

MAR 15 2006

S.R. NO. 82

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DESIGNATION OF `AWA AS THE OFFICIAL STATE BEVERAGE.

1 WHEREAS, anthropological evidence suggests that `awa, as it
2 is called in Hawaiian, has been cultivated and consumed by
3 humans for well over three thousand years; and
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5 WHEREAS, historically, over a dozen types of `awa, or Piper
6 methysticum, were known in Hawai`i; and
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8 WHEREAS, in Hawai`i, these different variations were used
9 to name distinct varieties, recognized by those who knew the
10 plant well; and
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12 WHEREAS, in Hawai`i, `awa was commonly used until the end
13 of the nineteenth century; and
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15 WHEREAS, traditionally, `awa was considered to be a
16 beneficial herb for healthy individuals, but to be avoided by
17 the sick or infirm; and
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19 WHEREAS, `awa was considered not only a medicinal plant,
20 but it was consumed as a ceremonial beverage as well; and
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22 WHEREAS, in Hawai`i, `awa was used by the ali`i and kahuna,
23 as well as commoners, for medicinal purposes and also to promote
24 relaxation; and
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26 WHEREAS, in a traditional context, there were three major
27 kinds of `awa ceremonies:
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29 (1) Those held on formal occasions, such as to honor
30 ali`i;
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32 (2) Ceremonies performed at community meetings, such as
33 elder councils; and
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1 (3) Informal ceremonies; and

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3 WHEREAS, in Hawai`i, `awa was drunk during divination
4 ceremonies, naming of children aged one years old, the
5 consecrating of a male child, or initiating of young girls into
6 traditional hula and chanting; and

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8 WHEREAS, the feelings of camaraderie that `awa drinking
9 evokes has made it a symbol for peace and friendship in many
10 island nations of the Pacific; and

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12 WHEREAS, `awa is still used today by a wide range of
13 Pacific societies for spiritual, medicinal, and recreational
14 purposes; and

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16 WHEREAS, recently, `awa has seen a resurgence in popularity
17 in Hawai`i and elsewhere; and

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19 WHEREAS, due to this resurgence, the local demand for `awa
20 has outpaced the local industry's ability to supply it,
21 requiring many to purchase `awa from other Pacific island
22 sources such as Vanuatu; and

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24 WHEREAS, Hawai`i's rich cultural, historic, and ceremonial
25 traditions that are tied to `awa should be preserved and
26 fostered to ensure that this knowledge, experience, and
27 indigenous product is available for future generations of
28 Hawai`i residents; now, therefore,

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30 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-third
31 Legislature of the State of Hawai`i, Regular Session of 2006,
32 that `awa be considered the official state beverage; and

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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Agriculture,
35 Land and Natural Resources, and Business, Economic Development,
36 and Tourism are urged to encourage the propagation, cultivation,
37 and production of `awa in the State; and

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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
40 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
41 Agriculture, the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural



1 Resources, and the Director of Business, Economic Development,
2 and Tourism, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the
3 Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the `Awa Development Council.
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