

MAR 10 2026

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# SENATE 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



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 Senate of the Thirty-third  
32 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026, the  
33 House of Representatives concurring, that a sister-state  
34 relationship between the State of Hawaii, United States of  
35 America, and the Prefecture of Okayama, Japan, is hereby  
36 established; and  
37

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

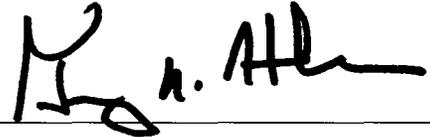


# S.C.R. NO. 47

1 Hawaii; Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism;  
2 and Chairperson of the Hawaii Sister-State and International  
3 Partnerships Commission.

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OFFERED BY:

  
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