

MAR 05 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO DEVELOP AN
EVACUATION PLAN FOR THE AREAS WITHIN LAVA ZONES 1, 2, 3, 4,
AND 6.

1 WHEREAS, Mauna Loa is the largest active volcano on Earth,
2 rising approximately 13,680 feet above the Pacific Ocean; and
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4 WHEREAS, Mauna Loa encompasses more than half the area of
5 the island of Hawai'i; and
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7 WHEREAS, since 1843, Mauna Loa has erupted thirty-three
8 times, averaging one eruption every five years; and
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10 WHEREAS, Mauna Loa's most recent eruption occurred from
11 March 24 to April 15, 1984, the result of more than two years of
12 increased seismicity and summit inflation; and
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14 WHEREAS, volcanic hazards associated with a Mauna Loa
15 eruption include:
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- 17 (1) Voluminous, fast-moving lava flows due to its steep
18 slopes;
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- 20 (2) Potentially large and destructive earthquakes and
21 ground motion due to vertical and horizontal movements
22 of the volcano's flanks as it inflates;
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- 24 (3) Volcanic gas emissions and dense vog that can be a
25 nuisance or potential health hazard to people downwind
26 of the vent; and
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- 28 (4) Possible explosive eruptions and associated ashfall
29 that can impact air traffic; and
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31 WHEREAS, the Kilauea volcano is currently erupting with
32 lava pouring into the lava lake within Halema'uma'u crater; and
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34 WHEREAS, volcanic hazards associated with the active
35 Kilauea volcano include:



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- (1) High levels of volcanic gas being continuously released during eruptions, and
- (2) Rockfalls and minor explosions, which may suddenly occur without warning; and

WHEREAS, lava flows from Kilauea and Mauna Loa will interfere with human activity and infrastructure as development and communities increase around these active volcanos; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2010 census, the island of Hawai'i is the fastest growing region in the State, which includes several developments on the slopes of Mauna Loa including Hawaiian Ocean View Estates; and

WHEREAS, if a Mauna Loa eruption occurs along the southwest rift zone, slopes steeper than fifteen degrees, a history of high effusion rates, and the close proximity of developed areas put South Kona and Ka'u at significant risk; and

WHEREAS, eruptions on the southwest flank of Kilauea are a threat to land within the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and the district of Ka'u; and

WHEREAS, as Mamalahoa Highway remains the only infrastructure connecting Ka'u to South Kona, an eruption on Mauna Loa's southern flank would be especially devastating to those individuals who do business in Kona town; and

WHEREAS, precious little time may be available for response or evacuation efforts in the South Kona and Ka'u areas; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency is the emergency management agency for the State and serves as the coordinating agency between the four county emergency management agencies; and

WHEREAS, while all disaster response starts at the county level, it is critical that the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency be prepared to respond to county requests for state



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1 assistance in the case of hazardous volcanic activity; now,
2 therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,
6 that the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency is requested to
7 develop an evacuation plan for the areas within lava zones 1, 2,
8 3, 4, and 6, which include but are not limited to South Kona and
9 Ka'u; and

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawai'i Emergency Management
12 Agency is requested to submit the evacuation plan to the
13 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
14 the Regular Session of 2022; and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Hawai'i
18 Emergency Management Agency and Mayor of the County of Hawai'i.

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OFFERED BY: _____

