
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE MILITARY TO MAP AND MONITOR ALL MUNITION
DUMPSITES OFF HAWAIIAN SHORES.

1 WHEREAS, a 2001 U.S. Army study of its own declassified
2 records (2001 Army Report) revealed that, between 1918 and 1970,
3 it disposed of chemical weapons in seventy-three different
4 dumping events in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans, the
5 Mediterranean sea, and in U.S. rivers and lakes; and

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7 WHEREAS, at least twenty-six chemical dumpsites were
8 created by the Army, the coordinates of which only half are
9 known. This global dumping practice resulted in over sixty-four
10 million pounds of nerve and mustard agents, hundreds of
11 thousands of mustard, white phosphorus, lewisite, and phosgene
12 bombs, chemical projectiles, and bulk containers of radioactive
13 waste, either tossed in bulk containers from military ships or
14 packed into vessel holds and scuttled; and

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16 WHEREAS, additional dumpsites probably exist because the
17 Army has never fully examined records from the World War I
18 period, when ocean dumping of chemical weapons was common, or
19 released a full accounting of classified dumpsites; and

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21 WHEREAS, the 2001 Army Report indicated that vast
22 quantities of chemical weapons were dumped in at least three
23 major events off Hawaiian shores: two off Honolulu in 1944, and
24 one off Waianae in 1945. These dumps included over 1,650 tons
25 of mustard bombs; 4,220 tons of "unspecified toxics" including
26 hydrogen cyanide; 7 tons of hydrogen cyanide bombs; 489 tons of
27 cyanogen chloride bombs; 510 tons of mustard shells; 1,817 tons
28 of mustard agent; and 399 tons of lewisite; and

29
30 WHEREAS, blister agents mustard and lewisite cause severe
31 blistering of the skin and are caustic to the eyes and lungs;
32 extensive exposure to mustard can be fatal; highly poisonous
33 hydrogen cyanide is the same gas used in Nazi gas chambers,



1 exposure to which is fatal within minutes; and cyanogen chloride
2 kills on contact; and
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4 WHEREAS, the United States Congress banned the practice of
5 chemical weapons dumping in 1972, and the United States signed
6 an international treaty banning the practice three years later;
7 and
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9 WHEREAS, military munitions pose environmental and human
10 health dangers at each step in their life cycle and the more
11 than 9,000 tons of chemical munitions lying on the ocean floor
12 off Oahu represent a threat to the public and a challenge to its
13 faith in the military; and
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15 WHEREAS, a 1987 Army study of declassified records of
16 chemical weapons movement between 1946 and 1986 reported that
17 the transportation of munitions over land and sea resulted in
18 over thirty incidents of munitions leakage and hundreds of
19 injuries, and records indicate that if a leak at sea could not
20 be plugged, the leaking container was simply dumped overboard;
21 and
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23 WHEREAS, the effect of the dumping operations has never
24 been studied, and few scientists have been aware that it was
25 done, as the Army has surveyed only four of its twenty-six
26 declassified dump zones, most recently in 1975; and
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28 WHEREAS, because records are sketchy, it is impossible to
29 say precisely where the dumped weapons are currently located;
30 and
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32 WHEREAS, the danger posed by dumped munitions increases
33 with time as munitions casings progressively corrode; and
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35 WHEREAS, in 1976, a crew three miles off Honolulu Harbor
36 suffered chemical burns from canisters dredged up in 1,200 feet
37 of water; and the Army conceded that a 1944 dump of "unspecified
38 toxins" were "probably the source" of the injuries; and
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40 WHEREAS, Hawaii has had a difficult history with munitions
41 contamination on the island of Kahoolawe and in Makua Valley on
42 Oahu: the Navy spent \$400 million on a five-year cleanup of
43 Kahoolawe, and still did not clear the entire island, and the
44 cleanup of former west Hawaii military sites around Waikoloa,



1 Waimea, and Kawaihae is estimated at \$600 million, which
2 represents the entire annual U.S. budget for cleaning up former
3 military sites; and

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5 WHEREAS, some munitions may have been dumped in water so
6 deep that removal may not be possible, and continuous monitoring
7 must be conducted to protect public safety; now, therefore,

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9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-third
10 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006, the
11 House of Representatives concurring, that Congressional action
12 is necessary to protect communities and ensure that the
13 appropriate resources are provided for cleanups that protect
14 human health and the environment, and prevent additional
15 contamination; and

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the military is urged to ensure
18 that all overland and sea transportation of munitions within the
19 State comply with existing ordnance transportation rules and
20 regulations to maximize public safety and be free from spillage
21 and contamination; and

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the military is requested to
24 prevent accidental exposure to any contaminants by conducting a
25 mapping project of all dumpsites off Hawaii shores, to include a
26 thorough search of records and interviews of those still alive
27 who performed the dumping and identification of specific
28 dumpsites, which shall be marked clearly on all marine
29 navigation maps, and have their locations released to the public
30 and media; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the military is requested to
33 conduct a risk assessment to determine the extent of any
34 potential public health risks associated with these dumpsites,
35 and whether any munitions may be safely removed from Hawaii
36 waters; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the military is requested to
39 monitor continuously to the extent possible the existing
40 munitions dumpsites off Hawaiian shores, and to report these
41 monitoring results to the Departments of Land and Natural
42 Resources, Health, and Public Safety; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the military is requested to
 2 develop an emergency public notification procedure that will go
 3 into effect within twenty-four hours of any threat from
 4 contamination or other danger arising from the dumpsites; and

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 6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Departments of Health and
 7 Public Safety, together with the appropriate federal
 8 departments, shall develop adequate safety procedures including
 9 evacuation and disaster control procedures; and

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 11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 12 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Deputy Assistant
 13 Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety, and Occupational
 14 Health; Hawaii's congressional delegation; the Commander in
 15 Chief of the Pacific; the Commander in Chief of the United
 16 States Army Pacific; the Commander in Chief of the United States
 17 Pacific Fleet; Commander in Chief of the Pacific Air Force; and
 18 the Director of the American Friends Service Committee Hawaii
 19 Area Program.

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