

JAN 21 2014

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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE COMMISSIONING AND FUNDING OF WATER RESOURCE AND  
HEALTH BASELINE STUDIES TO BE DONE PRIOR TO FUTURE  
GEOTHERMAL DRILLING AND DEVELOPMENT.

1           WHEREAS, geothermal development can affect the health and  
2 wellbeing of people surrounding a geothermal plant during  
3 dramatic accidents like the KS-8 blowout in 1991 and potentially  
4 during smaller upsets and operational releases similar to those  
5 that occurred in 1997 and 2005; and

6  
7           WHEREAS, the Puna district is particularly vulnerable to  
8 the health effects of geothermal; and

9  
10           WHEREAS, the Geothermal Public Health Assessment Study  
11 Group's *Final Report, Geothermal Public Health Assessment* found  
12 in pertinent part:

13  
14           "Puna has unique challenges. Being a rural area with a  
15 highly dispersed population and underdeveloped  
16 transportation and health systems, it is difficult for  
17 residents in need of health assistance to reach help.  
18 There are clinics but no hospital facilities in the  
19 District of Puna. There are no public wastewater treatment  
20 systems; most homes have septic tanks or cesspools. About  
21 13% of Puna's people live below the federal poverty line.  
22 Almost half of the population age 65 and over are living  
23 with disabilities. Puna has the worst statistics in the  
24 County for low birth weight babies (9%), mood disorders  
25 (1,885 over a 5-year period, or 10%), and anxiety disorders  
26 (790 over a 5-year period or 4.6%).

27  
28           While 84.2% of Puna's population report themselves to be in  
29 good health, other numbers suggest problems. Seven percent  
30 of the population lack complete plumbing facilities and  
31 four percent lack complete kitchen facilities. Puna's high  
32 percentage of low-income residents tends to increase the



1 need for social services, yet private health care providers  
2 are reported to be reluctant to locate in Puna due to  
3 insurance issues. Puna residents score worst in the state  
4 on several other indicators: adults who are obese (24%);  
5 adults who smoke (18.9%); adults without health insurance  
6 (9.5%); and

7  
8 WHEREAS, by establishing a baseline health study that  
9 measures the same parameters explored as described in  
10 Recommendation 1 of the *Final Report, Geothermal Public Health*  
11 *Assessment* (2013), future health studies can more easily  
12 establish the magnitude and responsibility of health effects;  
13 and

14  
15 WHEREAS, geothermal development may affect water wells  
16 downstream from the development area as well as the coastal  
17 basal brackish groundwater and the ocean near the geothermal  
18 plant; and

19  
20 WHEREAS, by establishing a baseline using the methodology  
21 of the study of Recommendation 4 of the *Final Report, Geothermal*  
22 *Public Health Assessment* (2013), future water studies will be  
23 able to more easily establish the magnitude and possible  
24 responsibility for environmental impact from geothermal  
25 development; now, therefore,

26  
27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh  
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2014, the  
29 House of Representatives concurring, that the County of Hawaii  
30 is encouraged to commission water resource and health baseline  
31 studies that are to be completed prior to future geothermal  
32 drilling; and

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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that future geothermal developers  
35 are encouraged to fund these studies; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Geological  
38 Survey is encouraged to conduct these studies; and



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# S.C.R. NO. 10

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of Maui County  
3 and the United States Geological Survey.  
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OFFERED BY:

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