

MAR 08 2024

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A HOUSING
EQUITY AND WELLNESS TASK FORCE.

1 WHEREAS, housing security plays a crucial role in
2 preventing suicides and safeguarding mental health, as evidenced
3 by recent incidents of elderly community members experiencing
4 serious crises following eviction notices, underscoring the
5 disproportionate impact of the housing crisis on marginalized
6 groups, particularly middle- and lower-class elderly community
7 members; and

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9 WHEREAS, housing insecurity poses a significant risk for
10 Hawaii's kupuna, where the exorbitant cost of living amplifies
11 financial strain and exponentially increases the risk of
12 homelessness and displacement; and

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14 WHEREAS, working-class individuals constitute a significant
15 portion of the tenant population in the community, and there
16 exists an inherent injustice of rent increases outpacing
17 stagnant wages, as wages are the primary means by which tenants
18 afford their housing; and

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20 WHEREAS, Hawaii's kupuna are among the most vulnerable to
21 the housing crisis, which is exacerbated by the State's
22 prohibitive cost of living, with residents spending more income
23 on rent than in any other State; and

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25 WHEREAS, Hawaii residents statistically endure the most
26 unaffordable rental market in the country as over half of
27 households are living paycheck to paycheck, and approximately
28 forty-three percent of households are renters who spend nearly
29 half of their earnings on rent; and

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31 WHEREAS, current laws in Hawaii provide insufficient
32 protections for tenants, with month-to-month tenancies without
33 legal cause requiring only a forty-five day notice, leaving



1 vulnerable individuals with limited avenues to address the
2 threat of sudden eviction; and

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4 WHEREAS, homes and communities are integral to a person's
5 sense of identity, particularly the elderly, making them more
6 susceptible to the crises resulting from eviction, further
7 compounded by recent occurrences of mental health outbursts
8 among elderly community members facing eviction, highlighting
9 the urgent need for greater protections; now, therefore,

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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
12 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024, the
13 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
14 Health is requested to establish a Housing Equity and Wellness
15 Task Force dedicated to studying the effect of housing
16 insecurity on mental health and well-being, with a focus on
17 vulnerable populations such as the elderly; and

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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
20 conduct a study on the effect of housing insecurity on mental
21 health and well-being, with a focus on vulnerable populations
22 such as the elderly; and

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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
25 submit a report and any findings and recommendations, including
26 proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty
27 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health,
31 Executive Director of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development
32 Corporation, Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing
33 Authority, and Chairperson of the Hawaii State Council on Mental
34 Health.

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OFFERED BY: 

