
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO WORK WITH THE TARO SECURITY AND PURITY TASK FORCE TO IDENTIFY TARO LANDS AND DEVELOP POLICIES TO PROMOTE TARO FARMING.

1 WHEREAS, Kalo (*colocasia esculenta*), the Hawaiian word for
2 taro, is a culturally significant plant to the kanaka maoli,
3 Hawaii's indigenous peoples and to the State; and
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5 WHEREAS, in 2008, the Legislature recognized kalo's role in
6 the State's history by designating kalo as the state plant; and
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8 WHEREAS, the Legislature also passed Act 211, Session Laws
9 of Hawaii 2008, which created the Taro Security and Purity Task
10 Force that directed the taro farmers, Department of Agriculture,
11 Department of Land and Natural Resources, University of Hawaii,
12 Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, and Onipa'a Na Hui kalo
13 representatives to seek solutions to challenges facing taro,
14 taro farmers, and taro markets for a period of two years; and
15

16 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force found that
17 the State retains numerous lands within its jurisdiction that
18 were former taro lands or are capable of becoming wet or dry
19 taro producing lands on all islands, many of which are
20 prioritized for other uses; and
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22 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force also found
23 that some agricultural leases, both public and private, were as
24 low as \$30 per acre per year, but as high as \$2,000 per acre per
25 year when they were adjacent to highly valued residential
26 properties or conservation land; and
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28 WHEREAS, in general, taro farming lands appear to have
29 higher lease rates among state agencies than leases for other
30 agricultural uses; and
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32 WHEREAS, the high cost of leases renders unaffordable
33 critical fallowing practices that improve soil health and reduce



1 apple snail populations and fungal diseases in taro soils; now,
2 therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
5 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
6 of 2010, that the Legislature requests the Department of
7 Agriculture and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, in
8 conjunction with the Taro Security and Purity Task Force to:

- 9
10 (1) Reevaluate agency land inventory for potential taro-
11 growing lands, and using local knowledge of the
12 location of historic dry and wet taro cultivated
13 areas, designate these lands for taro production use
14 by January 1, 2012;
- 15
16 (2) Develop a consistent and affordable lease rent rate
17 schedule specific to taro farmed lands by January 1,
18 2012;
- 19
20 (3) Set a cap on lease rents for taro farms at no more
21 than \$100 per acre, regardless of adjacent land
22 values;
- 23
24 (4) Review existing qualifying criteria for farm leases
25 and develop a consistent and accessible criteria for
26 taro farmers to qualify for taro land leases by
27 January 1, 2012; and
- 28
29 (5) Provide taro farmers, organizations, and individuals
30 access to information by January 1, 2012, including:
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32 (A) Taro land inventories;
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34 (B) Opportunities for leases of these lands; and
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36 (C) Qualifying criteria and costs for farm leases; and

37
38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
39 and the Department of Land and Natural Resources are requested
40 to submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days
41 prior to the 2012 regular session regarding the reclassification
42 of taro lands, adjustments to lease rents, and modifications to
43 lease qualification criteria; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to Chairperson of the Board of
3 Agriculture, the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
4 Resources, and the Taro Security and Purity Task Force.
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OFFERED BY:

Mele Carroll

Karen Auana

Mark Katakina

[Signature]

Ray Hanlon

MAR 10 2010

