
HOUSE 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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31 WHEREAS, in Kona there is no permanent office for the
32 Office of Veterans Services of the state Department of Defense,
33 and, therefore, meetings are held at the federal Department of
34 Veterans Affairs Center in a leased retail space; and



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



1 cemeteries in the nation to have that distinction, and the only
2 one in Hawaii; and

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

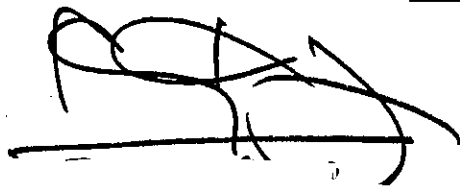
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10 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that funding for the
11 planning, assessment, design, and construction of the West
12 Hawaii multi-purpose and intergenerational Veterans Center
13 facility is needed and strongly supported; now, therefore,
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15 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
16 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
17 of 2011, that the Governor, in coordination with the Department
18 of Land and Natural Resources and the Hawaii Department of
19 Defense, is requested to set aside and transfer by executive
20 order sixty acres of land to support the establishment of a West
21 Hawaii multi-purpose and intergenerational Veterans Center
22 facility, to the West Hawaii Veterans Council; and

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

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OFFERED BY:



Cindy Evans

Deborahima

[Signature]

Danny Coffey

