
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO
CONVENE A WORKING GROUP AND VARIOUS COMMITTEES TO CREATE
AND RECOMMEND FEDERAL, STATE, AND COUNTY SUBSIDIES FOR THE
TRANSPORT OF WATERBORNE CARGO CONSISTENT WITH THE FINDINGS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WATER CARRIERS WORKING GROUP'S
FINAL REPORT.

1 WHEREAS, Senate Resolution No. 125, S.D. 1, Regular Session
2 of 2020, requested that the Public Utilities Commission, in
3 collaboration with the Department of Commerce and Consumer
4 Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy and any interisland water
5 carriers operating in the State, convene a Water Carriers
6 Working Group to recommend mid-term and long-term solutions to
7 balance the need for continuous interisland water carrier
8 service throughout the State with the need for water carriers to
9 maintain financial sustainability; and

10
11 WHEREAS, on December 27, 2021, the Water Carriers Working
12 Group issued its final report on its findings and
13 recommendations; and

14
15 WHEREAS, the Water Carriers Working Group's final report
16 noted that:

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18 (1) Hawaii's communities are mostly dependent on the
19 import of goods, as over eighty percent of goods
20 consumed in Hawaii are imported, of which over ninety-
21 eight percent is transported as waterborne cargo;

22
23 (2) Hawaii must rely heavily on transport of cargo by
24 water carrier, unlike other communities in the
25 continental United States that have alternative means
26 of transporting goods by truck and rail;
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1 (3) The cost of shipping goods to and within Hawaii is
2 reflected in the cost of imported goods consumed in
3 Hawaii and has been calculated to be as much as 7.5
4 percent of the cost of the goods;

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6 (4) Due to Hawaii's dependency on the import of goods,
7 maritime support to ensure food security in the State
8 is required; and

9
10 (5) While there are agricultural-specific subsidies, as
11 well as subsidies for aircrafts transporting to remote
12 destinations, subsidies do not currently exist for
13 general cargo transport to and within Hawaii; and
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15 WHEREAS, the Water Carriers Working Group's final report
16 recommended that:

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18 (1) A broad subsidy for trans-Pacific and interisland
19 cargo could reduce the cost of goods;

20
21 (2) The source of such subsidies could be from existing or
22 newly created federal, state, and county government
23 programs;

24
25 (3) The Legislature pass a resolution directing the Hawaii
26 State Department of Transportation to convene a
27 working group to create and recommend federal, state,
28 and county subsidies for the transport of waterborne
29 cargo and provide an update on the status of creating
30 these programs to the Legislature prior to the
31 convening of the Regular Session of 2023;

32
33 (4) The Hawaii State Department of Transportation lead a
34 committee to continue working and consulting with the
35 United States Department of Transportation in the
36 establishment of a federal waterborne cargo subsidies
37 program, including the drafting of legislation;

38
39 (5) The Hawaii State Department of Transportation lead a
40 committee to work and consult with the Hawaii
41 Congressional Delegation to sponsor a bill to
42 establish a federal waterborne cargo subsidies program



1 within the United States Department of Transportation;
2 and

- 3
4 (6) The Hawaii State Department of Transportation lead a
5 committee to work and consult with the Hawaii State
6 Senate and House of Representatives Standing
7 Committees on Transportation, county departments of
8 transportation, and county councils in the
9 establishment of local waterborne cargo subsidies
10 program, including the drafting of legislation; and
11

12 WHEREAS, on November 5, 2021, the National Conference of
13 State Legislatures passed a resolution that:
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- 15 (1) Urges Congress to fund a broad subsidy for trans-
16 Pacific, trans-Atlantic, and interisland waterborne
17 cargo to improve the affordability of imported goods;
18 and
19

- 20 (2) Requests that the United States Department of
21 Transportation Maritime Administration develop and
22 implement a federal waterborne cargo subsidies program
23 and that sources of any subsidies may be from existing
24 or newly created federal programs; now, therefore,
25

26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
28 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the Hawaii State Department
29 of Transportation is requested to convene a working group and
30 various committees to create and recommend federal, state, and
31 county subsidies for the transport of waterborne cargo
32 consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Water
33 Carriers Working Group's final report; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group consist of
36 the following members:
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- 38 (1) The Senate President, or the President's designee;
39
40 (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives, or the
41 Speaker's designee;
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- 1 (3) The mayor of each county, or the respective mayor's
2 designee;
- 3
- 4 (4) One representative from the Department of Business,
5 Economic Development, and Tourism;
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- 7 (5) One representative from the Hawaii State Department of
8 Transportation;
- 9
- 10 (6) One representative from the Department of Agriculture;
- 11
- 12 (7) One representative from the Public Utilities
13 Commission;
- 14
- 15 (8) One representative from the Hawaii Farm Bureau;
- 16
- 17 (9) One representative from a labor organization that
18 represents longshoremen; and
- 19
- 20 (10) One representative from the Hawaii Cattlemen's
21 Council; and
- 22

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Department of
24 Transportation is requested to convene a committee to continue
25 working and consulting with the United States Department of
26 Transportation Maritime Administration in the establishment of a
27 federal waterborne cargo subsidies program, including the
28 drafting of legislation; and

29
30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Department of
31 Transportation is requested to convene a committee to work and
32 consult with the Hawaii Congressional Delegation to sponsor a
33 bill to establish a federal waterborne cargo subsidies program
34 within the United States Department of Transportation; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
37 to work and consult with the Senate and House of Representatives
38 Standing Committees with the subject matter of Transportation,
39 county departments of transportation, and county councils in the
40 establishment of a local waterborne cargo subsidies program,
41 including the drafting of legislation; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
2 to submit an interim report providing an update on the status of
3 establishing these waterborne cargo subsidies programs to the
4 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
5 the Regular Session of 2023; and
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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
8 to submit a final report of its findings and recommendations,
9 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature and
10 Governor no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the
11 Regular Session of 2024; and
12

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
14 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Hawaii's Congressional
15 Delegation; the Senate President; Speaker of the House of
16 Representatives; Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture;
17 Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism;
18 Director of Transportation; Chairperson of the Public Utilities
19 Commission; mayors of each county; Executive Director of the
20 Hawaii Farm Bureau; President of the International Longshore and
21 Warehouse Union, Local 142; and President of the Hawaii
22 Cattlemen's Council.

