

FEB 09 2026

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# SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAI'I HEALTH SYSTEMS CORPORATION'S EAST HAWAI'I REGIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON ESTABLISHING A RURAL HEALTH CLINIC OR COMPARABLE RURAL HEALTH ACCESS POINT TO SERVE THE VOLCANO COMMUNITY.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's East  
2 Hawai'i Regional Health Care System (HHSC East Hawai'i Region)  
3 operates the Hilo Medical Center Ka'ū Hospital, Rural Health  
4 Clinic, Hale Ho'ola Hamakua, and a network of East Hawai'i Health  
5 Clinics that together provide essential medical services to  
6 communities across East Hawai'i; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, the long-standing designation of the Ka'ū Hospital  
9 as a Critical Access Hospital and the establishment of its  
10 Medicare-certified Rural Health Clinic have enabled the HHSC  
11 East Hawai'i Region to expand primary-care access to rural  
12 communities while strengthening the region's financial stability  
13 and provider recruitment capacity; and  
14

15 WHEREAS, the community of Volcano, located between the  
16 districts of Puna and Ka'ū, remains one of the largest rural  
17 population centers on Hawai'i Island that is without direct  
18 access to primary-care services, emergency stabilization  
19 capacity, or a locally-based medical provider; and  
20

21 WHEREAS, the community of Volcano's geographic isolation,  
22 distance from Hilo and Ka'ū hospitals, increased wildfire risks,  
23 volcanic-related hazards, and limited transportation options  
24 create chronic barriers to timely health care access for  
25 residents; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, the Volcano Community Association (VCA) recently  
28 completed a Medical and Health Care Services Needs Assessment,  
29 which identified the development of a clinic offering primary  
30 and other health care services as a long-term need for the area  
31 due to its aging population, rural character, and anticipated  
32 population growth; and  
33



1 WHEREAS, the VCA's Medical and Health Care Services Needs  
2 Assessment further identified the recruitment of a part-time  
3 primary care provider who could establish medical services in  
4 the Volcano community at least two days per week as a short-term  
5 goal; and  
6

7 WHEREAS, the VCA has expressed strong willingness to  
8 partner with the HHSC East Hawai'i Region to identify potential  
9 clinic sites, coordinate community outreach, support provider  
10 recruitment, and assist with long-term planning efforts; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, the purpose of the Volcano Health Collaborative is  
13 to improve the health status of residents of the community of  
14 Volcano and its neighboring communities by increasing the  
15 accessibility of quality, affordable medical and associated  
16 health care; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, Volcano Village and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park  
19 receive millions of visitors annually, dramatically increasing  
20 the volume of people passing through the area and creating a  
21 heightened need for accessible medical services to respond to  
22 visitor injuries, respiratory distress, and other urgent needs  
23 arising from outdoor and volcanic-environment exposure; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, emergency medical services for the Volcano area  
26 are currently located within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and  
27 operated out of Kilauea Military Camp, serving both residents  
28 and the substantial visitor population, further underscoring the  
29 need for a dedicated community-based health care access point in  
30 the Volcano community; and  
31

32 WHEREAS, establishing a Rural Health Clinic in the Volcano  
33 community, whether permanent, mobile, or hybrid, would  
34 strengthen the overall East Hawai'i rural health network, support  
35 the Ka'ū Hospital in its role as a Critical Access Hospital  
36 serving remote communities, and improve health outcomes for both  
37 residents and visitors; now, therefore,  
38

39 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
40 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,  
41 that the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's East Hawai'i



1 Regional Health Care System (HHSC East Hawai'i Region) is  
2 requested to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a Rural  
3 Health Clinic or comparable rural health access point to serve  
4 the Volcano community; and  
5

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HHSC East Hawai'i Region is  
7 requested to examine the following in its feasibility study:  
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- 9 (1) Potential sites within Volcano Village or adjacent  
10 areas for a clinic or satellite office;  
11
- 12 (2) Operational models, including part-time provider  
13 service, mobile-clinic deployment, telehealth  
14 integration, or co-location with existing community  
15 facilities;  
16
- 17 (3) Staffing requirements, including short-term options  
18 for providing primary-care services at least two days  
19 per week;  
20
- 21 (4) Start-up and ongoing costs, including eligibility for  
22 rural health clinic reimbursement and other federal  
23 rural-access funding;  
24
- 25 (5) Opportunities for partnership with the Volcano  
26 Community Association, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park,  
27 local nonprofits, organizations, and educational or  
28 medical-training institutions; and  
29
- 30 (6) Potential benefits to emergency response, chronic  
31 disease management, and visitor-safety services; and  
32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HHSC East Hawai'i Region is  
34 requested to submit the completed feasibility study; its  
35 findings and recommendations, including any propose legislation;  
36 and an implementation timeline to the Legislature no later than  
37 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of  
38 2027; and  
39

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
41 Resolution be transmitted to the President and Chief Executive  
42 Officer of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation, Chief



1 Executive Officer of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's  
2 East Hawai'i Regional Health Care System, Superintendent of  
3 Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, President of Volcano Community  
4 Association, President of the Volcano Community Association, and  
5 President of the Volcano Health Collaborative.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. K. M.", written over a horizontal line.