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# 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 and ongoing cultural exchange;  
4 and  
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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  
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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  
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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  
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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



1 the benefit of residents, businesses, students, and communities  
2 in both regions; now, therefore,

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

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

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State and Yamagata  
18 Prefecture are encouraged to pursue initial pilot initiatives,  
19 including but not limited to:

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

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

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32 (3) An Education and Workforce Exchange Pilot Program to  
33 promote student, faculty, and professional exchanges  
34 focused on agriculture, hospitality, sustainability,  
35 and culinary arts; and

36  
37 (4) A Sustainable Development Collaboration Pilot Program  
38 to promote knowledge-sharing on renewable energy,  
39 climate adaptation, rural revitalization, and  
40 community-based economic development; and  
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the sister-state relationship  
2 between the State and the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan, is  
3 requested to:

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- 5 (1) Expand economic and trade opportunities for local  
6 businesses and entrepreneurs;
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  - 8 (2) Strengthen sustainable tourism and destination  
9 stewardship practices;
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  - 11 (3) Support workforce development and education pathways;
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  - 13 (4) Enhance food security, agricultural innovation, and  
14 culinary excellence;
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  - 16 (5) Deepen cultural understanding and long-term people-to-  
17 people ties; and
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  - 19 (6) Promote climate resilience and sustainable community  
20 development; and
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor, or the Governor's  
23 designee, is requested to collaborate with Yamagata Prefecture  
24 to develop memoranda of understanding and implementation  
25 frameworks to advance the sister-state relationship between the  
26 State and the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
29 Resolution be transmitted to the United States Secretary of  
30 State; Ambassador of the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C.;  
31 Governor; Governor of the Prefecture of Yamagata, Japan; Consul  
32 General of Japan in Honolulu; Director of Business, Economic  
33 Development, and Tourism; and Chairperson of the Hawaii  
34 Sister-State and International Partnerships Commission.

