
- 34

35 WHEREAS, other sources of noise that contribute to the
 36 urban cacophony and discord include:

- 37
- 38 (1) Low-frequency repetitive bass music that emanates with
- 39 occasional spikes in volume from music playing at area
- 40 venues, especially open-air venues;



- 1 (2) Smokers congregating outside their favorite bar or
- 2 restaurant, often continuing until 2:00 a.m. or later;
- 3
- 4 (3) Leaf blowers in the street, in parks, and around
- 5 residential buildings during and outside legally
- 6 permitted times;
- 7
- 8 (4) Persons whistling and yelling at each other throughout
- 9 the night; and
- 10
- 11 (5) Homeless campers creating various noises, including
- 12 the occasional quarrel or fight; and
- 13

14 WHEREAS, other more-intermittent noises contribute to
 15 additional disruptive noise that intrudes on urban residents
 16 throughout the day and night, such as:

- 17
- 18 (1) Power washing of streets and private plazas;
- 19
- 20 (2) Grease trap pumping at some restaurants, starting as
- 21 early as 6:00 a.m. and utilizing a very loud motor;
- 22
- 23 (3) Street cleaning machines that tend to be operated
- 24 around 4:30 a.m.;
- 25
- 26 (4) Recycling operations from bars that involve a large
- 27 dump of glass bottles all at once and sorting of
- 28 individual bottles, several times a week at
- 29 unpredictable hours; and
- 30
- 31 (5) Harbor noise, including loud hammering; now,
- 32 therefore,
- 33

34 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 35 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
 36 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative Reference
 37 Bureau, in consultation with the John A. Burns School of
 38 Medicine at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Department of
 39 Health, is requested to conduct a study on the cumulative health
 40 effects of persistent urban noise in Honolulu; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the extent of
2 urban noise, its effect on residents' quality of life, and
3 possible solutions used by other urban environments that may
4 also be effective in Honolulu; and

5
6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
7 Bureau is requested to submit its findings and recommendations
8 to the Legislature by September 1, 2022; and

9
10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health,
12 Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, Mayor of the City
13 and County of Honolulu, Director of the Legislative Reference
14 Bureau, Chairperson of the Honolulu City Council, and
15 Chairpersons of the Downtown-Chinatown Neighborhood Board,
16 Waikiki Neighborhood Board, Ala Moana-Kakaako Neighborhood
17 Board, McCully-Moiliili Neighborhood Board, and Makiki-Tantalus
18 Neighborhood Board.

