

MAR 1 1 2016

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STRONGLY URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PLAN AND ADDRESS THE
NEED FOR A RESPONSE TEAM FOR VECTOR-BORNE ILLNESSES.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is an isolated island state with tropical
2 climates of warm temperatures located in the middle of the
3 Pacific Ocean, making it geographically and climatically
4 vulnerable as a breeding ground for vectors and creating
5 favorable conditions for transmission of viruses and infectious
6 diseases by infected *Aedis aegypti* mosquitoes; and
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8 WHEREAS, *Aedis aegypti*, also known as the yellow fever
9 mosquito as it was responsible for the infamous yellow fever
10 outbreak, was thought to be extinct in Hawaii in 1949 but was
11 later found in traps at the Honolulu International Airport in
12 2012, and it is now most recently associated with the spread of
13 dengue fever, chikungunya, and zika; and
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15 WHEREAS, dengue fever, first documented in the 1950s and
16 recognized as one of the most common vector-borne diseases
17 worldwide that causes explosive outbreaks through transmission
18 between humans by a single bite from an infected *Aedis aegypti*,
19 is an incurable disease without a vaccine, causing sudden-onset
20 high fever; severe headache; muscle, bone, and joint pain; skin
21 rash; possible organ dysfunction; severe gastrointestinal
22 bleeding; and, in some cases, death; and
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24 WHEREAS, chikungunya, first discovered in Africa in 1952
25 and researched as a potential biological weapon, has recently
26 reached nearly epidemic proportions in parts of Tahiti and is
27 known as a crippling, incurable viral infection without a
28 vaccine, causing sudden-onset high fever, headache, fatigue,
29 severe to debilitating joint pain lasting several years, and
30 digestive symptoms, including abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting,
31 and diarrhea; and
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1 WHEREAS, zika was first discovered in Africa and noted by
2 the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
3 in December 2015 as occurring within nine countries, with a
4 recent ongoing outbreak in Brazil in April 2015, and active zika
5 virus transmission in over thirty-five countries according to
6 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

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8 WHEREAS, zika is an unpreventable disease with no vaccine
9 that is spread by transmission of the zika virus by daytime
10 active *Aedis aegypti* and possible sexual transmission between
11 humans; and

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13 WHEREAS, symptoms of zika include headache, skin rash,
14 fever, malaise, conjunctivitis, joint pain, and severe birth
15 defects, particularly an increased risk of microcephaly, a
16 neurodevelopmental disorder affecting fetuses of pregnant women
17 that results in abnormal head size and incomplete brain
18 development; and

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20 WHEREAS, Hawaii is a tourist destination where thousands of
21 visitors travel every year from countries of similar climates in
22 similar geographic locales that have or are experiencing
23 outbreaks or high incidence of the viruses transmitted by
24 infected mosquitoes, such as French Polynesia, which has
25 reported approximately 130,000 chikungunya cases, of which
26 approximately half being reported in Tahiti; and

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28 WHEREAS, chikungunya has been found to lead to
29 leptospirosis in some cases, which is a bacterial disease
30 affecting humans and animals that is spread through contact with
31 either urine or other bodily fluids of infected animals or with
32 water, soil, or food contaminated with the urine of infected
33 animals, creating a secondary public health concern; and

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35 WHEREAS, mosquitoes in Hawaii are under the administrative
36 purview of the Vector Control Unit of the Department of Health,
37 which in 2009 saw several positions eliminated, resulting in a
38 reduction of approximately one-half of the Vector Control Unit's
39 previous size, allotting only four workers for Oahu, two for
40 Maui County, two for Hawaii County, and four for Kauai County,
41 further leading to an inadequate number of workers in proportion
42 to the population growth; now, therefore,



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 2 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
 3 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016, the
 4 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
 5 Health is strongly urged to plan and address the need for a
 6 response team for vector-borne illnesses, such as dengue fever,
 7 chikungunya, and zika, in order to proactively and ably respond
 8 to the likely public health threat the illnesses pose; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 11 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
 12 of Health, and each member of Hawaii's congressional delegation.
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OFFERED BY:

4. Koloni Eglish
Lamine S. Ameye
W. D. D. L.
Mike Gabriel
Amunua. Aoua
Amoa Oaranda
[Signature]

~~AC Rich Agon~~
[Signature]
Onchillo Kudani
[Signature]
[Signature]
Clarence Kishihara
Frank E. Puka
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
Theranne Chun Oahland