
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SEAN P. DUFFY TO INITIATE A PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT.

1 WHEREAS, the Rail Project is the most expensive publicly
2 funded project in the State of Hawaii, and due to its use of
3 city, state and federal funding it is the Legislature's belief
4 that a performance review under the 2024 Amended Full Funding
5 Grant Agreement ("Amended FFGA") to determine whether
6 satisfactory progress is being made to complete the Rail Project
7 should be initiated by the United States Transportation
8 Secretary Sean P. Duffy and the FTA; and
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10 WHEREAS, Sections 17-101 and 17-103.1 of the Revised
11 Charter of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition) establish the
12 Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation ("HART"), which has
13 the authority to develop the City's fixed guideway system, known
14 as the Honolulu Rail Transit Project ("Rail Project" or
15 "Project"); and
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17 WHEREAS, ballot measures in 2008 and 2010 presented to and
18 approved by the fully registered voters of the City and County
19 of Honolulu ("City") approved the establishment of a public
20 transit authority (now known as "HART") with the responsibility
21 to establish the rail transit system; and
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23 WHEREAS, on February 22, 2011, the City broke ground in
24 East Kapolei near the site of the 1st of 21 stations for the 20-
25 mile rail route with an expected price of \$5.5 billion; and
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27 WHEREAS, in 2012, the City and the Federal Transit
28 Administration ("FTA") entered into a Full Funding Grant
29 Agreement for the Rail Project providing federal grant funding
30 to the City in the amount of \$1.55 billion, with the City



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1 pledging to complete the system for public use by 2020 at a
2 total cost of \$5.2 billion; and

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4 WHEREAS, since breaking ground in 2011, the embattled Rail
5 Project has faced massive cost overruns, huge delays, and
6 multiple lawsuits which put the current timeline for finishing
7 the Project in 2030, with an estimated cost of \$12.45 billion;
8 and

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10 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii has twice now passed
11 legislation to bailout the plagued Rail Project by providing
12 additional funding of \$1.5 billion in 2015 and \$2.4 billion in
13 2017 through a general excise tax surcharge that is set to
14 expire in 2030; and

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16 WHEREAS, in 2019 the Honolulu City Council approved
17 Resolution 19-29, FD2 which supported the Office of the City
18 Auditor initiating an independent forensic audit of HART, but
19 plans were set aside in 2020 due to the global pandemic; and

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21 WHEREAS, in 2024 the City and the FTA signed an Amended
22 FFGA with a stated purpose that included defining milestones of
23 when the federal government would release remaining funds and
24 facilitating a timely and efficient management of the Rail
25 Project; and

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27 WHEREAS, Sections 15 and 19 of the Amended FFGA provide for
28 Project Management Oversight through Hill International Inc., a
29 consultant that monitors the rail project for the FTA, and
30 governmental authority to review HART's performance and
31 determine whether satisfactory progress is being made to
32 complete the rail project; and

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34 WHEREAS, as late as 2024 it was reported that Hill
35 International Inc. repeatedly flagged the Rail Project for
36 problems it faced filling vacancies in critical positions; and

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38 WHEREAS, to date, HART has received just over \$1.1 billion
39 in federal funding with another \$364 million expected as more
40 Project milestones are met; and

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1 WHEREAS, on February 20, 2025, the United States
2 Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy announced that the
3 Federal Railroad Administration initiated a compliance review of
4 the federal grants for the battered California High-Speed Rail
5 Project which faces significant funding shortfalls and extreme
6 delays similar to the Honolulu Rail Project; now, therefore,
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8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
10 of 2025, the Senate concurring, respectfully requests the United
11 States Secretary Sean P. Duffy and the FTA initiate a
12 performance review under the Amended FFGA to determine whether
13 satisfactory progress is being made to complete the Rail
14 Project; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to United States Secretary
18 of Transportation Sean P. Duffy, the Federal Transit
19 Administration, Hill International Inc., consultant and Project
20 Management Oversight for the Rail Project, and the Executive
21 Director and Chair of the Board of the Honolulu Authority for
22 Rapid Transit.
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OFFERED BY:



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