
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY, IN COOPERATION AND CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SCHOOL OF OCEAN AND EARTH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT, AND APPROPRIATE WATER SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS TO FURNISH, AS PART OF A MULTI-LINGUAL INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM, INFORMATION FOR VISITORS ON WATER SAFETY AND 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, the Hawaii Tourism Authority has the
27 responsibility, among other things, under section 201B-3(a)(21),
28 Hawaii Revised Statutes, to establish a public information and
29 educational program to inform the public of tourism and
30 tourism-related problems, which by reasonable interpretation
31 includes the prevention of drowning; and

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33 WHEREAS, section 201B-3(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes,
34 further provides that the Hawaii Tourism Authority shall do any
35 and all things necessary to carry out its purposes and to
36 exercise its powers and responsibilities under law; now,
37 therefore,

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39 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth
40 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008,
41 that the Hawaii Tourism Authority is requested in cooperation
42 and conjunction with the Department of Health, Honolulu
43 Emergency Services Department, University of Hawaii School of
44 Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, and appropriate water



1 safety organizations to furnish, as part of a multi-lingual
2 information and education program, information for visitors on
3 water safety and recreational hazards; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the information for visitors on
6 water safety and recreational hazards be disseminated by the
7 best means available to inform incoming visitors to Hawaii,
8 whether by brochure or on-board video or other means such as
9 website; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the point of dissemination
12 include the incoming airline flights, hotel rooms, and Hawaii
13 Superferry; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health,
16 Honolulu Emergency Services Department, and the University of
17 Hawaii School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology are
18 requested to cooperate with and assist the Hawaii Tourism
19 Authority in producing in composing the content of information
20 for visitors on water safety and recreational hazards and multi-
21 lingual dissemination thereto; and
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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Department of
24 Transportation is requested to work with the airlines on the
25 dissemination of the information for visitors on water safety
26 and recreational hazards, on all incoming flights to Hawaii; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii Superferry is requested
29 to disseminate to its passengers information for visitors on
30 water safety and recreational hazards; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Tourism Authority
33 disseminate this Senate Concurrent Resolution to every hotel in
34 the State and every cruise ship company operating in Hawaii; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the cruise industry inform its
37 passengers of the information for visitors on water safety and
38 recreational hazards; and
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
41 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health; Dean of the
42 University of Hawaii School of Ocean and Earth Science and
43 Technology, Director of Transportation; Executive Director of
44 the Hawaii Tourism Authority and each member of the Hawaii



1 Tourism Authority; the Mayor and every councilmember of each
2 county; Director of the Honolulu Emergency Services Department
3 of the City and County of Honolulu; the President and Chief
4 Executive Officer of the Hawaii Superferry; and the manager of
5 Hawaii operations for Hawaiian Airlines, American Airlines,
6 Continental Airlines, Delta Airlines, Northwest Airlines, US
7 Air, United Airlines, Continental Micronesia, TWA, Air Canada,
8 Air New Zealand, Alaska Airlines, Japan Airlines, Jalways, All
9 Nippon Airways, Air Japan, Jetstar, Korean Air, Philippines
10 Airlines, Quantas Airways, WestJet, China Airlines, Omni Air
11 International, US Airways, and America West.

