

FEB 22 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE FEASIBILITY AND
EFFECTIVENESS OF A DIVISION OF OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

1 WHEREAS, the entire State of Hawai'i falls within Hawai'i's
2 coastal zone boundary; and
3

4 WHEREAS, due to its physical location, configuration, and
5 climate, Hawai'i is rich in a number of valuable coastal
6 ecosystems, such as wetlands and reef flats, embayments and
7 sheltered coves, sand beaches, and coral reefs that serve
8 important natural functions, such as providing habitat and
9 breeding grounds for wildlife and living marine resources,
10 natural buffers to the action of storm waters, and a natural
11 laboratory for scientific and biological research. In addition,
12 they provide the basis for recreational and commercial fishing
13 businesses; and
14

15 WHEREAS, demand for coastal recreational opportunities for
16 beach use and water sports continues to rise because of
17 population, growth, increased affluence, greater leisure time,
18 and increased tourism; and
19

20 WHEREAS, increasing and competing demands upon the lands
21 and waters of the coastal zone occasioned by population growth
22 and economic development, including requirements for industry,
23 commerce, residential development, transportation and
24 navigation, waste disposal, and harvesting of marine resources
25 have resulted in the loss of living marine resources, reduced
26 groundwater and aquifer recharge areas, increased
27 vulnerabilities to coastal development, reduced living marine
28 resources, wildlife, nutrient-rich areas, permanent and averse
29 changes to ecological systems, decreased open space for public
30 use, increased shoreline erosion, and compromised infrastructure
31 due to erosion and coastal flooding; and
32

33 WHEREAS, climate change will result in substantial sea
34 level rise with serious adverse effects in the coastal zone.



1 Seventy percent of beaches in Hawai'i are experiencing coastal
2 erosion and many miles of beach have been severely narrowed or
3 lost over the past century; and
4

5 WHEREAS, Hawai'i has a substantial and significant interests
6 in the protection, management, and development of ocean and
7 coastal resources; and
8

9 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources,
10 Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, is responsible for the
11 management of coastal resources including beaches, dunes, and
12 rocky shorelines seaward of county jurisdictions and/or within
13 the State Conservation District. The Coastal Lands Program is
14 responsible for coordinating coastal management, maintaining the
15 delicate balance between conservation of coastal resources and
16 responsible development of coastal areas, mitigating risks from
17 natural and human-induced hazards for coastal communities, and
18 implementing innovative shoreline management techniques; and
19

20 WHEREAS, in 1972, the Legislature authorized the Department
21 of Planning and Economic Development to prepare a plan for the
22 management of the State's coastal zones to comply with the
23 requirements of the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act. The
24 Federal Coastal Zone Management Act provided that the state Land
25 Use Commission has the authority to administer land and water
26 use regulations in coastal zones, control development to ensure
27 compliance with the State's management program in coastal zones,
28 and resolve conflicts among competing uses in coastal zones; and
29

30 WHEREAS, in 1977, the Legislature established the Coastal
31 Zone Management Program within the Office of Planning of the
32 Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. The
33 Office of Planning's purpose is to provide central direction and
34 cohesion in the allocation of resources and effectuation of
35 state activities and programs, and effectively address current
36 or emerging issues and opportunities. The purpose of the
37 Coastal Zone Management Program is to provide for the effective
38 management, beneficial use, protection, and development of the
39 coastal zone; and
40

41 WHEREAS, through the Office of Planning's Coastal Zone
42 Management Program and enactment of Chapter 205A, the



S.R. NO. 29

1 Legislature established a network program, whereby the program
2 works with a network of state agencies and local governments to
3 administer and enforce all laws, regulations, and policies that
4 protect the coastal zone; and
5

6 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's environment is both undermanaged and
7 overregulated and new regulatory mechanisms should not be added
8 onto, but rather combined into, the existing systems; now,
9 therefore,
10

11 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
12 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,
13 that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested
14 to conduct a needs assessment for the feasibility and
15 effectiveness of a Division of Ocean and Coastal Management; and
16

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Ocean and
18 Coastal Management would be the designated state coastal
19 management agency and be responsible for the implementation and
20 administration of Hawai'i's coastal zone management program,
21 including the direct regulation of coastal resources within the
22 critical areas of the state including coastal waters, tidelines,
23 beaches, and beach dune systems and the consideration of
24 ecological, cultural, aesthetic, recreational, scenic, open
25 space values, public access, coastal hazards, sea level rise,
26 and needs for economic development; and
27

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Ocean and
29 Coastal Management should effectively manage networks of healthy
30 coral reefs while improving the health of reef ecosystems at
31 priority sites, identify and fill in management gaps that inform
32 existing efforts to prevent further damage to fragile nearshore
33 ecosystems, and supplement existing efforts to address the
34 effects of sea level rise; and
35

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
37 Natural Resources is requested to submit a report of its
38 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
39 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
40 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2022; and
41



S.R. NO. 29

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Business, Economic
3 Development, and Tourism and Chairperson of the Board of Land
4 and Natural Resources.

5
6
7

OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DKU', is written over a horizontal line.