

MAR 16 2026

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ENGAGE WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND OTHER FEDERAL AND MILITARY PARTNERS TO EXPLORE ESTABLISHING A MILITARY-CIVILIAN TRAUMA PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN THE HAWAII TRAUMA SYSTEM.

1           WHEREAS, trauma remains a leading cause of death and  
2 disability in the State, particularly for residents of the  
3 neighbor islands, where geographic isolation and limited access  
4 to specialty trauma services may delay timely access to  
5 definitive trauma care; and  
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7           WHEREAS, severe traumatic injuries, including traumatic  
8 brain injuries, are time-sensitive medical emergencies requiring  
9 rapid stabilization, evaluation, and access to specialized  
10 trauma care to prevent death and long-term disability; and  
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12           WHEREAS, timely transfer of severely injured patients to a  
13 level I or level II trauma center with specialty surgical  
14 capabilities is essential to improving survival, preventing  
15 disability, and reducing long-term health care costs; and  
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17           WHEREAS, the State has made important progress in  
18 strengthening its trauma system through trauma center  
19 designation, emergency medical services coordination, and the  
20 development of statewide trauma registry infrastructure; and  
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22           WHEREAS, Tripler Army Medical Center, has facilitated the  
23 State's progress in strengthening its trauma system but does not  
24 function as a routine receiving trauma center for civilian  
25 trauma transfers within the Hawaii Trauma System; and  
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27           WHEREAS, despite its advances in trauma care, the State  
28 continues to face trauma system capacity challenges related to  
29 geographic isolation, limited specialty trauma resources, and  
30 trauma center bed availability, which often results in prolonged  
31 transfer times exceeding five hours for critically injured  
32 patients before they are able to reach definitive trauma care;  
33 and



1  
2 WHEREAS, Tripler Army Medical Center is designated as a  
3 level II trauma center and possesses highly trained trauma  
4 teams, surgical specialists, and critical care capabilities  
5 developed through military trauma training and combat casualty  
6 care experience; and  
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8 WHEREAS, the State serves as a critical hub for the United  
9 States Indo-Pacific Command, which coordinates defense  
10 operations and disaster response throughout the Pacific region;  
11 and  
12

13 WHEREAS, strengthening military-civilian trauma  
14 collaboration in the State would support both civilian trauma  
15 care and national medical readiness; and  
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17 WHEREAS, collaboration between military and civilian trauma  
18 systems has been successfully implemented in other states  
19 through initiatives such as the Military-Civilian Partnership  
20 for Trauma Readiness, strengthening trauma system capacity while  
21 supporting military medical readiness; and  
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23 WHEREAS, increased collaboration between Tripler Army  
24 Medical Center, the Department of Health, and civilian trauma  
25 centers would improve trauma system capacity, reduce delays in  
26 accessing definitive trauma care, and enhance disaster and mass  
27 casualty preparedness across the State; and  
28

29 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Trauma System within the Department of  
30 Health has not received a significant increase in dedicated  
31 trauma system funding for more than twenty years, despite  
32 population growth, rising health care costs, and increasing  
33 demands on trauma system infrastructure; now, therefore,  
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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
36 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,  
37 that the Governor and the Department of Health are requested to  
38 engage with the United States Department of Defense and other  
39 federal and military partners to explore establishing a  
40 military-civilian trauma partnership to strengthen the Hawaii  
41 Trauma System; and  
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
2 requested to collaborate with Tripler Army Medical Center,  
3 emergency medical services providers, and other trauma system  
4 stakeholders to identify operational pathways to support  
5 integration of military trauma resources into the Hawaii Trauma  
6 System; and

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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor and the Department  
9 of Health, through their engagement with the United States  
10 Department of Defense, are requested to evaluate the following:

- 11  
12 (1) Opportunities for Tripler Army Medical Center to  
13 participate as a receiving trauma center for civilian  
14 trauma patients within the Hawaii Trauma System;  
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16 (2) Opportunities to increase dedicated funding, including  
17 funding necessary for uncompensated civilian trauma  
18 care when provided by Tripler Army Medical Center as  
19 part of the Hawaii Trauma System, to support trauma  
20 system coordination, trauma readiness initiatives, and  
21 collaboration with military medical partners;  
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23 (3) Legislative and regulatory changes that may be  
24 necessary to allow Tripler Army Medical Center to  
25 receive reimbursement for civilian trauma patients,  
26 including Medicaid reimbursement mechanisms similar to  
27 those implemented in states such as Texas, that allow  
28 military medical facilities to receive reimbursement  
29 for civilian trauma care; and  
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31 (4) Development of statewide military and civilian tele-  
32 trauma consultation capabilities to support rural and  
33 community hospitals with trauma assessment,  
34 stabilization guidance, and triage decision-making;  
35 and

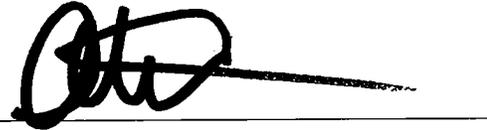
36  
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
38 requested to submit a report of its findings and  
39 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
40 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
41 the Regular Session of 2027; and  
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to the United States Secretary of  
3 Defense, Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command,  
4 Commander of Tripler Army Medical Center, members of Hawaii's  
5 congressional delegation, Governor, and Director of Health.

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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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