
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A TASK FORCE TO DISCUSS ISSUES,
STUDY IMPACTS, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO
GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY.

1 WHEREAS, since the engineering of genetically modified
2 organisms (GMOs) is a relatively new science, the public has
3 asked for a long-term evaluation of potential effects on the
4 health of humans, other living creatures, and the environment;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, Hawaii has more genetic engineering test sites per
8 square mile than any other state in the nation; and

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10 WHEREAS, public and environmental health concerns about the
11 testing, propagating, cultivating, raising, planting, growing,
12 or releasing of genetically modified crops and seeds in the
13 state have elicited extensive public comment during recent
14 legislative hearings; and

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16 WHEREAS, these concerns include, but are not limited to,
17 the risks of new allergens and toxins in foods, pollen drift,
18 rising resistance rates of pests and weeds, crossing of new
19 genes into wild relatives, and the potential contamination of
20 aquifers, reservoirs, and fresh waterways; and

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22 WHEREAS, in 2008, the County of Hawaii enacted Ordinance
23 No. 08-154, which prohibits any person from testing,
24 propagating, cultivating, raising, planting, growing,
25 introducing, or releasing genetically engineered or recombinant
26 DNA taro or coffee in the County of Hawaii; and

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28 WHEREAS, given the growing public concern about GMOs in the
29 state, it is necessary for the genetically engineered crop and
30 seed industry, farmers, and the public to collaborate and



1 discuss important issues relating to public and environmental
2 health; and
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4 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the state will benefit
5 most from a task force composed of independent members who are
6 familiar with the relevant health and environmental issues, and
7 have expertise in the areas of human health, ecosystems,
8 biosecurity, pest control, and water and soil quality, in
9 addition to representatives from the genetically engineered crop
10 and seed industry, non-GMO commercial farms, and organic farms;
11 now, therefore,
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13 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
14 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
15 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
16 Agriculture (DOA), the Department of Health (DOH), and the
17 President of UH are requested to co-convene a task force to
18 review research studies, gather input, discuss issues, and
19 recommend policies, regulatory needs, and legislative action
20 relating to GMOs; and
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force also:
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- 24 (1) Study the scope of the current and proposed use of
25 GMOs in the state;
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27 (2) Examine issues relating to farmer indemnity and how to
28 reduce the likelihood of future litigation; and
29
30 (3) Study methods to allow the genetically engineered crop
31 and seed industry to make the location and nature of
32 genetically engineered crops transparent to the
33 public;
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35 and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force membership be
38 comprised of those representatives who are directly involved in
39 the independent scientific review and evaluation of
40 environmental and health impacts to the natural resources and
41 people of the State of Hawaii; provided that the task force
42 membership include:
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- 1 (1) The Administrator of the DOA Plant Pest Control
- 2 Branch;
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- 4 (2) The Deputy Director of the DOH Environmental Health
- 5 Administration;
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- 7 (3) The Director of the DOH Office of Environmental
- 8 Quality Control;
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- 10 (4) The Chair of the UH Institutional Biosafety Committee;
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- 12 (5) The Director of the UH Environmental Health and Safety
- 13 Office or the Director of the UH Environmental Center;
- 14
- 15 (6) The Director of the UH Office of Public Health
- 16 Studies;
- 17
- 18 (7) One non-GMO commercial farmer representative from each
- 19 county appointed by the respective mayor of each
- 20 county;
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- 22 (8) One organic farmer representative from each county
- 23 appointed by the respective mayor of each county; and
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- 25 (9) One GMO farmer representative from each county
- 26 appointed by the respective mayor of each county;

27
28 and

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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
31 report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no
32 later than 20 days prior to the convening of the 2011 Regular
33 Session; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
36 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chair of
37 the Board of Agriculture, Director of DOH, President of UH, the
38 Attorney General, and the mayor of each county.

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OFFERED BY: 

MAR 18 2009

