
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE TEA INDUSTRY TO COLLABORATE ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO DEFINE TEA AS AN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY UNDER CHAPTER 147, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, AND ESTABLISH STANDARDS THAT DEFINE GEOGRAPHICAL REGION DESIGNATIONS FOR TEA GROWN IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, the image of Hawaii can be used as a tool to
2 increase brand recognition and market share; and
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4 WHEREAS, many businesses neither produce nor use products
5 that are made in Hawaii, yet claim their commodities as such,
6 and lead consumers to believe that consumers are purchasing a
7 "made in Hawaii" or "produced in Hawaii" commodity; and
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9 WHEREAS, tea is a significant niche crop that has
10 significant future potential in the State; and
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12 WHEREAS, over the past twelve years, there has been tea
13 research and the development of small family farms that grow
14 Camellia sinensis and assamica tea varieties in Hawaii and the
15 mainland United States; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Tea of the United States (TOTUS) Awards, the
18 first national tea competition specifically for United States
19 grown tea, encourages those who have pioneered United States tea
20 farming to gain national recognition for their uniquely crafted
21 teas and further educate consumers supporting domestic tea
22 agriculture; and
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24 WHEREAS, the Hawaii County Office of Research and
25 Development awarded a grant to co-fund a tea competition program
26 with the intent to enable a broad range of communities to
27 contribute to and access data from the TOTUS Awards that
28 advances research in domestic tea agriculture, cultural
29 development, and innovative trade; and



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2 WHEREAS, most tea in Hawaii is grown on the Hilo side of
3 the island of Hawaii and grown in volcanic soil; and
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5 WHEREAS, the ability for an applicant to register a
6 product's origin according to standards that define a geographic
7 region designation for tea would enable Hawaii tea growers to
8 benefit from the image of Hawaii while also honing their
9 products in anticipation of the TOTUS Awards; and
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11 WHEREAS, tea is not currently defined as an agricultural
12 commodity under chapter 147, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and
13 therefore the Department of Agriculture does not have statutory
14 authority to adopt geographical region designation standards for
15 tea grown in Hawaii; and
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17 WHEREAS, encouraging the Department of Agriculture and the
18 tea industry to collaborate on proposed legislation would be
19 beneficial to the development of Hawaii's growing tea industry;
20 now, therefore,
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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016, the
24 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
25 Agriculture and the tea industry are encouraged to collaborate
26 on proposed legislation to define tea as an agricultural
27 commodity under chapter 147, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and
28 establish standards that define geographical region designations
29 for tea grown in the State; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
32 is requested to submit a report to the Legislature no later than
33 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
34 2017 on the proposed legislation developed in collaboration with
35 the tea industry; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
39 Board of Agriculture.

