

MAR 07 2025

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE TO CONVENE A
GEOTHERMAL ENERGY WORKING GROUP TO EVALUATE THE REGULATORY
AND POLICY LANDSCAPE SURROUNDING GEOTHERMAL ENERGY IN
HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has committed to achieving a one hundred
2 percent renewable energy portfolio standard by 2045 under
3 section 269-92, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and has made
4 significant progress in the development of renewable energy
5 resources; and

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7 WHEREAS, however, the State remains heavily dependent on
8 imported fossil fuels, creating high energy costs and economic
9 vulnerability and increasing the urgency to accelerate the
10 development of local firm renewable energy resources; and

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12 WHEREAS, on January 29, 2025, the Governor issued an
13 executive order that recommits the State to its one hundred
14 percent renewable portfolio standard goal, while setting a new
15 goal to accelerate renewable energy for neighbor island
16 communities and directing state departments to streamline and
17 accelerate permitting to reduce energy costs and project
18 timelines; and

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20 WHEREAS, ninety-one percent of respondents in a statewide
21 public opinion survey on energy in Hawaii expressed their
22 support for the expansion of renewable energy resources
23 throughout the State, with the importance of developing Hawaii's
24 own energy resources emphasized by respondents across all
25 counties; and

26
27 WHEREAS, geothermal energy provides a stable, firm, and
28 dispatchable source of renewable power, capable of supporting



1 grid stability and resilience while reducing dependence on
2 imported oil; and

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4 WHEREAS, Hawaii has substantial geothermal potential,
5 particularly on Hawaii Island, and there is growing interest in
6 responsibly developing community-led geothermal resources to
7 contribute to the State's clean energy goals and support
8 community development; and

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10 WHEREAS, despite its potential, geothermal energy in Hawaii
11 has been hindered by regulatory uncertainty, permitting
12 challenges, land use restrictions, and public concerns that
13 require careful consideration and engagement; and

14
15 WHEREAS, a coordinated, transparent, and community-
16 inclusive process is essential to evaluating the role of
17 geothermal energy in Hawaii and identifying a clear development
18 pathway that aligns with state policy, environmental
19 stewardship, and cultural sensitivity; and

20
21 WHEREAS, the Hawaii State Energy Office is the lead agency
22 for energy policy and planning and is well-positioned to convene
23 stakeholders and provide guidance on challenges and
24 opportunities relevant to geothermal energy technology; now,
25 therefore,

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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the
29 House of Representatives concurring, that the Hawaii State
30 Energy Office is requested to convene a Geothermal Energy
31 Working Group to evaluate the regulatory and policy landscape
32 surrounding geothermal energy in Hawaii; and

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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
35 to consist of the following members:

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37 (1) The Chief Energy Officer, or the Chief Energy
38 Officer's designee, who is requested to serve as
39 chairperson of the working group;

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41 (2) The Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
42 Resources, or the Chairperson's designee;



- 1
- 2 (3) The Director of Business, Economic Development, and
- 3 Tourism, or the Director's designee;
- 4
- 5 (4) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;
- 6
- 7 (5) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or
- 8 the Chairperson's designee;
- 9
- 10 (6) The Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, or
- 11 the Chairperson's designee;
- 12
- 13 (7) A representative from the University of Hawaii
- 14 Groundwater and Geothermal Resources Center;
- 15
- 16 (8) A representative from the Department of Planning and
- 17 Permitting of the City and County of Honolulu;
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- 19 (9) A representative from the Planning Department of the
- 20 County of Maui;
- 21
- 22 (10) A representative from the Planning Department of the
- 23 County of Hawaii;
- 24
- 25 (11) A representative from an electric utility;
- 26
- 27 (12) A representative from the geothermal industry;
- 28
- 29 (13) A representative from a non-governmental organization
- 30 with experience in energy policy; and
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- 32 (14) Other members, as invited by the chair; and

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
34 to:

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- 37 (1) Identify key regulatory, policy, and permitting
- 38 challenges affecting geothermal energy in Hawaii;
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- 40 (2) Review best practices from other jurisdictions with
- 41 successful geothermal energy programs and consider



1 best practices of Pacific island countries such as New
2 Zealand;

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4 (3) Assess the potential for geothermal expansion and its
5 role in supporting energy resilience and
6 affordability; and

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8 (4) Provide recommendations to the Legislature and
9 Governor on policy and regulatory reforms necessary to
10 establish a clear and efficient pathway for geothermal
11 energy in Hawaii; and

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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Energy Office
14 is requested to submit a report of its findings and
15 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
16 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
17 the Regular Session of 2026; and

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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
20 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Chief
21 Energy Officer; Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
22 Resources; Director of Business, Economic Development, and
23 Tourism; Director of Health; Chairperson of the Public Utilities
24 Commission; Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission;
25 Director of the University of Hawaii Groundwater and Geothermal
26 Resources Center; Director of the Department of Planning and
27 Permitting of the City and County of Honolulu; Director of the
28 Planning Department of the County of Maui; and Planning Director
29 of the Planning Department of the County of Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY: 

