
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
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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 jurisdictions, including business incubators, innovation hubs,
14 and 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
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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



1 agriculture is not economically viable in a resource-scarce
2 environment; and

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4 WHEREAS, shared-use scaling facilities, such as Singapore's
5 FoodPlant, provide critical insight into how the State can
6 utilize small-batch production infrastructure to mitigate
7 prohibitive initial capital costs, thereby enabling businesses
8 to systematically engineer products specifically for high-
9 margin, premium consumer markets; and

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11 WHEREAS, Hawaii's ability to compete in global markets
12 depends on its capacity to use similar coordinated and strategic
13 planning to refine processes, scale production, and manufacture
14 high-value, export-ready ingredients and goods; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Food and Product Innovation Network uniquely
17 integrates entrepreneurial education, workforce development,
18 agricultural production, and value-added innovation into one
19 coordinated system; and

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21 WHEREAS, the successful implementation and growth of the
22 Food and Product Innovation Network requires further examination
23 of Hawaii's food manufacturing strengths and the identification
24 of strategic markets for local high-value, premium products;
25 now, therefore,

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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
28 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
29 of 2026, that the Department of Business, Economic Development,
30 and Tourism (Department) is requested to conduct a study on
31 Hawaii's food manufacturing strengths and strategic markets,
32 including an assessment of the competitive advantages of Hawaii-
33 made products and the specific high-value, premium products that
34 the State should focus on manufacturing for export; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as part of the study, the
37 Department is requested to establish clear economic metrics
38 defining what qualifies as a high-value product and to identify
39 specific markets matching those metrics with specific product
40 categories that possess the highest probability of export
41 success; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to
2 include in the study a comprehensive cost-of-production
3 analysis, factoring in Hawaii's high operational costs,
4 including energy, labor, and imported ingredients, to
5 mathematically determine the minimum profit margins required to
6 make local food manufacturing economically viable; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to
9 assess any logistical or transportation barriers that currently
10 prevent entry into identified strategic markets and to propose
11 state-level solutions; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Hawaii is
14 requested to use the findings of the study to update the
15 curriculum at the Maui Food Innovation Center and Wahiawa Value-
16 Added Product Development Center to ensure that local
17 entrepreneurs are taught to engineer products specifically for
18 high-value, export-oriented markets from the very beginning; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to
21 collaborate with the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity,
22 Agribusiness Development Corporation and its innovation centers,
23 and University of Hawaii to ensure that the results of the study
24 are integrated into existing workforce development and business
25 incubation programs; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Agribusiness Development
28 Corporation is requested to utilize the findings of the study to
29 guide the development and operation of its next-phase scaling
30 facilities, ensuring that businesses developed through
31 University of Hawaii programs are supported with the necessary
32 infrastructure to manufacture high-value products and achieve
33 sustainable economic growth; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, based on the study's findings,
36 the Agribusiness Development Corporation and University of
37 Hawaii are requested to collaborate to instill market discipline
38 early in the Food and Product Innovation Network process,
39 teaching entrepreneurs which products are high-value and viable
40 for export; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department is requested to
2 propose policy recommendations on how the State can realign and
3 prioritize existing economic development resources, grants, and
4 funding mechanisms to specifically support businesses that
5 manufacture the identified high-value, premium products and
6 submit the proposed policy recommendations to the Legislature no
7 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
8 Session of 2027; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Business, Economic
12 Development, and Tourism; Chairperson of the Board of
13 Agriculture and Biosecurity; President of the University of
14 Hawaii; Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the
15 Agribusiness Development Corporation; Executive Director of the
16 Agribusiness Development Corporation; Director of the Maui Food
17 Innovation Center; and Director of the Wahiawa Value-Added
18 Product Development Center.

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