
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF ALLOCATING FUNDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS THROUGH A PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROCESS.

1 WHEREAS, participatory budgeting is a democratic process in
2 which community members directly decide how to spend part of a
3 public budget; and
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5 WHEREAS, the participatory budgeting process was first
6 developed in Brazil in 1989 and has since been implemented in
7 jurisdictions across the globe, with notable examples in Canada,
8 Germany, Indonesia, France, and the United States, including in
9 New York City, which distributed over \$32,000,000 in public
10 funds through participatory budgeting processes last year; and
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12 WHEREAS, though each participatory budgeting process may be
13 different, most follow a similar pattern where residents
14 brainstorm public spending ideas and priorities, volunteer
15 delegates develop proposals based on these ideas, residents vote
16 on the proposals, and public agencies implement the top
17 proposals; and
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19 WHEREAS, while the traditional political process may
20 involve a complex mix of esoteric politics, exclusive language,
21 byzantine procedures, and obfuscating rhetoric that impedes the
22 average citizen's participation, a prime characteristic of
23 participatory budgeting is the transformation of this process
24 into a series of simple, straightforward, citizen-driven
25 interactions; and
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27 WHEREAS, while current democratic processes provide most
28 citizens with the opportunity for meaningful public
29 participation only at elections, participatory budgeting can
30 offer an alternative system in which citizens directly and



1 regularly assume decision-making power and are empowered to act
2 as their own advocates in negotiating among themselves and with
3 elected officials for the distribution of scarce resources and
4 implementation of public policy priorities; and
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6 WHEREAS, in jurisdictions where it has been implemented,
7 participatory budgeting has been shown to increase citizens'
8 participation in the democratic process, to spur reform in
9 bureaucratic systems, and to rebalance the distribution of
10 resources to low-income communities; and
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12 WHEREAS, when citizens have a means of clearly expressing
13 their needs and priorities, government agencies and elected
14 officials are able to better serve their constituents; and
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16 WHEREAS, capital improvement project budget items reflect
17 State expenditures for public infrastructure projects that
18 directly benefit the communities in which they are located; now,
19 therefore,
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21 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
22 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
23 Session of 2016, that the Legislative Reference Bureau is
24 requested to conduct a study on the feasibility of allocating
25 funding for capital improvement projects through a participatory
26 budgeting process; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
29 Bureau shall submit the results of the study to the Legislature
30 and to the Governor no later than twenty days prior to the
31 convening of the 2017 Regular Session; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Resolution be transmitted to the Acting Director of the
35 Legislative Reference Bureau and the Governor.
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OFFERED BY:

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