
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY, IN COOPERATION AND CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND APPROPRIATE WATER SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS, TO FURNISH ONBOARD A VISITOR WATER SAFETY INFORMATION MULTI-LINGUAL HANDOUT TO PROVIDE EDUCATION ON WATER RECREATIONAL HAZARDS.

1 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health in a May 23,
2 2007 article in the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, statistics show that
3 Hawaii has the second-highest resident drowning rate in the
4 United States, and if drowning included visitors, Hawaii may
5 lead the nation; and

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7 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health, in a
8 June 18, 2006 article in *The Honolulu Advertiser*, seventy-seven
9 drownings occurred statewide in 2006, up from seventy-one in
10 2004, which previously was a fifteen-year high; the article
11 quoted a Department of Health official as saying that the
12 statistics definitely point to a lack of awareness, and most
13 people would agree we need to do more education; and

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15 WHEREAS, an August 26, 2006 article in *The New York Times*,
16 stated that drowning claims far more lives in Hawaii than
17 headline grabbing shark attacks, especially with Hawaii's
18 coastlines of sand, coral reef, and lava rock creating
19 shorebreaks and currents that cause many swimmers, even
20 competent ones, to encounter entirely unexpected peril; and

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22 WHEREAS, *The Garden Island News* in an article of January 1,
23 2008, reported that on August 5 and 6, 2007, there were a total
24 of sixteen rescues in Kauai waters, ten visitors and six local
25 people who were rescued from deadly rip currents during strong
26 tradewind conditions; two Kapa'a surfers had recently responded
27 to someone on shore at Donkey Beach waiving frantically for help
28 to rescue a Tennessee family of six all in severe distress in
29 the water, with all six saved by the surfers but four landed up
30 in the emergency room for aspirating seawater; the father stated
31 that they had just arrived on Kauai to stay at a private



1 residence and thus had no chance to be warned by hotel
2 concierges or activities desk personnel; and

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4 WHEREAS, it was further reported in *The Honolulu Advertiser*
5 on January 30, 2007, that a key feature of a water safety
6 warning program to protect visitors is information, and for
7 years, lifeguards have been fighting a difficult battle to
8 educate people about ocean hazards; many of them have launched
9 their own individual efforts (often at their own expense) to
10 warn visitors; and

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12 WHEREAS, visitors to Hawaii often learn about an area from
13 a guidebook; of particular concern to some is the issue of
14 internet and travel guides that direct visitors, who are often
15 inexperienced swimmers, to remote beaches, cliffs, and dive
16 spots that may not have lifeguards; for example, on Oahu along
17 the cliffs of Maunalua Bay in Hawaii Kai, drownings and rescues
18 are a regular occurrence, despite warning signs, at two popular
19 cliff-diving places, Spitting Caves and China Walls; and

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21 WHEREAS, many interventions to prevent drowning have been
22 undertaken to get information to visitors via airline water
23 safety videos, hotel concierges, car rental companies, visitor
24 information websites, and baggage claim videos; and

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26 WHEREAS, two documents that are distributed onboard to
27 every air traveler arriving to Hawaii are the Department of
28 Agriculture Plant and Animal Declaration Form and the Visitor
29 Survey Form; and

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31 WHEREAS, a simple one-page handout could similarly be
32 distributed onboard to airline passengers to provide water
33 safety information to educate them on water recreational
34 hazards, such as drownings; and

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36 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Tourism Authority has the
37 responsibility, among other things, under section 201B-3(a)(21),
38 Hawaii Revised Statutes, to establish a public information and
39 educational program to inform the public of tourism and
40 tourism-related problems, which by reasonable interpretation
41 includes the prevention of drowning; and

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43 WHEREAS, section 201B-3(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes,
44 further provides that the Hawaii Tourism Authority shall do any



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1 and all things necessary to carry out its purposes and to
2 exercise its powers and responsibilities under law; now,
3 therefore,
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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
6 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
7 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Hawaii Tourism
8 Authority is requested, in cooperation and conjunction with the
9 Department of Health and appropriate water safety organizations,
10 to furnish and distribute aboard to all incoming mainland and
11 international flights a visitor water safety information
12 multi-lingual handout to provide education on water recreational
13 hazards; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
16 requested to cooperate with and assist the Hawaii Tourism
17 Authority in producing a visitor water safety information
18 multi-lingual handout to provide education on water recreational
19 hazards; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Department of
22 Transportation is requested to work with the airlines to ensure
23 the distribution of the handout onboard to all incoming
24 passengers on flights to Hawaii; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
27 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health;
28 Director of Transportation; Executive Director of the Hawaii
29 Tourism Authority and each member of the Hawaii Tourism
30 Authority; the Mayor and every councilmember of each county; and
31 the manager of Hawaii operations for Aloha Airlines, Hawaiian
32 Airlines, American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta
33 Airlines, Northwest Airlines, US Air, United Airlines, American
34 Trans Air, Continental Micronesia, TWA, Air Canada, Air New
35 Zealand, Alaska Airlines, Japan Airlines, Jalways, All Nippon
36 Airways, Air Japan, Jetstar, Korean Air, Philippines Airlines,
37 Quantas Airways, WestJet, ATA, China Airlines, Omni Air
38 International, US Airways, and America West.
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OFFERED BY:



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