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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

COMMITTING TO PROVIDE GREATER PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE  
PROCESS BY ADOPTING RULES TO ALLOW FOR VIRTUAL TESTIMONY,  
RECORDED HEARINGS, AND INTERNET BROADCASTS OF HEARINGS  
BEYOND PERIODS OF CATASTROPHIC EVENTS.

1 WHEREAS, public access to the Legislature and the  
2 legislative process allows for citizens of Hawaii to actively  
3 engage in decisions impacting their everyday life; and  
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5 WHEREAS, the Legislature has committed to providing greater  
6 public access for citizens interested in the legislative  
7 process, beginning with Act 331, Session Laws of Hawaii 1989, to  
8 improve public access to legislative information; and  
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10 WHEREAS, Hawaii's unique geography as an archipelago of  
11 islands poses significant challenges for residents from the  
12 counties of Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii to actively participate due  
13 to costly, time-consuming travel to attend hearings, and to  
14 provide in-person, oral testimony; and  
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16 WHEREAS, the lack of remote hearing and testimony  
17 procedures impacts approximately four hundred thousand residents  
18 in the State; and  
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20 WHEREAS, the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
21 pandemic has created great challenges to all individuals  
22 interested in participating in the legislative process; and  
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24 WHEREAS, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, physical  
25 access to the Capitol building, hearings, and live testimony was  
26 restricted due to social distancing guidelines; and  
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1 WHEREAS, during the emergency stay-at-home orders and  
2 travel restrictions, legislators, staff, and members of the  
3 public could not attend public meetings in person; and  
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5 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the implementation of  
6 emergency measures suspending certain requirements of the  
7 State's sunshine law in order to allow boards and commissions to  
8 continue meeting and conduct necessary business while protecting  
9 participants' health and safety and expanding public access to  
10 meetings throughout the State; and  
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12 WHEREAS, remote meetings can connect people in different  
13 physical locations through the use of interactive conference  
14 technology and thus enable enhanced legislative and public  
15 participation; and  
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17 WHEREAS, remote meetings can be safely held and allow more  
18 people from different islands or parts of islands to effectively  
19 participate, often during times when they would not otherwise be  
20 physically able or authorized to leave their work, homes, or  
21 schools to participate in an in-person meeting; and  
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23 WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, remote meetings  
24 helped to prevent the spread of disease, and even when there is  
25 no pandemic, remote meetings can be a way to protect the health  
26 and safety of participants; and  
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28 WHEREAS, remote meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic also  
29 allowed the elderly and individuals who have disabilities or  
30 medical conditions that would place them at greater risks during  
31 travel or attendance at in-person public meetings to participate  
32 in the legislative process; and  
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34 WHEREAS, in 2021, each house of the Legislature adopted  
35 rules on remote hearings and testimony that allowed members of  
36 the public to continue participation through virtual  
37 conferencing platforms; and  
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39 WHEREAS, the successful utilization of virtual attendance  
40 and remote testimony procedures during the ongoing COVID-19  
41 pandemic supports the continuation of pandemic-era rules to



1 allow for greater public access to the legislative process; now,  
2 therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
5 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
6 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that this body is committed to  
7 providing greater public access to the legislative process by  
8 adopting rules to allow virtual testimony, recorded hearings,  
9 and internet broadcasts of hearings beyond periods of  
10 catastrophic events.

