
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION TO ENSURE THAT DESTINATIONS TO WHICH THE STATE'S RECYCLABLE WASTE IS TRANSPORTED FOR OUT-OF-STATE PROCESSING ABIDE BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AS OUTLINED BY THE BASEL CONVENTION.

1 WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii exported approximately 10,500,000
2 pounds of plastic, 8,500,000 pounds of aluminum, and 32,100,000
3 pounds of glass and bi-metal for recycling; and
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5 WHEREAS, much of the recyclable waste that is shipped to
6 United States destinations from Hawaii is subsequently sent
7 overseas for end-of-life processing; and
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9 WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii shipped its recyclable plastics,
10 aluminum, glass, and bi-metal to other states, including
11 California, Georgia, Maryland, and Oregon, and outside the
12 United States to China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi
13 Arabia, and South Korea; and
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15 WHEREAS, prior to China's import ban on recyclable plastics
16 in January 2018, seventy percent of the world's plastic waste
17 was exported to China; and
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19 WHEREAS, since China's import ban on recyclable plastics,
20 recyclable plastic waste shipments to Southeast Asian countries
21 have increased exponentially; for example, exports of recycling
22 from the United States to Thailand increased almost seven
23 thousand percent in one year; and
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25 WHEREAS, end-of-life processing for recyclable plastics and
26 waste in many of the countries in which Hawaii's recyclable
27 waste ultimately arrives are often handled in a manner that
28 cause harm to human health and local environments; and



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1 WHEREAS, the Basel Convention on the Control of
2 Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal,
3 commonly referred to as the Basel Convention, was adopted on
4 March 22, 1989, and entered into force in 1992, in response to
5 public outcry following the discovery in the 1980s of deposits
6 of toxic wastes imported from abroad in Africa and other parts
7 of the developing world; and

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9 WHEREAS, the objective of the Basel Convention is to
10 protect human health and the environment from the effects of
11 hazardous wastes and other wastes; and

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13 WHEREAS, the Basel Convention, an international
14 environmental treaty under the auspices of the United Nations
15 Environmental Program, was created to reduce the movement of
16 hazardous and other wastes between nations; and

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18 WHEREAS, the United States of America is a signatory to the
19 Basel Convention but not a party; and

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21 WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2021, the Basel Convention
22 was amended to require trade controls for all mixed plastic
23 waste not destined for environmentally-sound recycling; and

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25 WHEREAS, Hawaii collection companies choose where to send
26 the State's recyclable waste based on factors including shipping
27 costs, contracts, and how much the buyer is willing to pay; and

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29 WHEREAS, the Department of Health oversees waste disposal
30 and recycling in the State; and

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32 WHEREAS, each county in the State handles its respective
33 waste processing independent of the other counties; now,
34 therefore,

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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
37 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
38 of 2021, that the Department of Health's Environmental
39 Management Division is urged to ensure that destinations to
40 which the State's recyclable waste is transported for out-of-



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1 state processing abide by the environmental standards as
2 outlined by the Basel Convention; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are urged to
5 ensure that destinations to which their respective county's
6 recyclable waste is transported for out-of-state processing
7 abide by the health and safety standards as outlined by the
8 Basel Convention; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, mayors of each
12 county, and Director of Health.

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OFFERED BY: *Nicole E. Laver*

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