
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONVENE AND PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE TO A
DESALINATION PLANNING TASK FORCE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE
USE OF DESALINATION FOR LARGE-SCALE WATER CONSUMPTION IN
THE STATE IS FEASIBLE.

1 WHEREAS, freshwater scarcity is an increasingly present
2 threat to communities around the world in the face of population
3 growth and climate change; and

4
5 WHEREAS, freshwater is vital not only to the sustenance of
6 life in the State, but also its economy and culture, including
7 supporting agricultural production and tourism; and

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9 WHEREAS, islands like O'ahu rely on underground aquifers for
10 their freshwater supply; and

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12 WHEREAS, underground aquifers take decades to replenish
13 naturally and are susceptible to chemical spills and leaks,
14 draughts, and commercial overuse; and

15
16 WHEREAS, a decrease of rainfall of eighteen percent over
17 the last thirty years, a population that has doubled since 1959,
18 constantly rising visitor levels, and the destruction of half of
19 its watershed forests have contributed to a freshwater crisis in
20 the State; and

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22 WHEREAS, desalination, the process of removing salt from
23 seawater, offers a promising solution to the freshwater scarcity
24 crisis; and

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26 WHEREAS, despite the abundance of seawater surrounding the
27 State and need for an alternative source of freshwater,
28 desalination can be cost-prohibitive and energy-intensive,



1 necessitating a thorough examination of whether it is the
2 solution best suited to the State's needs; now, therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the
6 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Land
7 and Natural Resources is requested to convene and provide
8 administrative assistance to a Desalination Planning Task Force
9 to determine whether the use of desalination for large-scale
10 water consumption in the State is feasible; and

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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
13 consist of the following members:

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- 15 (1) The Chairperson of the Commission on Water Resource
16 Management or the Chairperson's designee, who shall
17 serve as Chair of the Task Force;
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- 19 (2) The Director of Health or the Director's designee;
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- 21 (3) The Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture or the
22 Chairperson's designee;
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- 24 (4) The Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian
25 Affairs or the Chief Executive Officer's designee;
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- 27 (5) The Chairs of the Senate and House of Representatives
28 Standing Committees on Water and Land or their
29 designees; and
- 30
- 31 (6) The Director or Manager and Chief Engineer of each
32 county's Department or Board of Water Supply; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to:

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- 36 (1) Conduct a study to determine the water demand for
37 housing, agriculture, and industrial uses throughout
38 the State, including in high-need areas;
- 39
- 40 (2) Examine the feasibility of using desalination as a
41 source of clean and safe drinking water to supplement



- 1 the State's existing groundwater and surface water
2 resources;
- 3
- 4 (3) Determine the extent to which the use of desalination
5 will:
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- 7 (A) Assist the State in meeting its projected future
8 water needs; and
- 9
- 10 (B) Improve the resiliency of the State's water
11 systems, considering in particular the impacts of
12 the water crisis caused by the contamination at
13 the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility;
- 14
- 15 (4) Determine whether it is feasible for the Commission on
16 Water Resource Management to integrate desalination
17 into its overall water management plans;
- 18
- 19 (5) Consider the extent to which the construction of
20 desalination plants may affect or interfere with
21 historical sites and Native Hawaiian cultural sites
22 and practices, including burial sites; and
- 23
- 24 (6) Address environmental concerns associated with the
25 operation of desalination plants, including high
26 energy consumption and disposal of brine concentrate;
27 and
- 28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
30 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including
31 any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than
32 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
33 2026; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
36 dissolve on June 30, 2026; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
39 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
40 Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chairperson of
41 the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Director of Health,



- 1 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Chief Executive Officer
- 2 of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and Mayors of each county.

