

MAR 07 2025

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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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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

19  
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

3  
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

9  
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,

26  
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;



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

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

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



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

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

7  
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

12  
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

18  
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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31  
32 OFFERED BY:

