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# HOUSE 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  
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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  
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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  
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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  
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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  
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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  
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32           WHEREAS, when, contrary to the designed one-time use, food  
33 or beverages are reheated in expanded polystyrene foam  
34 containers, leaching of the chemical neurotoxin styrene occurs;  
35 and



1 WHEREAS, improper or inadvertent disposal (littering) of  
2 expanded polystyrene foam products is not only an aesthetic  
3 concern but also raises significant health and welfare concerns  
4 for the State's aquatic and wildlife; and  
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6 WHEREAS, disposable cups, clamshell containers, egg  
7 cartons, meat trays, and numerous other items made from expanded  
8 polystyrene foam pose a significant threat to the environment,  
9 including the numerous and oftentimes fragile ecosystems that  
10 exist in Hawaii, and to the health and welfare of the general  
11 public; and  
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13 WHEREAS, Haleiwa town's Plastic Free Haleiwa coalition  
14 provides a tremendous example and excellent model of community  
15 members and business owners working together to reduce and  
16 ultimately eliminate the use of disposable plastics, including  
17 expanded polystyrene foam products, in their community; now,  
18 therefore,  
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20 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
21 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
22 Session of 2008, that the Legislative Reference Bureau is  
23 requested to conduct a study on the feasibility of using  
24 polystyrene foam alternative products in the state; and  
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study consider the economic  
27 impact of the use of polystyrene foam alternative products in  
28 the state, as well as Hawaii's potential as a manufacturer of  
29 polystyrene foam alternative products; and  
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference  
32 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and  
33 recommendations to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior  
34 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2009; and  
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this  
37 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative  
38 Reference Bureau.

