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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND  
TOURISM TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON HAWAII'S FOOD MANUFACTURING  
STRENGTHS AND STRATEGIC MARKETS.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's economy relies on small businesses, which  
2 account for 99.3 percent of businesses and 49.3 percent of  
3 employees across the State; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, a report on small businesses by the Economic  
6 Research Organization at the University of Hawaii recommended  
7 that the State create centralized networking systems to help  
8 small businesses build connections and collaborate on projects;  
9 launch initiatives in partnership with educational institutions  
10 for technical skills, training, leadership development, and  
11 employee retention strategies; and foster small business growth  
12 and sustainability by implementing policies from comparable  
13 cities, including business incubators, innovation hubs, and  
14 public-private partnerships; and  
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16 WHEREAS, Act 237, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, established  
17 the food and product innovation network, a statewide network of  
18 open-access food and value-added product development facilities  
19 to enable businesses to scale up new products, by supporting  
20 research and development, manufacturing, and commercialization;  
21 and  
22

23 WHEREAS, the food and product innovation network is modeled  
24 on New Zealand's public-private innovation network, which  
25 includes food innovation hubs that are strategically located and  
26 coordinated nationally to deliver complementary services across  
27 the nation; and  
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29 WHEREAS, similar to Hawaii, Singapore faces severe  
30 geographic and agricultural land constraints and has  
31 strategically shifted its food innovation focus toward  
32 developing high-value, technology-driven food products and  
33 premium exports, recognizing that traditional volume-based  
34 agriculture is not economically viable in a resource-scarce  
35 environment; and



1 WHEREAS, shared-use scaling facilities, such as Singapore's  
2 FoodPlant, provide critical insight into how the State can  
3 utilize small-batch production infrastructure to mitigate  
4 prohibitive initial capital costs, thereby enabling businesses  
5 to systematically engineer products specifically for high-  
6 margin, premium consumer markets; and  
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8 WHEREAS, Hawaii's ability to compete in global markets  
9 depends on its capacity to use similar coordinated and strategic  
10 planning to refine processes, scale production, and manufacture  
11 high-value, export-ready ingredients and goods; and  
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13 WHEREAS, the State's food and product innovation network  
14 uniquely integrates entrepreneurial education, workforce  
15 development, agricultural production, and value-added innovation  
16 into one coordinated system; and  
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18 WHEREAS, the successful implementation and growth of the  
19 food and product innovation network requires further examination  
20 of Hawaii's food manufacturing strengths and the identification  
21 of strategic markets for local high-value, premium products;  
22 now, therefore,  
23

24 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
25 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
26 of 2026, that the Department of Business, Economic Development,  
27 and Tourism is requested to conduct a study on Hawaii's food  
28 manufacturing strengths and strategic markets, including an  
29 assessment of the competitive advantages of Hawaii-made products  
30 and the specific high-value, premium products that the State  
31 should focus on manufacturing for export; and  
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as part of the study, the  
34 Department is requested to establish clear economic metrics  
35 defining what qualifies as a high-value product and to identify  
36 specific markets matching those metrics with specific product  
37 categories that possess the highest probability of export  
38 success; and  
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to  
41 include in the study a comprehensive cost-of-production  
42 analysis, factoring in Hawaii's high operational costs,



1 including energy, labor, and imported ingredients, to  
2 mathematically determine the minimum profit margins required to  
3 make local food manufacturing economically viable; and  
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to  
6 assess any logistical or transportation barriers that currently  
7 prevent entry into identified strategic markets and to propose  
8 state-level solutions; and  
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Hawaii is  
11 requested to use the findings of the study to update the  
12 curriculum at the Maui Food Innovation Center and Wahiawa Value-  
13 Added Product Development Center to ensure that local  
14 entrepreneurs are taught to engineer products specifically for  
15 high-value, export-oriented markets from the very beginning; and  
16

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Business,  
18 Economic Development, and Tourism is requested to collaborate  
19 with the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, Agribusiness  
20 Development Corporation and its innovation centers, and the  
21 University of Hawaii to ensure that the results of the study are  
22 integrated into existing workforce development and business  
23 incubation programs; and  
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Agribusiness Development  
26 Corporation is requested to utilize the findings of the study to  
27 guide the development and operation of its next-phase scaling  
28 facilities, ensuring that businesses developed through  
29 University of Hawaii programs are supported with the necessary  
30 infrastructure to manufacture high-value products and achieve  
31 sustainable economic growth; and  
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, based on the study's findings,  
34 the Agribusiness Development Corporation and University of  
35 Hawaii are requested to collaborate to instill market discipline  
36 early in the food and product innovation network process,  
37 teaching entrepreneurs which products are high-value and viable  
38 for export; and  
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Business,  
41 Economic Development, and Tourism is requested to propose policy  
42 recommendations on how the State can realign and prioritize



1 existing economic development resources, grants, and funding  
2 mechanisms to specifically support businesses that manufacture  
3 the identified high-value, premium products; and  
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
6 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Business, Economic  
7 Development, and Tourism; Director of Agriculture and  
8 Biosecurity; President of the University of Hawaii; Chairperson  
9 of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development  
10 Corporation; Executive Director of the Agribusiness Development  
11 Corporation; Director of the Maui Food Innovation Center; and  
12 Director of the Wahiawa Value-Added Product Development Center.  
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OFFERED BY:

  
MAR 03 2026

