
SENATE CONCURRENT 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, prior to China's import ban on recyclable plastics
2 in January 2018, seventy percent of the world's plastic waste
3 was exported to China; and
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5 WHEREAS, since China's import ban on recyclable plastics,
6 recyclable plastic waste shipments to Southeast Asian countries
7 have increased exponentially; for example, exports of recycling
8 from the United States to Thailand increased almost seven
9 thousand percent in one year; and
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11 WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii exported approximately 10,500,000
12 pounds of plastic, 8,500,000 pounds of aluminum, and 32,100,000
13 pounds of glass and bi-metal for recycling; and
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15 WHEREAS, Hawaii collection companies choose where to send
16 the State's recyclable waste based on factors including shipping
17 costs, contracts, and the amount the buyer is willing to pay;
18 and
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20 WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii shipped its recyclable plastics,
21 aluminum, glass, and bi-metal nationally to states including
22 California, Georgia, Maryland, and Oregon, and internationally
23 to China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and South
24 Korea; and
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26 WHEREAS, much of the recyclable waste that is shipped to
27 United States destinations from Hawaii is subsequently sent
28 overseas for end-of-life processing; and
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1 WHEREAS, end-of-life processing for recyclable plastics and
2 waste in many of the countries in which Hawaii's recyclable
3 waste ultimately arrives are often handled in a manner that
4 cause harm to human health and local environments; and
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6 WHEREAS, in response to public outcry following the
7 discovery in the 1980s of deposits of toxic wastes imported from
8 abroad in Africa and other parts of the developing world, the
9 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of
10 Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, commonly referred to as the
11 Basel Convention, was adopted on March 22, 1989, and entered
12 into force in 1992; and
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14 WHEREAS, the objective of the Basel Convention is to
15 protect human health and the environment from the effects of
16 hazardous wastes and other wastes; and
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18 WHEREAS, the Basel Convention is a multilateral
19 environmental agreement under the auspices of the United Nations
20 Environmental Program and was created to reduce the movement of
21 hazardous and other wastes between nations, specifically with
22 the intent of preventing transfer of hazardous waste from
23 developed to less developed countries; and
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25 WHEREAS, the United States of America is a signatory to the
26 Basel Convention but not a party; and
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28 WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2021, the Basel Convention
29 was amended to require trade controls for all mixed plastic
30 waste not destined for environmentally-sound recycling; and
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32 WHEREAS, the Department of Health oversees waste disposal
33 and recycling in the State; and
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35 WHEREAS, each county in the State handles its respective
36 waste processing independent of the other counties; now,
37 therefore,
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39 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
40 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021, the
41 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
42 Health's Environmental Management Division is urged to ensure



1 that destinations to which the State's recyclable waste is
2 transported for out-of-state processing abide by the
3 environmental standards as outlined by the Basel Convention; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are urged to
6 ensure that destinations to which their respective county's
7 recyclable waste is transported for out-of-state processing
8 abide by the health and safety standards as outlined by the
9 Basel Convention; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
12 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
13 of Health, and mayors of each county.

