
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE STATE AUDITOR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE JOHN A. BURNS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA, 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

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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:

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29 (1) Buses "kneeling" along the Beretania Street, Hotel
30 Street, and King Street routes, which generate a
31 hydraulic noise followed by a beeping noise;



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

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

- 33
- 34 (1) Low-frequency repetitive bass music that emanates with
35 occasional spikes in volume from music playing at area
36 venues, especially open-air venues;
37
- 38 (2) Smokers congregating outside their favorite bar or
39 restaurant, often continuing until 2:00 a.m. or later;



- 1 (3) Leaf blowers in the street, in parks, and around
2 residential buildings during and outside legally
3 permitted times;
4
- 5 (4) Persons whistling and yelling at each other throughout
6 the night; and
7
- 8 (5) Homeless campers creating various noises, including
9 the occasional quarrel or fight; and
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11 WHEREAS, other more-intermittent noises contribute to
12 additional disruptive noise that intrudes on urban residents
13 throughout the day and night, such as:
14

- 15 (1) Power washing of streets and private plazas;
16
- 17 (2) Grease trap pumping at some restaurants, starting as
18 early as 6:00 a.m. and utilizing a very loud motor;
19
- 20 (3) Street cleaning machines that tend to be operated
21 around 4:30 a.m.;
22
- 23 (4) Recycling operations from bars that involve a large
24 dump of glass bottles all at once and sorting of
25 individual bottles, several times a week at
26 unpredictable hours; and
27
- 28 (5) Harbor noise, including loud hammering; now,
29 therefore,
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31 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
32 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
33 of 2021, that the State Auditor, in consultation with the John
34 A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii at
35 Manoa, is requested to conduct a study on the cumulative health
36 effects of persistent urban noise in Honolulu; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include the extent of
39 urban noise, its effect on residents' quality of life, and
40 possible solutions used by other urban environments that may
41 also be effective in Honolulu; and



H.R. NO. 6

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Auditor is requested
2 to submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by
3 September 1, 2022; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
6 Resolution be transmitted to the State Auditor, Dean of the John
7 A. Burns School of Medicine, Mayor of the City and County of
8 Honolulu, Chairperson of the Honolulu City Council, and
9 Chairperson of the Downtown-Chinatown Neighborhood Board.
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11
12

OFFERED BY: *Scott. Barr*
JAN 22 2021

