
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO SET ASIDE AND TRANSFER SIXTY ACRES OF
LAND TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WEST HAWAII MULTI-
PURPOSE AND INTERGENERATIONAL VETERANS CENTER.

1 WHEREAS, there are more than sixteen thousand veterans on
2 the island of Hawaii, a significant number of whom live in West
3 Hawaii, and they are overwhelmingly requesting and supporting
4 the location of a veterans center in the central part of West
5 Hawaii, near the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery; and
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7 WHEREAS, veterans make up 12.5 per cent of the adult
8 population of Hawaii County, which is second only to the City
9 and County of Honolulu at 13.0 per cent, and according to the
10 2010 census data, the population of Hawaii County has increased
11 24.5 per cent since the last census, which is greater than any
12 other county in the State; and
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14 WHEREAS, there is a severe lack of facilities to meet the
15 needs of veteran groups in West Hawaii, including American
16 Legion Posts, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign
17 Wars, Korean War Veterans Association, Vietnam Era Veterans
18 Association, Camp Tawara Detachment #1255 of the Marine Corps
19 League, Big Island National Guard Retirees Association, Big
20 Island Retired Military Association, 100th Infantry Battalion
21 Veterans (also known as Club 100), 442nd Veterans Association,
22 Interpreters Club, Hawaii Island Women Veterans Association,
23 Hawaii Island Veterans Memorial, Inc., and Military Order of the
24 Purple Heart; and
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26 WHEREAS, the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery does not have a
27 convenient place for large gatherings for funeral services and
28 celebrations; a veterans center would be convenient and
29 appropriate for these gatherings; and
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1 WHEREAS, in Kona there is no permanent office for the
2 Office of Veterans Services of the state Department of Defense,
3 and, therefore, meetings are held at the federal Department of
4 Veterans Affairs Center in a leased retail space; and

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6 WHEREAS, the National Guard Armory in West Hawaii is old
7 and located south of Kona, which is a less than optimal location
8 for the community; and

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10 WHEREAS, there is a shortage of public emergency shelter
11 space in West Hawaii and a new veterans facility could be
12 designed to accommodate this need; and

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14 WHEREAS, there is a need for a gymnasium activity center to
15 provide a facility in West Hawaii where veterans of all ages
16 would have access to suitable recreational activities; and

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18 WHEREAS, veterans in West Hawaii have indicated a desire to
19 have a museum to share their personal achievements, medals,
20 plaques, group commendations, troop flags, and other
21 achievements, as well as personal photos and memorabilia from
22 newspapers, magazines, and letters; and

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24 WHEREAS, a museum with adequate acreage would be ideal for
25 an outdoor museum for historical planes, such as the P-51
26 Mustang and F-4C Phantom; and

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28 WHEREAS, the Kailua-Kona Community Based Outpatient Clinic
29 is in a leased two-story building located on a hill, which
30 presents significant difficulties for parking, especially for
31 disabled veterans, because the parking lot is small and
32 navigating the turns to drop off a veteran in a wheelchair at
33 the door is very difficult; alternative parking at the bottom of
34 the hill does not meet the requirements of the Americans with
35 Disabilities Act because it would require walking up a steep
36 hill; and

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38 WHEREAS, because the Kailua-Kona Community Based Outpatient
39 Clinic building lease period ends in approximately two years,
40 and having a larger, expanded facility that is co-located with
41 the federal Veterans Affairs Center would better meet the
42 existing and future needs of West Hawaii veterans, there is an
43 opportunity for moving the Community Based Outpatient Clinic to



1 a new West Hawaii Veterans Center and designing the facility to
2 best accommodate the needs of veterans; and
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4 WHEREAS, in Maui and Hilo, there are efforts to co-locate
5 military and veteran services to wisely expend federal dollars
6 and create efficiencies that would best serve our veterans; and
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8 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that co-locating the West
9 Hawaii federal Veterans Association Center and the Veterans
10 Association Community Based Outpatient Clinic within a multi-
11 purpose facility that includes a meeting place for veterans
12 would provide veterans access to meetings, information,
13 assistance, activities, and all veterans affairs services within
14 a consolidated area, which would be in the veterans' best
15 interests; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that a multi-purpose and
18 intergenerational veterans facility should be established and
19 operated by a nonprofit organization that could generate funds
20 for repair, maintenance, and operation of the facility; and
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22 WHEREAS, a multi-purpose and intergenerational veterans
23 facility could generate the necessary funds by providing
24 facilities, programs, and services for the numerous federal and
25 state programs for veterans and the military, which is similar
26 to the existing Kauai and Oahu veterans centers; and
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28 WHEREAS, the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Development and
29 Expansion Association's leadership is forming the West Hawaii
30 Veterans Council, a nonprofit organization that should manage
31 the proposed multi-purpose and intergenerational facility; and
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33 WHEREAS, the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Development and
34 Expansion Association was established in 2005 and has proven
35 itself highly competent by spending countless hours of labor,
36 donating materials and equipment, renovating the cemetery, and
37 removing headstones (after GPS positioning) to install an
38 irrigation system, topsoil, and new grass sod as an unofficial
39 caretaker in cooperation with the county Department of Parks and
40 Recreation; and
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42 WHEREAS, the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Development and
43 Expansion Association's leadership of the West Hawaii Veterans
44 Cemetery, touted as the Arlington of the Pacific, resulted in



1 the cemetery being granted shrine status by the United States
 2 Department of Veterans Affairs, making the sixty-two acre
 3 cemetery in Kailua-Kona one of three state-owned veterans
 4 cemeteries in the nation to have that distinction, and the only
 5 one in Hawaii; and

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 7 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the current and future
 8 needs of veterans in West Hawaii require that immediate action
 9 be taken to establish a multi-purpose and intergenerational
 10 veterans facility, to include a facility with area for a museum,
 11 meetings, activities, and other veteran-related services; and

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 13 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that funding for the
 14 planning, assessment, design, and construction of the West
 15 Hawaii multi-purpose and intergenerational Veterans Center
 16 facility is needed and strongly supported; now, therefore,

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 18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 19 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
 20 of 2011, the Senate concurring, that the Governor, in
 21 coordination with the Department of Land and Natural Resources
 22 and the Hawaii Department of Defense, is requested to set aside
 23 and transfer by executive order sixty acres of land to support
 24 the establishment of a West Hawaii multi-purpose and
 25 intergenerational Veterans Center facility, to the West Hawaii
 26 Veterans Council; and

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 28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 29 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the
 30 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the
 31 Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii, the Director of the
 32 Office of Veterans Services of the State of Hawaii, the Mayor of
 33 the County of Hawaii, the President of the West Hawaii Veterans
 34 Council, and the Director of the Honolulu Regional Office,
 35 Department of Veterans Affairs.

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OFFERED BY:  

