
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE 'AHA MOKU ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO FOLLOW ITS ADOPTED
RULES OF PRACTICE, FULFILL ITS STATUTORY DUTIES, ESTABLISH
POLICIES TO ASSURE CONSISTENT STANDARDS OF ADMINISTRATIVE
AND MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY; AND CONVENING A WORKING
GROUP TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS.

1 WHEREAS, in August 2006, Native Hawaiian cultural
2 practitioners, kūpuna, and representatives from forty-three moku
3 across the State gathered at Puwalu 'Ekahi to share manao and
4 call for a process to uphold and perpetuate traditional Hawaiian
5 land and ocean practices; and
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7 WHEREAS, subsequent gatherings known as Puwalu 'Elua and
8 Puwalu 'Ekolu, held in November and December 2006, convened
9 educators, policymakers, cultural practitioners, environmental
10 experts, and community leaders to discuss the integration of
11 traditional Hawaiian knowledge and management practices into
12 public policy, education, and resource management; and
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14 WHEREAS, additional puwalu convened between 2006 and 2010
15 gathered input from farmers, fishers, environmental advocates,
16 educators, Native Hawaiian organizations, agencies, and
17 governmental representatives, resulting in consensus on the need
18 to integrate the traditional 'aha moku system into state
19 governance and resource management policy; and
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21 WHEREAS, the Legislature enacted Act 288, Session Laws of
22 Hawaii 2012, establishing the 'Aha Moku Advisory Committee
23 (Committee) and administratively attaching it to the Department
24 of Land and Natural Resources to advise the State on Native
25 Hawaiian traditional and customary resource management
26 practices; and
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1 WHEREAS, the Committee appears to have held meetings in
2 2013 and 2014 addressing organizational development, funding,
3 communications, and the development of a strategic plan and
4 reporting framework; and

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6 WHEREAS, on October 20, 2016, the Committee reportedly
7 adopted Rules of Practice and Procedure to govern its
8 operations; and

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10 WHEREAS, a resolution adopted at the November 2016 puwalu
11 gathering referenced the adoption of those Rules of Practice and
12 Procedure and expressed support for adherence to them; and

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14 WHEREAS, a resolution adopted at the 2017 puwalu gathering
15 expressed concerns regarding whether the Committee provided the
16 representation required under existing law; and

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18 WHEREAS, the Committee receives annual state funding of
19 approximately \$286,300 through the Department of Land and
20 Natural Resources and is subject to public accountability and
21 transparency standards; and

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23 WHEREAS, as a public advisory committee, the Committee is
24 subject to the Sunshine Law, which requires deliberations and
25 decision-making to occur in properly noticed public meetings;
26 and

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28 WHEREAS, independent 'aha moku island councils and community
29 groups exist separately from the statutorily established
30 Committee and are not the subject of this measure; and

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32 WHEREAS, concerns have been raised within the Native
33 Hawaiian community regarding the administration, representation,
34 and transparency of the Committee; and

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36 WHEREAS, the Committee has not consistently convened
37 publicly noticed meetings, raising concerns regarding compliance
38 with the Sunshine Law; and

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40 WHEREAS, the Executive Director of the Committee has
41 acknowledged that the Committee does not follow the Rules of



1 Practice and Procedure reportedly adopted on October 20, 2016;
2 and

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4 WHEREAS, there is no publicly available record indicating
5 that the Committee has repealed, amended, or formally
6 discontinued those Rules of Practice and Procedure; and

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8 WHEREAS, the absence of publicly available agendas,
9 minutes, reports, and other administrative records has limited
10 transparency and hindered public participation and oversight;
11 and

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13 WHEREAS, although the Committee employs an Executive
14 Director, the lack of regular meetings, administrative records,
15 budgetary accounting, and statutorily required reports raises
16 concerns regarding oversight, governance, and accountability;
17 and

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19 WHEREAS, because the Committee has not convened a publicly
20 noticed meeting for more than five years, there is no apparent
21 mechanism for the Committee to manage or evaluate its Executive
22 Director, including performance reviews, duties, or salary and
23 budgetary decisions; and

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25 WHEREAS, questions have arisen regarding how the Committee
26 is able to issue official positions, effectively manage and make
27 salary decisions for its Executive Director, and review,
28 monitor, and approve budgets and reports to the Legislature,
29 without formally discussing and adopting positions and decisions
30 in open meetings; and

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32 WHEREAS, advisory positions have been issued in the name of
33 the Committee without those matters being properly agendized,
34 deliberated, and adopted at Sunshine Law-compliant meetings; and

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36 WHEREAS, consistent administrative and managerial policies
37 are necessary to ensure accountability, effective oversight, and
38 responsible stewardship of public resources; and

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40 WHEREAS, a comprehensive and independent review is
41 necessary to ensure that the operations of the Committee align



1 with statutory requirements, best practices in governance,
2 fiscal prudence, and the public trust; now, therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
5 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
6 of 2026, the Senate concurring, that the 'Aha Moku Advisory
7 Committee is urged to follow and implement the Rules of Practice
8 and Procedures reportedly adopted on October 20, 2016; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee is urged to
11 fulfill all statutory duties, including complying with the
12 Sunshine Law, holding regular meetings, ensuring transparency in
13 decision-making, and submitting required reports in a timely
14 manner; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that advisory positions issued in
17 the name of the Committee be adopted only through properly
18 noticed public meetings in compliance with the Sunshine Law; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee is urged to adopt
21 appropriate administrative and managerial policies and
22 procedures to promote consistent standards of accountability and
23 effective governance; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a working group is convened to
26 review the policies, administration, finances, and operations of
27 the Committee, and make recommendations to ensure consistent
28 standards of accountability and effective governance and the
29 executive execution of its mission; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the working
32 group is requested to consist of the following members:
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- 34 (1) One member appointed by the President of the Senate or
35 the member's designee;
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37 (2) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of
38 Representatives or the member's designee;
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40 (3) One representative from the Committee or the
41 representative's designee;
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1 (4) One representative from the Department of Land and
2 Natural Resources or the representative's designee;
3 and
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5 (5) One representative from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
6 or the representative's designee; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the working
9 group are requested to designate the member appointed by the
10 President of the Senate or the member appointed by the Speaker
11 of the House of Representatives to be Chairperson of the working
12 group; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
15 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
16 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
17 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
18 of 2027; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
21 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
22 Board of Land and Natural Resources; Executive Director of the
23 'Aha Moku Advisory Committee; each member of the 'Aha Moku
24 Advisory Committee; and the Chief Executive Officer of the
25 Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

