
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ESTABLISHING A SISTER-STATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE OF
HAWAII, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND THE PREFECTURE OF
OKAYAMA, JAPAN.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has had a multicultural population since
2 the days of the Hawaiian monarchy in the 19th century and
3 maintains a heritage of international participation and cultural
4 sensitivity unparalleled in other states; and

5
6 WHEREAS, since 1981, the Legislature has instituted
7 sister-state relationships as a means of asserting the State's
8 active participation in international matters; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Hawaii currently maintains nineteen sister-state
11 relationships, including relationships with six of Japan's
12 forty-seven prefectures; and

13
14 WHEREAS, Okayama is a prefecture in Japan's Chugoku region
15 on the Seto Inland Sea coast of Honshu Island; and

16
17 WHEREAS, Hawaii and Okayama share long-standing historical,
18 cultural, and people-to-people ties rooted in Japanese
19 immigration to Hawaii and ongoing cultural exchanges; and

20
21 WHEREAS, these ties were formally organized as early as
22 1927 with the establishment of the Hawaii Okayama Kenjinkai, an
23 organization that continues to foster friendship and heritage to
24 this day; and

25
26 WHEREAS, Japan remains one of Hawaii's most important
27 international partners in tourism, trade, education, and
28 cultural exchanges, and Okayama Prefecture is widely recognized
29 for its leadership in high-quality agriculture, manufacturing,
30 education, and sustainability; and
31



1 WHEREAS, Okayama is known as the "Land of Sunshine," or
2 *Hare no Kuni*, due to its mild climate and low rainfall, a
3 distinction that has allowed it to become a premier agricultural
4 region renowned for white peaches, muscat grapes, and
5 high-quality rice; and

6
7 WHEREAS, Hawaii and the people of Okayama share a unique
8 historical bond dating back to 1868 with the arrival of the
9 *Gannenmono*, the first group of Japanese immigrants to Hawaii,
10 which included Sentaro Ishii, a samurai from Okayama who settled
11 on the island of Maui and became a prominent centenarian and
12 community leader; and

13
14 WHEREAS, grassroots relationships have flourished for
15 decades, including the sister-chapter relationship established
16 in 1985 between the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce
17 and the Kurashiki, Kojima, and Tamashima Junior Chamber
18 International chapters in Okayama; and

19
20 WHEREAS, Okayama Prefecture has demonstrated a strong
21 commitment to direct exchange, having successfully operated
22 fifty-two charter flights carrying more than twelve thousand
23 passengers between Okayama Airport and Honolulu from 1991 to
24 2018; and

25
26 WHEREAS, both jurisdictions share common priorities,
27 including sustainable tourism, workforce development, food
28 security, clean energy, climate resilience, and the preservation
29 of cultural heritage; and

30
31 WHEREAS, educational exchanges have already flourished at
32 the university level between Okayama University and the
33 University of Hawaii at Manoa, and both regions express a strong
34 desire to expand these opportunities to the high school level;
35 and

36
37 WHEREAS, pursuant to section 229-3, Hawaii Revised
38 Statutes, the Hawaii Sister-State and International Partnerships
39 Commission is tasked with evaluating and developing
40 recommendations for the initiation of all sister-state
41 relationships, and forwarding its recommendations to the
42 Legislature for the Legislature to implement, if it so chooses,



1 by either adopting a concurrent resolution or by enacting
2 session law to that effect; and

3
4 WHEREAS, a relationship between Hawaii and Okayama will
5 strengthen institutional collaboration, economic opportunity,
6 and cultural exchanges for the benefit of residents, businesses,
7 students, and communities in both regions; and

8
9 WHEREAS, a relationship between Hawaii and Okayama is
10 expected to expand economic and trade opportunities for local
11 businesses; strengthen sustainable tourism; support workforce
12 development; enhance food security and agricultural innovation;
13 and deepen cultural understanding; and

14
15 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii is actively seeking to expand
16 its international ties and has an abiding interest in developing
17 goodwill, friendship, and economic relations between the people
18 of Hawaii and the people of many nations; and

19
20 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Sister-State and International
21 Partnerships Commission has reviewed the Hawaii-Okayama
22 sister-state application and recommended that a sister-state
23 relationship be established between Hawaii and Okayama; and

24
25 WHEREAS, this body believes that a sister-state
26 relationship between Hawaii and Okayama will be highly
27 beneficial in expanding tourism, strengthening cultural bonds,
28 and advancing common goals of international peace and
29 cooperation; now, therefore,

30
31 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
32 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
33 of 2026, the Senate concurring, that a sister-state relationship
34 between the State of Hawaii, United States of America, and the
35 Prefecture of Okayama, Japan, is hereby established; and

36
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the United States
39 Secretary of State; Ambassador of the Embassy of Japan in
40 Washington, D.C.; Governor of the Prefecture of Okayama, Japan;
41 Consul General of Japan in Hawaii; Governor of the State of
42 Hawaii; Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism;

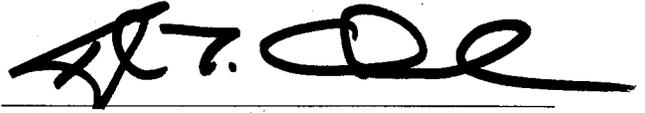


H.C.R. NO. 76

1 and Chairperson of the Hawaii Sister-State and International
2 Partnerships Commission.

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OFFERED BY:



MAR 10 2026

