

MAR 11 2022

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 Hawaii 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 adverse
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 interest
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 or within the
13 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, which
24 provided that the state Land Use Commission has the authority to
25 administer land and water use regulations in coastal zones,
26 control development to ensure compliance with the State's
27 management program in coastal zones, and resolve conflicts among
28 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 and
32 Sustainable Development of the Department of Business, Economic
33 Development, and Tourism. The Office of Planning and
34 Sustainable Development's purpose is to provide central
35 direction and cohesion in the allocation of resources and
36 effectuation of state activities and programs, and effectively
37 address current or emerging issues and opportunities. The
38 purpose of the Coastal Zone Management Program is to provide for
39 the effective management, beneficial use, protection, and
40 development of the coastal zone; and
41



1 WHEREAS, through the Office of Planning and Sustainable
2 Development's Coastal Zone Management Program and enactment of
3 chapter 205A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Legislature
4 established a network program, whereby the program works with a
5 network of state agencies and local governments to administer
6 and enforce all laws, regulations, and policies that protect the
7 coastal zone; and
8

9 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's environment is both undermanaged and
10 overregulated and new regulatory mechanisms should not be added
11 onto, but rather combined into, the existing systems; now,
12 therefore,
13

14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first
15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,
16 that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested
17 to conduct a needs assessment for the feasibility and
18 effectiveness of a Division of Ocean and Coastal Management; and
19

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Ocean and
21 Coastal Management would be the designated state coastal
22 management agency and be responsible for the implementation and
23 administration of Hawai'i's coastal zone management program,
24 including the direct regulation of coastal resources within the
25 critical areas of the State including coastal waters, tidelines,
26 beaches, and beach dune systems and the consideration of
27 ecological, cultural, aesthetic, recreational, scenic, open
28 space values, public access, coastal hazards, sea level rise,
29 and needs for economic development; and
30

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Ocean and
32 Coastal Management should effectively manage networks of healthy
33 coral reefs while improving the health of reef ecosystems at
34 priority sites, identify and fill in management gaps that inform
35 existing efforts to prevent further damage to fragile nearshore
36 ecosystems, and supplement existing efforts to address the
37 effects of sea level rise; and
38

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
40 Natural Resources is requested to submit a report of its
41 findings and recommendations, including any proposed



1 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
2 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023; and
3

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Business, Economic
6 Development, and Tourism and Chairperson of the Board of Land
7 and Natural Resources.
8
9
10

OFFERED BY:

