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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PRIORITIZE TESTING AND RESEARCH OF BEACH SAND CONTAMINATION LEVELS AT POKAI BAY AND REQUESTING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION TO PRIORITIZE RENOVATIONS OF THE RESTROOM FACILITIES AT POKAI BAY.

1 WHEREAS, Pokai Bay is one of the most-visited ocean areas  
2 on Oahu's Leeward Coast because of its wide sandy beach and  
3 relatively calm waters; and

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5 WHEREAS, because it is protected by an offshore breakwater,  
6 Pokai Bay maintains calm conditions year-round, which makes it  
7 an ideal location for many ocean users, including swimmers,  
8 canoe paddlers, surfers, snorkelers, boaters, divers, and stand-  
9 up paddlers; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, despite Pokai Bay's pristine appearance of  
12 crystal-blue waters and white sand, it is sadly the site of  
13 pollution from multiple sources, including runoff from  
14 surrounding surfaces, illegal dumping, and user-induced  
15 contaminants; and

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17 WHEREAS, over the last decade, beach users and local  
18 community members have reported the presence of health and  
19 environmental hazards at Pokai Bay; and

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21 WHEREAS, additional suspected sources of pollution at Pokai  
22 Bay include water runoff containing industrial pollutants washed  
23 from local surface streets, parking lots, and sidewalks;  
24 illegally moored boats; and petrochemical-based pollutants from  
25 vehicular use of an adjacent boat ramp; and

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27 WHEREAS, historically, illegal dumping of dredging  
28 materials and other substances has occurred at higher rates  
29 along the Leeward Coast, including at Pokai Bay, than at other  
30 locations on Oahu; and



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2 WHEREAS, the significant use of Leeward Coast beaches for  
3 camping and associated activities of daily life by homeless  
4 persons, such as bathing, are suspected to have introduced  
5 higher than normal levels of bacteria to the sand and waters at  
6 Pokai Bay, resulting in a rash of staph infections and other  
7 health problems among regular beach users; and  
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9 WHEREAS, a 2015 study by professors and researchers at the  
10 University of Hawaii at Manoa's Department of Civil and  
11 Environmental Engineering found that beach sand holds more fecal  
12 indicator bacteria than seawater; and  
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14 WHEREAS, based upon the results of this study, the beach  
15 sand at Pokai Bay may be found to retain pollutants from the  
16 restroom facilities in the area, specifically rinse-off from the  
17 showers and fecal bacteria from toilet plumbing; and  
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19 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has the supplies to test  
20 seawater and occasionally tests the seawater in Pokai Bay  
21 specifically for fecal indicator bacteria, which decays at  
22 slower rates in the beach sand than in seawater; now, therefore,  
23

24 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
25 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
26 Session of 2023, that the Department of Health is urged to  
27 prioritize testing and research of fecal indicator bacteria  
28 levels and any other pollutants of the beach sand at Pokai Bay;  
29 and  
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
32 urged to make testing and research of fecal indicator bacteria  
33 levels and any other pollutants in beach sand at Pokai Bay a  
34 priority of the Department's non-point source pollution program;  
35 and  
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
38 urged to develop a plan to increase water circulation at Pokai  
39 Bay to improve water quality and mitigate environmental and  
40 health risks caused by pollution and contaminants in the water;  
41 and  
42



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
2 requested to collaborate with other appropriate state and county  
3 agencies to develop the plan to increase water circulation; and  
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
6 requested to submit a report of its collaborative activities,  
7 including significant findings, cost estimates, and any proposed  
8 legislation to increase water circulation at Pokai Bay, to the  
9 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
10 the Regular Session of 2024; and  
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that based upon the Department of  
13 Health's testing and research of fecal indicator bacteria in the  
14 beach sand at Pokai Bay, the City and County of Honolulu  
15 Department of Parks and Recreation is requested to prioritize  
16 renovations of the restroom facilities at Pokai Bay; and  
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
19 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and Director  
20 of the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and  
21 Recreation.  
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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



MAR 10 2023

