

MAR 16 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

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

1 WHEREAS, the State and Yamagata Prefecture, Japan, share
2 long-standing historical, cultural, and people-to-people ties
3 rooted in Japanese immigration to and ongoing cultural exchange;
4 and

5
6 WHEREAS, Japan remains one of the State's most important
7 international partners in tourism, trade, education, and
8 cultural exchange, and Yamagata Prefecture is widely recognized
9 for its leadership in agriculture, food production,
10 manufacturing, sustainability, and rural revitalization; and

11
12 WHEREAS, the State and Yamagata Prefecture share deep
13 culinary similarities grounded in respect for land and sea,
14 seasonal ingredients, craftsmanship, and cultural traditions,
15 including rice cultivation, seafood, fermentation, noodles, and
16 locally sourced cuisine; and

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18 WHEREAS, Yamagata Prefecture is renowned for premium rice,
19 cherries, wagyu beef, soba, and sake, while the State's culinary
20 identity reflects indigenous Hawaiian foodways and multicultural
21 influences, including Japanese cuisine, contributing to the
22 State's global reputation for farm-to-table and culinary
23 innovation; and

24
25 WHEREAS, both jurisdictions share common priorities
26 including sustainable tourism, workforce development, food
27 security, clean energy, climate resilience, and the preservation
28 of cultural heritage; and

29
30 WHEREAS, a formal sister-state relationship between the
31 State and Yamagata Prefecture will strengthen institutional
32 collaboration, economic opportunity, and cultural exchange for
33 the benefit of residents, businesses, students, and communities
34 in both regions; now, therefore,
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S.R. NO. 160

1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
3 that a sister-state relationship between the State of Hawaii,
4 United States of America, and the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan,
5 is hereby established; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in their partnership, the State
8 and Yamagata Prefecture are encouraged to promote collaboration
9 in the areas of economic development and trade, sustainable
10 tourism, education and workforce development, agriculture and
11 food security, clean energy and climate resilience, and cultural
12 and people-to-people exchange; and

13
14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State and Yamagata
15 Prefecture are encouraged to pursue initial pilot initiatives,
16 including but not limited to:

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18 (1) A Culinary and Agricultural Exchange Pilot Program to
19 promote chef, farmer, and food artisan exchanges that
20 highlight local ingredients, traditional practices,
21 and value-added food production;

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23 (2) A Culinary Tourism and Cultural Showcase Pilot Program
24 to promote joint food and cultural events in the State
25 and Yamagata Prefecture that promotes regional
26 products, culinary traditions, and tourism
27 experiences;

28
29 (3) An Education and Workforce Exchange Pilot Program to
30 promote student, faculty, and professional exchanges
31 focused on agriculture, hospitality, sustainability,
32 and culinary arts; and

33
34 (4) A Sustainable Development Collaboration Pilot Program
35 to promote knowledge-sharing on renewable energy,
36 climate adaptation, rural revitalization, and
37 community-based economic development; and

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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the sister-state relationship
40 between the State and the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan, is
41 requested to:
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- 1 (1) Expand economic and trade opportunities for local
2 businesses and entrepreneurs;
- 3
- 4 (2) Strengthen sustainable tourism and destination
5 stewardship practices;
- 6
- 7 (3) Support workforce development and education pathways;
- 8
- 9 (4) Enhance food security, agricultural innovation, and
10 culinary excellence;
- 11
- 12 (5) Deepen cultural understanding and long-term people-to-
13 people ties; and
- 14
- 15 (6) Promote climate resilience and sustainable community
16 development; and
- 17

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor, or the Governor's
19 designee, is requested to collaborate with Yamagata Prefecture
20 to develop memoranda of understanding and implementation
21 frameworks to advance the sister-state relationship between the
22 State and the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan; and

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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
25 Resolution be transmitted to the United States Secretary of
26 State; Ambassador of the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C.;
27 Governor; Governor of the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan; Consul
28 General of Japan in Hawaii; and Director of Business, Economic
29 Development, and Tourism.

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OFFERED BY: 

