
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO EVALUATE TRAFFIC
CONGESTION, HIGHWAY FLOODING, AND ROAD SAFETY ISSUES ON
HAWAI'I ISLAND.

1 WHEREAS, the island of Hawai'i is experiencing growth in
2 population and as a result, an increase in difficulties
3 generated by a significant growth in traffic; and
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5 WHEREAS, vehicle traffic on Kuakini Highway between Lako
6 Street and Kamehameha III Road on Hawai'i island typically causes
7 traffic jams lasting several consecutive hours in the mornings
8 and evenings; and
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10 WHEREAS, North Kona's population spiked by almost four
11 thousand people to nearly forty-two thousand in total from 2010
12 through 2016, causing additional traffic on Kuakini Highway and
13 Queen Kaahumanu Highway; and
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15 WHEREAS, relieving the bottleneck where the Queen Kaahumanu
16 and Kuakini Highways merge is necessary for the community's
17 safety; and
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19 WHEREAS, S.B. No. 1011, Regular Session of 2021, proposes
20 to appropriate funds to the Department of Transportation to
21 widen Queen Kaahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway; and
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23 WHEREAS, the Senate Committee on Transportation found that
24 the rapidly growing population in west Hawai'i has contributed to
25 consistent vehicle traffic on Queen Kaahumanu Highway and
26 Kuakini Highway; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation initiated a study
29 that determined that widening Kuakini Highway from two to four
30 lanes would require land acquisitions from over one hundred
31 fifty property owners and funding in excess of \$150,000,000; and
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1 WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation terminated the
2 Kuakini Highway widening study due to the project's
3 infeasibility; and
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5 WHEREAS, easing traffic at one of Kona's most frustrating
6 pinch points on Kuakini Highway and Queen Kaahumanu Highway
7 between Henry Street and Kamehameha III Road is in the best
8 safety and public welfare interests of the State; and
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10 WHEREAS, there is also well-documented flooding at the
11 intersection of the Hawaii Belt Road (Mamalahoa Highway) and
12 Meleana Place, on Hawaii Island; and
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14 WHEREAS, flooding increased after completion in 1997 of the
15 Konawaena School Offsite Highway Improvements Project (Job
16 Number: P3222) in South Kona, which included the construction of
17 a concrete rock masonry retaining wall along the makai side of
18 Mamalahoa Highway and two rock walls on the mauka side of
19 Mamalahoa Highway; and
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21 WHEREAS, flooding from the intersection and culverts
22 designed to divert excess water from the roadway often overflow
23 onto adjacent properties and Mamalahoa Highway after heavy
24 rains, creating hazardous conditions for residents and drivers;
25 now, therefore,
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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,
29 that the Department of Transportation is requested to evaluate
30 Kuakini Highway and Queen Kaahumanu Highway between Henry Street
31 and Kamehameha III Road on Hawai'i island and identify best
32 options for traffic reduction; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in exploring other alternative
35 means of traffic reduction, the Department of Transportation is
36 requested to consider narrowing the traffic lanes by repainting
37 so that all lanes are uniformly ten feet in width; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of
40 Transportation is urged to consider adding the Kuakini Highway
41 and Queen Kaahumanu Highway project to the Highway Safety



1 Improvement Program so that the project may be considered for
2 the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, at the appropriate time, the
5 Department of Transportation is requested to conduct a study of
6 the flooding and safety issues and to prepare a plan to
7 remediate the flooding issues at the intersection of Mamalahoa
8 Highway and Meleana Place; provided that the State eventually
9 acquires this section of highway; and

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
12 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Transportation and
13 Mayor of the County of Hawai'i.

