
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU CONDUCT A
FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE USE OF POLYSTYRENE FOAM
ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTS IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, due to the inherent nonbiodegradable,
2 nonrecyclable nature and chemical composition of expanded
3 polystyrene foam (commonly known as Styrofoam), the use and
4 disposal of this product poses a significant threat not only to
5 Hawaii's ecosystems and environment but also to the general
6 health and welfare of the citizens of this state; and
7

8 WHEREAS, expanded polystyrene foam is a petroleum
9 by-product, nonrenewable resource composed of the chemical
10 styrene, a neurotoxin and a possible human carcinogen; and
11

12 WHEREAS, when expanded polystyrene foam breaks down in the
13 State's landfills, dangerous chemicals leach into the seepage of
14 the landfills, adversely impacting the State's environment and
15 ecosystems; and
16

17 WHEREAS, landfill seepage that is pumped out of the
18 landfill and inadequately processed or treated before being
19 discharged into the ocean, also threatens marine ecosystems
20 around the islands; and
21

22 WHEREAS, expanded polystyrene foam products take hundreds
23 of years to break down, posing a significant long-term
24 detrimental impact upon Hawaii's environment and ecosystems; and
25

26 WHEREAS, when expanded polystyrene foam is disposed of by
27 incineration, it produces a dense, black, irritating smoke
28 containing acidic gases and over 90 different chemical
29 compounds, including carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and the
30 known neurotoxin and possible human carcinogen, styrene; and



1 WHEREAS, when, contrary to the designed one-time use, food
2 or beverages are reheated in expanded polystyrene foam
3 containers, leaching of the chemical neurotoxin styrene occurs;
4 and

5
6 WHEREAS, improper or inadvertent disposal (littering) of
7 expanded polystyrene foam products is not only an aesthetic
8 concern but also raises significant health and welfare concerns
9 for the State's aquatic and wildlife; and

10
11 WHEREAS, disposable cups, clamshell containers, egg
12 cartons, meat trays, and numerous other items made from expanded
13 polystyrene foam pose a significant threat to the environment,
14 including the numerous and oftentimes fragile ecosystems that
15 exist in Hawaii, and to the health and welfare of the general
16 public; and

17
18 WHEREAS, Haleiwa town's Plastic Free Haleiwa coalition
19 provides a tremendous example and excellent model of community
20 members and business owners working together to reduce and
21 ultimately eliminate the use of disposable plastics, including
22 expanded polystyrene foam products, in their community; now,
23 therefore,

24
25 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
26 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
27 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative
28 Reference Bureau is requested to conduct a study on the
29 feasibility of using polystyrene foam alternative products in
30 the state; and

31
32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study consider the economic
33 impact of the use of polystyrene foam alternative products in
34 the state, as well as Hawaii's potential as a manufacturer of
35 polystyrene foam alternative products; and

36
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
38 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and
39 recommendations to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior
40 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2009; and

41
42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
43 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the
44 Legislative Reference Bureau.

