
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP AN
INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN TO THE TSUNAMI DEBRIS GENERATED
BY THE MARCH 2011 EARTHQUAKE IN JAPAN THAT MAY REACH
HAWAII'S SHORES.

1 WHEREAS, this body finds that Japan experienced an
2 earthquake with an estimated magnitude of 9.1 in March 2011, the
3 fourth most powerful ever recorded; and
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5 WHEREAS, the earthquake generated a tsunami that dragged
6 three million to four million tons of debris into the ocean
7 after tearing up Japanese harbors and homes; and
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9 WHEREAS, scientists believe ocean currents are carrying
10 some of the debris across the Pacific Ocean toward the United
11 States and one to five percent of the one million to two million
12 tons of debris still in the ocean may reach the shores of
13 Hawaii, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington in the United States and
14 British Columbia in Canada; and
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16 WHEREAS, the majority of the objects expected to be among
17 the debris are from Japan's fishing industry, for example large
18 buoys suspected to be from Japanese oyster farms that were found
19 on the shores of Alaska in late 2011; and
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21 WHEREAS, debris that washes up on coral reefs or beaches
22 could harm wildlife, such as endangered Hawaiian monk seals; and
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24 WHEREAS, the debris is largely dispersed over a wide area
25 that makes it difficult to rely on satellite imagery to track
26 the debris; and
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28 WHEREAS, Hawaii must stand prepared to ensure prompt and
29 effective action if the debris reaches the shores of Hawaii;
30 now, therefore,
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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
33 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
34 of 2012, that the Director of State Civil Defense is requested



1 to convene a task force to develop an international response
2 plan to ensure prompt and effective action to address tsunami
3 debris generated by the March 2011 earthquake in Japan if it
4 reaches Hawaii's shores; and

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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include the
7 Director of State Civil Defense, or the Director's designee, and
8 a representative from:

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10 (1) The military;
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12 (2) The National Disaster Preparedness Training Center at
13 the University of Hawaii;
- 14
15 (3) The Rotary Club;
- 16
17 (4) The Lions Club International;
- 18
19 (5) Kiwanis International;
- 20
21 (6) The Nature Conservancy;
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23 (7) The National Audubon Society;
- 24
25 (8) The Sierra Club; and
- 26
27 (9) The Surfrider Foundation; and

28
29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
30 address the following as part of the international response
31 plan:

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33 (1) Whether available information must be updated to
34 include information on debris that may reach Hawaii's
35 shores;
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37 (2) Identify needs such as sirens, evacuation procedures,
38 road closures, transportation of evacuees to safe
39 areas, available emergency personnel, and emergency
40 supplies, for various situations involving the tsunami
41 debris;
- 42
43 (3) Coordination and execution by local and state
44 authorities of emergency response plans and other



activities in preparation for the arrival, collection, and disposal of the debris;

(4) Safeguards that must be put in place to prevent or minimize the harm to wildlife, such as the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, that may be caused by floating debris; and

(5) Any other relevant issues that may be important to ensuring prompt and effective action to avoid or mitigate the negative impacts of any debris that may reach Hawaii's shores; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force shall not receive compensation for their service but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in the performance of their duties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to submit a report detailing the international response plan and any relevant findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2014; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be dissolved on June 30, 2014; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Director of State Civil Defense, the Director of the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Rotary Club; the Lions Club International, Kiwanis International, The Nature Conservancy, the National Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, and the Surfrider Foundation.

OFFERED BY:

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[Signature]