
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A TASK FORCE TO INVESTIGATE,
EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ISSUE OF
MANAGED SHORELINE RETREAT AND COASTAL LAND ACQUISITION IN
HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, beaches are central to cultural, recreational, and
2 subsistence practices in Hawaii; and
3

4 WHEREAS, beaches are a key part of the coastal environment,
5 providing essential habitat for many species; and
6

7 WHEREAS, beaches are a major attraction for Hawaii's
8 \$14,400,000,000 visitor economy, and Hawaiian beaches
9 consistently rank among the most popular beach destinations in
10 the world; and
11

12 WHEREAS, healthy beach and dune systems provide natural
13 protection from coastal flooding and property loss during high
14 waves and storms; and
15

16 WHEREAS, Hawaii's beaches are being lost by a process known
17 as coastal erosion or shoreline retreat; and
18

19 WHEREAS, studies by the University of Hawaii and the United
20 States Geological Survey find that seventy percent of beaches
21 have eroded and over thirteen miles of beach have been
22 completely lost to erosion in Hawaii over the past century; and
23

24 WHEREAS, the percentage of beaches eroding and rates of
25 beach erosion will only increase with projected increases in
26 rates of sea level rise; and
27

28 WHEREAS, construction of seawalls and other methods of
29 hardened shoreline protection on eroding beaches are shown to
30 contribute to beach loss in Hawaii; and
31

32 WHEREAS, alternatives to shoreline hardening must be
33 developed and encouraged if we are to conserve our beaches for
34 the next generation; and



1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is left with a legacy of homes and
2 infrastructure built too close to eroding shorelines due to a
3 historical lack of understanding of shoreline variability and
4 insufficient building setbacks; and
5

6 WHEREAS, erosion-rate based setback policies adopted by the
7 State and by Kauai and Maui counties apply only to new
8 construction; and
9

10 WHEREAS, some existing infrastructure and homes need to be
11 moved away from highly vulnerable coastal areas through a
12 process known as managed retreat to improve resilience to
13 coastal hazards and preserve beaches, coastal ecosystems, and
14 public shoreline access; and
15

16 WHEREAS, acquisition of coastal lands for public
17 conservation or park lands may be a viable and cost-effective
18 alternative for conserving beaches and assisting private
19 landowners and government in conducting managed retreat away
20 from highly vulnerable coastal areas; and
21

22 WHEREAS, sufficient funding and agency staffing support do
23 not presently exist for planning for managed coastal retreat and
24 acquisition of coastal lands; and
25

26 WHEREAS, development of a coastal lands acquisition program
27 will require close coordination between government agencies,
28 scientists, legal experts, and non-governmental organizations;
29 now, therefore,
30

31 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
32 Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
33 Session of 2014, that the Chairperson of the Board of Land and
34 Natural Resources is requested to convene a task force to
35 investigate, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding
36 managed retreat and coastal land acquisition in Hawaii; and
37

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chairperson of the Board of
39 Land and Natural Resources or the Chairperson's designee is
40 requested to serve as chair of the task force; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force comprise the
2 following individuals:

- 3
- 4 (1) The Administrator of the Office of Conservation and
5 Coastal Lands, or the Administrator's representative;
6
 - 7 (2) A representative from the Kauai Mayor's Office;
8
 - 9 (3) A representative from the Honolulu Mayor's Office;
10
 - 11 (4) A representative from the Maui Mayor's Office;
12
 - 13 (5) A representative from the Hawaii Mayor's Office;
14
 - 15 (6) The Program Manager of the State Coastal Zone
16 Management Program, or the Program Manager's
17 representative;
18
 - 19 (7) A professor from the Department of Geology and
20 Geophysics at the University of Hawaii, or the
21 professor's representative;
22
 - 23 (8) The Coastal Lands Program Coordinator at the Office of
24 Conservation and Coastal Lands, or the Coordinator's
25 representative;
26
 - 27 (9) An environmental attorney specializing in land use as
28 it relates to climate and sustainability; and
29
 - 30 (10) A representative from a non-governmental land trust;
31 and
32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
34 consider:

- 35
- 36 (1) Whether acquisition of coastal lands to protect
37 beaches is feasible;
38
 - 39 (2) If feasible, what agency or entity would be tasked
40 with the responsibility of administering a coastal
41 lands acquisition program; and
42
 - 43 (3) How the program would be funded; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force are
2 requested to serve without compensation; and
3

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
5 submit its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
6 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
7 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and
8

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be dissolved on
10 June 30, 2016; and
11

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
13 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
14 Land and Natural Resources, Program Manager of the Hawaii
15 Coastal Zone Management Program, Administrator of the Office of
16 Conservation and Coastal Lands, Department Chair of the
17 Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of
18 Hawaii, Mayor of the County of Kauai, Mayor of the City and
19 County of Honolulu, Mayor of the County of Maui, and Mayor of
20 the County of Hawaii.

