

MAR 13 2008

---

---

# SENATE 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

6  
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

14  
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

21  
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

3  
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

11  
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

20  
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

25  
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

30  
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

35  
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

42  
43 WHEREAS, section 201B-3(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
44 further provides that the Hawaii Tourism Authority shall do any



1 and all things necessary to carry out its purposes and to  
2 exercise its powers and responsibilities under law; now,  
3 therefore,

4  
5 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth  
6 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the  
7 House of Representatives 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

14  
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

20  
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

25  
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.

39  
40  
41 OFFERED BY:

*Ray L. Acan*  
*Clarence K. Iwashiro*  
*Hon. Inezio K.*



S.C.R. NO. 166

*Will Eyo*  
*Erzanne Chun Oalland*

---

