
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE COUNTY OF HAWAI'I TO EXPAND THE HELE-ON SHARED RIDE PROGRAM TO SERVE THE ENTIRE ISLAND OF HAWAI'I, INCLUDING RURAL AND UNDERSERVED AREAS SUCH AS WEST HAWAI'I, NORTH KOHALA, SOUTH KOHALA, KA'Ū, AND PUNA.

1 WHEREAS, reliable, affordable, and accessible
2 transportation is a critical component of public infrastructure
3 that enables residents to meet basic needs, maintain
4 independence, and fully participate in their communities; and
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6 WHEREAS, individuals with disabilities, kupuna, and
7 residents with chronic health conditions often rely on
8 specialized or accessible transportation services to attend
9 medical appointments, obtain prescriptions, access supportive
10 services, and maintain their overall health and well-being; and
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12 WHEREAS, residents of rural and geographically isolated
13 areas of the island of Hawai'i face disproportionate
14 transportation barriers due to long travel distances, limited
15 fixed-route bus service, and a lack of on-demand transportation
16 options; and
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18 WHEREAS, these barriers are particularly acute in west
19 Hawai'i, Ka'ū, North Kohala, and South Kohala, where access to
20 health care facilities, social services, and employment
21 opportunities often requires long-distance travel; and
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23 WHEREAS, the County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency currently
24 operates the Hele-On Shared Ride Program exclusively in east
25 Hawai'i, offering subsidized, on-demand transportation services
26 that are accessible to individuals who use mobility devices; and
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1 WHEREAS, effective July 1, 2023, the Hele-On Shared Ride
2 Program subsidizes up to \$15.80 per trip, equivalent to
3 approximately four miles, with passengers responsible for any
4 remaining balance, thereby increasing flexibility, eliminating
5 the use of traditional taxi coupons, and allowing unlimited
6 travel based on individual need; and
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8 WHEREAS, participation in the program requires eligible
9 individuals to obtain a Shared Ride Program Identification Card,
10 helping ensure that transportation support is provided to those
11 who need it most while maintaining program accountability; and
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13 WHEREAS, at present, shared ride providers participating in
14 the program operate only in the Hilo area, with no participating
15 companies serving Puna, Ka'ū, Waimea, South Kohala, North Kohala,
16 or west Hawai'i, including Kailua-Kona; and
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18 WHEREAS, the absence of island-wide shared ride service
19 limits access to timely health care, contributes to missed
20 medical appointments, and increases isolation for individuals
21 who are unable to drive or who require accessible
22 transportation; and
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24 WHEREAS, expanding the Hele-On Shared Ride Program to serve
25 the entire island of Hawai'i would advance transportation equity,
26 support independent living for people with disabilities, improve
27 health care access in rural communities, and reduce disparities
28 between east and west Hawai'i; and
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30 WHEREAS, an island-wide expansion would also complement
31 existing Hele-On fixed-route services, encourage partnerships
32 with local transportation providers, and support a more
33 integrated and responsive public transit system for the island
34 of Hawai'i; now, therefore,
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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
37 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
38 of 2026, the Senate concurring, that the County of Hawai'i is
39 requested to expand the Hele-On Shared Ride Program to serve the
40 entire island of Hawai'i, including rural and underserved areas



1 such as west Hawai'i, North Kohala, South Kohala, Ka'u, and Puna;
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency is requested to:

- (1) Prioritize accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including ensuring the availability of vehicles that accommodate mobility devices and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- (2) Collaborate with local taxi, shared-ride, and transportation providers to increase participation in areas that currently lack service, including west Hawai'i and other rural districts;
- (3) Consider the expansion of the Hele-On Shared Ride Program as a means of improving access to health care services, including medical appointments, pharmacies, and supportive care, particularly for kupuna, individuals with disabilities, and residents without access to personal vehicles; and
- (4) Explore phased implementation, pilot programs, or other cost-effective strategies to support island-wide expansion of the Hele-On Shared Ride Program, subject to available funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of the County of Hawai'i, Chair of the Hawai'i County Council, and Administrator of the County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency.

OFFERED BY:



MAR 16 2026

