
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION TO REVIEW POSSIBLE ETHICS VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM.

1 WHEREAS, in 2005, the Department of Business, Economic
2 Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) pursued trade missions to the
3 People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea to
4 encourage economic and tourism-related partnerships with these
5 two countries; these missions were therefore considered to be
6 state-related business; and

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8 WHEREAS, to support this mission, the sum of \$268,637 was
9 raised by DBEDT from private sector sponsors; and

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11 WHEREAS, it has been revealed that this money paid for a
12 variety of costs for the mission, including travel expenses and
13 honorariums to local entertainers who accompanied the China and
14 South Korea delegation; and

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16 WHEREAS, in carrying out these trade missions, an issue of
17 concern arises as to whether it is permissible under ethics law
18 to solicit private funding to finance activities that are
19 essentially a government function; and

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21 WHEREAS, moreover, the method of soliciting private funds,
22 including the possibility of promising special benefits in
23 exchange for large contributions, can be troubling; and

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25 WHEREAS, it is critical that no ethical bounds are crossed
26 in government solicitations of private sponsorships of official
27 government trade missions, and measures need to be taken to
28 ensure that government solicitations are public and aboveboard
29 and that government decisions are not influenced by private
30 contributions to support these missions; and



1 WHEREAS, the private sponsorship of official government
2 trade missions can raise additional ethical concerns; for
3 example, in the event that private funds received from the
4 sponsors and participants of the trade mission are used to pay
5 for the trip of any state employee, prior approval from the
6 State Ethics Commission may need to be obtained; and
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8 WHEREAS, the State Ethics Commission has the responsibility
9 to initiate, receive, and consider charges concerning alleged
10 violations of the State Ethics Code; now, therefore,
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12 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-third
13 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006, the
14 House of Representatives concurring, that the State Ethics
15 Commission is requested pursuant to section 84-31(a)(7), Hawaii
16 Revised Statutes (HRS), to review this matter for possible
17 ethics code violations committed by DBEDT; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to section 84-
20 31(a)(7), HRS, the State Ethics Commission is requested to
21 educate the Legislature and the citizenry regarding the ethical
22 aspects of its review no later than September 1, 2006; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
25 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Executive Director
26 of the State Ethics Commission and Director of Business,
27 Economic Development, and Tourism.
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