
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE THE UNITED STATES MILITARY PRESENCE IN OKINAWA.

1 WHEREAS, since the time when Okinawa was known as the
2 sovereign Ryukyu Kingdom before its colonization by Japan in
3 1872, the United States has had a long relationship with
4 Okinawa; and

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6 WHEREAS, the brunt of the tremendous number of casualties
7 in the historic Battle of Okinawa in World War II between the
8 United States and Japan were Okinawan civilians, amounting to
9 almost one-third of the population; and

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11 WHEREAS, since then, Okinawa has endured great hardships in
12 its efforts to restore the health of its economy, land, and
13 people on its war-torn island; and

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15 WHEREAS, the population density of Okinawa is approximately
16 two thousand nine hundred persons per square mile, nearly twice
17 that of the island of Oahu; yet Okinawa is smaller than Kauai,
18 at only four hundred sixty square miles; and

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20 WHEREAS, the prefecture of Okinawa comprises only six-
21 tenths of one per cent of the nation of Japan, yet seventy-five
22 per cent of the United States' military presence has been
23 concentrated in Okinawa for over five decades since World War
24 II; and

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26 WHEREAS, the people and the government of Okinawa have
27 repeatedly appealed for land, air, and sea space to improve



1 Okinawa's struggling economy and the well-being and safety of
2 its people; and

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4 WHEREAS, like Hawaii, Okinawa strives to diversify its
5 industries from tourism and the military to strengthen its
6 economy, which requires the return of facilities not needed for
7 United States military purposes; and

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9 WHEREAS, while some progress has been made to return or to
10 provide for joint use of Okinawan facilities by the United
11 States and Japan, facilities such as Kadena Air Base, Futenma
12 Marine Corps Air Station, Naha Military Port, and other
13 facilities, which make up twenty per cent of the land the United
14 States military occupies on Okinawa and are scheduled to be
15 returned to Okinawa, are still under negotiations; and

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17 WHEREAS, since World War II, there have been numerous
18 heinous criminal activities by United States military personnel
19 that continue to damage the military's reputation and
20 relationships locally and internationally; and

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22 WHEREAS, the United States and Japan have both acknowledged
23 the disproportionate burden placed on the people of Okinawa in
24 the 1996 Final Report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa
25 and have pledged to dismantle and return Futenma Air Station by
26 2003 to Okinawa, but the station remains in operation with
27 records of up to two hundred flights from the station that fly
28 over residential and commercial areas; and

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30 WHEREAS, United States military exercises result in
31 recurring deadly accidents, such as the 2004 crash of a Kaneohe
32 Marine helicopter into an Okinawan university near Futenma Air
33 Station where the United States military physically halted local
34 authorities from investigating outside military property; and

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36 WHEREAS, the proximity of military installations to urban
37 populations has been shown to jeopardize the security of
38 inhabitants and the health and development of infants and
39 children around military bases such as Futenma Air Station; and
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1 WHEREAS, the Okinawan people have been asserting their
2 right to self-determination from the United States and Japan's
3 military policies, as expressed in the Okinawa Prefectural
4 referendum on September 8, 1996, which resulted in almost ninety
5 per cent in favor of military reduction and the revision of the
6 Japan-United States Status of Forces Agreement; and

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8 WHEREAS, more recent polls, such as the August 2005 Okinawa
9 Times poll reported eighty-two per cent of Okinawan citizens
10 oppose base expansion; and

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12 WHEREAS, the proposal for a mile-long off-shore heliport
13 base near a world-class reef in rural northern Okinawa has been
14 rejected by prefecture and municipal leaders, as well as the
15 majority of residents who voted against the base construction in
16 a 1997 referendum of Nago City; and

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18 WHEREAS, numerous international scientific bodies, such as
19 the World Conservation Congress, have condemned the construction
20 of the proposed Henoko Village heliport as detrimental to the
21 endangered dugong, an internationally protected sea mammal; and

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23 WHEREAS, the people of Okinawa have symbolically shown
24 their opposition to military base construction through community
25 actions, such as a vigil on-going for over eight years, civil
26 disobedience led by village seniors for over a year-and-a-half,
27 and numerous incidents of linking of hands around entire
28 military bases by peace-seeking peoples, including over 27,500
29 people around Kadena Air Force Base, the largest American air
30 field outside of the United States; and

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32 WHEREAS, the United States is engaged in fighting for the
33 democratic rights of the people of Afghanistan and Iraq; and

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35 WHEREAS, to honor and be consistent with these precious
36 democratic principles, the President of the United States should
37 respect the requests of the Okinawan people and reduce the
38 military presence in Okinawa so that these military bases can be
39 used for peaceful, economically-sustainable uses, as enshrined
40 in numerous international treaties, such as the International



1 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of which the United
2 States and Japan are signatories; and
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4 WHEREAS, the people of Hawaii, including the indigenous
5 Hawaiian community and especially the Okinawan community, have a
6 special bond with the people of Okinawa, as evidenced by the
7 sister state--prefecture relation that was established in 1985,
8 and are sympathetic to the feelings and human rights of the
9 people of Okinawa; now, therefore,
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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
12 Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
13 of 2006, the Senate concurring, that the President of the United
14 States, the Department of Defense, and the United States
15 Congress, in concert with the Japanese Prime Minister, are
16 requested to recommit their efforts to negotiate and expedite an
17 agreeable solution for a potential relocation, adjustment,
18 realignment, and overall reduction of the current presence of
19 the United States military forces in Okinawa, and other Japanese
20 land areas, with the intent to return land and facilities not
21 needed for direct military purposes back to Okinawa Prefecture,
22 as recommended by the Final Report of the Special Action
23 Committee on Okinawa and the Treaty of Obligations; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the United
26 States, the Department of Defense, and the United States
27 Congress are requested to evaluate the distribution of forces in
28 Japan and Asia, with due consideration of Okinawa's internal
29 affairs and the international situation, and to consider the
30 possibility of reducing and relocating military facilities
31 within its continental borders; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
35 United States, the United States Secretary of Defense, the
36 Commander-in-Chief of the United States Pacific Command,
37 chairpersons of the congressional defense appropriation
38 committees, the Governor, the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture,
39 the Consul-General of Japan in Hawaii, the members of Hawaii's
40 congressional delegation, and the Hawaii United Okinawa



1 Association, who in turn, is requested to transmit it to its
2 member organizations.
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