
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY TO EXTEND THE RENEWAL PERIOD FOR SECRETARIAL DESIGNEE HEALTH CARE AUTHORIZATIONS RELATED TO THE RED HILL WATER CONTAMINATION CRISIS AND TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR AFFECTED INDIVIDUALS.

1 WHEREAS, the contamination of a significant portion of
2 Oahu's drinking water supply from the release of fuel from the
3 Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility in November 2021, created
4 significant health concerns for military families, civilian
5 residents, and United States Department of Defense personnel
6 living in military housing and surrounding communities; and
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8 WHEREAS, the Red Hill water contamination crisis resulted
9 in numerous reports of health symptoms among affected residents,
10 including headaches, nausea, respiratory irritation, skin
11 conditions, and other medical issues associated with potential
12 fuel exposure; and
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14 WHEREAS, protecting the health and well-being of
15 servicemembers and their families is essential to maintaining
16 military readiness and ensuring that those who serve the nation
17 are supported by a strong and reliable system of medical care;
18 and
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20 WHEREAS, the federal government owes a duty of care to
21 servicemembers, military families, and civilian personnel who
22 were exposed to contaminated drinking water while residing in
23 military housing; and
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25 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Defense, through
26 the Defense Health Agency, authorized expanded access to
27 civilian medical providers through Secretarial Designee letters
28 administered under TRICARE to ensure that affected individuals
29 could receive timely medical care; and
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1 WHEREAS, these Secretarial Designee authorizations
2 currently require periodic renewal, which may create uncertainty
3 and barriers for patients and health care providers seeking
4 continuity of care; and
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6 WHEREAS, many affected individuals continue to experience
7 ongoing health concerns and require long-term monitoring,
8 evaluation, and treatment related to potential fuel exposure;
9 and
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11 WHEREAS, many servicemembers and military families affected
12 by the Red Hill water contamination crisis have since relocated
13 to military installations across the United States; and
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15 WHEREAS, in many areas of the continental United States,
16 there are limited or no military treatment facilities nearby,
17 making it more difficult for affected individuals to access
18 military health services; and
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20 WHEREAS, reliance on civilian medical providers is often
21 necessary in these regions; however, some affected individuals
22 have reported challenges with referrals, coverage, and
23 reimbursement for care related to the Red Hill fuel exposure;
24 and
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26 WHEREAS, improved coordination between military treatment
27 facilities and civilian providers, including the use of "warm
28 handoff" referral practices and coordinated patient transitions,
29 would help ensure continuity of care and better health outcomes
30 for affected individuals; and
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32 WHEREAS, establishing reimbursement or voucher programs for
33 medical services related to the Red Hill fuel exposure could
34 help ensure equitable access to health care for affected
35 individuals, regardless of their geographic location and whether
36 a military treatment facility is available nearby; now,
37 therefore,
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39 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
40 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
41 of 2026, that the United States Department of Defense and
42 Defense Health Agency are urged to extend the renewal period for



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1 Secretarial Designee health care authorizations related to the
2 Red Hill water contamination crisis to a two-year renewal cycle
3 to promote stability and continuity of care for affected
4 individuals; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Defense is urged to improve access to health care for individuals affected by the Red Hill water contamination crisis by:

- (1) Expanding access to civilian medical providers under TRICARE;
- (2) Implementing coordinated referral practices, including "warm handoffs", between military treatment facilities and civilian providers to improve care coordination and patient transitions;
- (3) Promoting continuity of care and long-term medical monitoring for individuals affected by Red Hill fuel exposure; and
- (4) Exploring or establishing reimbursement or voucher programs to assist individuals who incur out-of-pocket costs for medical services related to Red Hill fuel exposure, particularly for those residing in areas without military treatment facilities nearby; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, United States Secretary of Defense, Director of the Defense Health Agency, and Hawaii's Congressional delegation.

OFFERED BY: 

MAR 16 2026

