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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO FULLY SUPPORT THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHELLFISH AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY AND  
IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE CLASSIFICATION PROGRAM FOR SHELLFISH  
GROWING AREAS.

1           WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that there is enormous  
2 potential in Hawaii to commercially culture bivalve shellfish,  
3 such as oysters and clams, for export or local consumption, or  
4 both; and

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6           WHEREAS, previous commercial efforts and recent research  
7 conducted by the private sector and the University of Hawaii  
8 have firmly established the biological feasibility of raising  
9 shellfish; and

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11           WHEREAS, several commercial companies currently produce  
12 young seed oysters and clams in land-based facilities that are  
13 shipped to the State of Washington and elsewhere to be grown in  
14 coastal waters; and

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16           WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii at Hilo is conducting  
17 tests, growing oysters in several fishponds around the State and  
18 these projects are experiencing very high growth rates in  
19 comparison to mainland locations, thus presenting Hawaii with  
20 economic competitive advantages; and

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22           WHEREAS, organolyptic evaluations have shown that shellfish  
23 produced in Hawaiian coastal waters have excellent flavor and  
24 texture; and

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26           WHEREAS, reducing seafood imports to the State is urgent  
27 and enhancing the local production of high quality seafood is in  
28 the State's best interest; and

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30           WHEREAS, bivalve shellfish culture is environmentally  
31 friendly and can even improve environmental quality; and



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WHEREAS, the Department of Health, under title 11, chapter 35, Hawaii Administrative Rules, has the responsibility of implementing the federally mandated national shellfish sanitation program, which includes criteria and protocols for testing shellfish growing areas, as well as all aspects of harvesting, processing, packaging, storing, and distributing of shellfish; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii is the only coastal state in the nation where locally grown shellfish cannot be certified and sold for local consumption, in contrast to imported shellfish, which can be certified and sold for local consumption; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health has a Food and Drug Administration-certified water quality testing laboratory that conducts water quality testing for water and dairy products, and is capable of conducting the water quality testing and providing the trained staff necessary to carry out the shellfish certification tests; and

WHEREAS, multiple aquaculture businesses and operators of traditional fishponds have already expended significant resources on research and development and have stated that they would expand their investment to shellfish farming if the Department of Health would fulfill the Department's legal responsibility to classify shellfish growing areas; and

WHEREAS, failure to implement all aspects of the state shellfish sanitation plan prevents sustainable economic development and job creation; and

WHEREAS, the most immediate beneficiaries would be existing aquafarms and operators of traditional Hawaiian fishponds who have shellfish products nearly ready for sale; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health, due to competing priorities and limited resources, has not moved expeditiously to work with the local shellfish aquaculture industry to provide essential services that would allow the sale of locally produced shellfish for local consumption; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2011, the



1 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of  
2 Health is requested to expeditiously take action to certify its  
3 water quality testing laboratory for the testing and  
4 classification of land- and ocean-based shellfish growing waters  
5 around the State, utilize appropriate staff for those purposes,  
6 and implement analyses to certify areas that are suitable for  
7 classification as shellfish growing areas; and  
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
10 requested to fully implement all components of the state  
11 shellfish sanitation plan in a timely manner so that  
12 classification of shellfish growing areas can be started  
13 immediately; and  
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
16 requested to consult with industry experts and shellfish  
17 biologists from the University of Hawaii System to develop a  
18 prioritized list of locations for testing and classification;  
19 and  
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
22 requested to work cooperatively with all members of the  
23 shellfish industry and other interested state agencies to plan,  
24 site, and develop an expanded commercial culture of shellfish  
25 for seed production and seafood production for local consumption  
26 and export; and  
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
29 requested to render as much assistance as possible under its  
30 authority to expedite the creation of a bivalve shellfish  
31 industry within Hawaii; and  
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health is  
34 requested to submit a report on the actions taken pursuant to  
35 this Concurrent Resolution to the Legislature no later than  
36 twenty days prior to the convening of the 2012 Regular Session;  
37 and  
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
40 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health,  
41 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,  
42 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and Director of  
43 Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.  
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