

MAR 04 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

REAFFIRMING THE STATE'S COMMITMENT TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND
PRIORITIZE CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION.

1 WHEREAS, in 2018, the State adopted legislation committed
2 to complying with the Paris Climate Agreement to reach carbon
3 neutrality by 2045; and
4

5 WHEREAS, coastal erosion threatens nearly every beach in
6 Hawaii and has caused more than thirteen miles of shoreline to
7 be lost throughout the islands; and
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9 WHEREAS, local experts estimate that the sea level will
10 rise by three feet as early as 2060 and cause at least
11 \$19,000,000,000 in damage by the end of the century; and
12

13 WHEREAS, the sediment released from erosion also decreases
14 ocean water quality and causes ocean acidification, both of
15 which are harmful to local reefs; and
16

17 WHEREAS, in 2019, petroleum-fired energy accounted for
18 approximately 70.4 percent of Hawaii's net electricity
19 generation (6,864 MWh) while forms of renewable energy, such as
20 conventional hydroelectric, all utility-scale solar, wind,
21 geothermal, and biomass, accounted for only 12.14 percent of the
22 State's net electricity generation; and
23

24 WHEREAS, the State is legally required to obtain one
25 hundred percent of its electricity from renewable sources by
26 2040 as outlined in its renewable portfolio standards; and
27

28 WHEREAS, professors at Cornell University affirm that
29 environmental education is an essential element of the global
30 response to climate change and climate literacy promotes
31 students rethinking their attitudes and decisions; and
32

33 WHEREAS, the State is particularly vulnerable to natural
34 disaster exacerbated by climate change through wildfires or
35 major storms, and students in the State would especially benefit



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1 from environmental education to foster community and socio-
2 ecological resilience; and

3
4 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources is
5 responsible for managing the State's coastal waters, beaches,
6 state parks, and public lands, including seven hundred fifty
7 miles of coastline, 1,300,000 acres of state lands, and fifty-
8 two state parks; and

9
10 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources is
11 the agency tasked with caring for the State's plant and wildlife
12 sanctuaries, conservation districts, watershed protection,
13 natural area reserves, and protecting native resources,
14 including the preservation of endangered species and unique
15 ecosystems; and

16
17 WHEREAS, in the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Department of
18 Land and Natural Resources was budgeted \$185,298,304 in the
19 Statewide Supplemental Operating Budget out of a statewide total
20 of \$16,197,208,201, constituting only 1.1 percent of the
21 Statewide Supplemental Operating Budget; and

22
23 WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu's Office of
24 Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience plays a critical
25 role in Hawaii's response to climate change by monitoring the
26 evolution of climate science, coordinating the response and
27 policies within the City and County of Honolulu, integrating
28 sustainable and environmental values into legislation, and
29 prioritizing community preparedness; and

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31 WHEREAS, ecological restoration projects in support of the
32 recovery of damaged or destroyed ecosystems is extremely
33 valuable in mitigating the negative effects of climate change,
34 by enhancing the extent and functioning of carbon sinks and
35 reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; and

36
37 WHEREAS, most ecological restoration projects are community
38 efforts. For example, Hui o Koolaupoko works with volunteers at
39 the Heeia Estuary to remove invasive species, which filters
40 stormwater runoff, fosters native species growth, and aids in
41 erosion control; and

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1 WHEREAS, forty governments worldwide have already
2 implemented some form of carbon emission regulation, through
3 either a direct carbon tax or a cap-and-trade program, which
4 results in a drastic reduction in coal use and carbon emissions,
5 a necessary step in combating climate change. For example,
6 Sweden introduced an extensive carbon tax in 1995, which has
7 since shrunk their carbon emissions by twenty-five percent,
8 while growing their economy by seventy-five percent; and
9

10 WHEREAS, economists from across the political spectrum
11 almost universally support a tax on carbon emissions, as it can
12 stimulate a country's economy and create an incentive to invest
13 in the green energy industry; now, therefore,
14

15 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
16 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021,
17 that this body reaffirms Hawaii's commitment to combating
18 climate change and prioritizing climate change legislation; and
19

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State commits to focusing
21 on climate change legislation that reduces greenhouse gas
22 emissions as laid out in the framework of the 2016 Paris Climate
23 Accord; and
24

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State continue its
26 commitment to set ambitious goals for carbon sequestration,
27 decrease of greenhouse gas emissions, and decrease of the
28 State's dependence on imported fuels; and
29

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State will persist in its
31 mission to reach carbon neutrality and use renewable sources to
32 obtain one hundred percent of the State's electricity by 2040
33 and will prioritize the establishment of a green energy industry
34 within the islands by supporting renewable sources of energy and
35 green initiatives; and
36

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State will commit to
38 considering the scope and importance of the Department of Land
39 and Natural Resources' mission when determining future statewide
40 supplemental operating budgets to ensure the Department is
41 capable of protecting and preserving the flora and fauna under



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1 its jurisdiction, which is a critical component of Hawaii's
2 response to climate change; and

3

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State recognizes the
5 importance of raising awareness about the climate crisis and
6 advocating for climate literacy and will promote youth climate
7 literacy and increased public awareness; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State will support
10 ecological restoration projects to integrate government and
11 community level efforts to restore native plants and animals to
12 their local habitats and the positive impacts these projects can
13 have in regard to climate change; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
16 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Chairperson of
17 the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and the Director of the
18 Office of Planning.

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OFFERED BY: _____

