
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO NEGOTIATE LAND EXCHANGES FOR THE
PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING PRIVATE LANDS SUITABLE FOR LONG-TERM
DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION IN EXCHANGE FOR STATE
LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED FOR AFFORDABLE, WORKFORCE, AND OTHER
HOUSING FOR HAWAII RESIDENTS.

1 WHEREAS, agriculture was the economic mainstay for many of
2 Hawaii's rural communities; and

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4 WHEREAS, the agricultural industry, specifically sugar cane
5 and pineapple, had a greater stake in how and where communities
6 grew; and

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8 WHEREAS, over the past four decades, communities have
9 witnessed the end of the era of Hawaii's plantation heritage;
10 and

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12 WHEREAS, in 1971, the Kahuku sugar mill closed; in 1996,
13 the Waialua sugar mill closed; in 2008, Del Monte fresh produce
14 ended operations; and in 2016, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar
15 Company ended sugar operations; and

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17 WHEREAS, a recent report released by the Department of
18 Agriculture, Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline 2015,
19 shows a dramatic change in agricultural land over the last
20 thirty-five years as sugar production and pineapple production
21 have downsized; and

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23 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Agriculture, there
24 are 151,830 acres of agricultural land in crop production today
25 compared to 350,830 acres in crop production in 1980; and

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27 WHEREAS, it is the State's responsibility under article XI,
28 section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution to conserve and
29 protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture,
30 increase agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the
31 availability of agriculturally suitable lands; and



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WHEREAS, Hawaii's agricultural production is insufficient to meet the State's food consumption needs, and this over-reliance on imported food creates critical health, safety and security issues for Hawaii, the State's sustainable future, and preparedness in the event of future disaster, emergency, or crisis; and

WHEREAS, attempts to stimulate diversified agriculture in the private sector through regulatory controls and land use and zoning restrictions is not sufficient to address the business needs and subsidies necessary to effectively and significantly increase diversified agriculture to the extent necessary to avoid Hawaii's agricultural self-sufficiency crisis; and

WHEREAS, over the past few years, the State has made it a priority to shift toward sustainability in agriculture and decreasing our food imports; and

WHEREAS, Act 55, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, amends the Hawaii State Planning Act to create a new state policy to promote economically competitive activities that increase Hawaii's agricultural self-sufficiency, including the increased purchase and use of Hawaii-grown food and food products by residents, businesses, and governmental bodies; and

WHEREAS, large tracts of agricultural land, including those formerly used for pineapple and sugar cane, are now fallow; and

WHEREAS, these lands provide a unique opportunity for the State to fulfill the intent of the Hawaii State Constitution regarding diversified agriculture and agricultural self-sufficiency through acquisition of suitable agricultural land for long-term leases for diversified, bona fide agricultural operations to increase agricultural production; and

WHEREAS, the State is facing a crisis in homelessness, affordable housing, workforce housing, and other housing inventory for Hawaii's residents; and

WHEREAS, according to the December 2016 Report to the Hawaii State Legislature in response to Act 127, Session Laws of



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1 Hawaii 2016, by the special action team on affordable rental
2 housing, there is an estimated statewide need for approximately
3 24,551 housing units in the five-year period from 2016 to 2020;
4 and

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6 WHEREAS, the lack of suitable, entitled lands for
7 development of appropriate housing is a major contributing
8 factor to the housing crisis, and substantial obstacles and
9 delays in entitling such lands result in discouraging
10 development, lowering housing inventory, and raising housing
11 prices, among other negative effects; and

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13 WHEREAS, land exchanges, the exchange of state lands in
14 other states for privately owned lands to meet the needs of and
15 to mutually benefit both parties, have provided public benefit
16 in the areas of conservation, economic growth, ecology, and
17 recreation; and

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19 WHEREAS, land exchanges present a viable method of
20 addressing the many housing and agricultural issues facing the
21 State because land exchanges present a win-win situation where
22 the State is able to negotiate a mutually beneficial exchange of
23 developable state lands for housing in exchange for privately
24 owned agricultural lands for farming; now, therefore,

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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
28 of 2017, the Senate concurring, that the Governor is requested
29 to negotiate land exchanges for the purpose of acquiring private
30 lands suitable for long-term diversified agriculture production
31 in exchange for state lands to be acquired by private parties
32 for development of affordable, workforce, and other housing for
33 Hawaii residents; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor coordinate with
36 the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Land and
37 Natural Resources, and any other department or agency of the
38 State that holds title to or an assignment of state land that
39 may be appropriate for exchange; and

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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the negotiations endeavor to:

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- 1 (1) Obtain large tracts of suitable agricultural lands for
- 2 the State to lease to farmers for diversified
- 3 agriculture; and
- 4
- 5 (2) Provide to private parties suitable urban lands along
- 6 the rail transit corridor on Oahu for development of
- 7 affordable housing, workforce housing, and other
- 8 housing inventory for Hawaii residents, and mixed use
- 9 commercial and accessory uses within areas designated
- 10 for transit-oriented development and other appropriate
- 11 urbanized areas on Oahu; and
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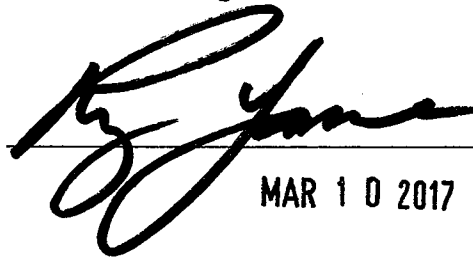
13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
 14 submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days
 15 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018 on:

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- 17 (1) The feasibility of any land exchanges of agricultural
- 18 parcels of high interest to the State in exchange for
- 19 urbanized lands along the rail transit corridor on
- 20 Oahu for appropriate private development of housing
- 21 negotiated by the Governor, a list of lands suitable
- 22 for such an exchange, and a description and the market
- 23 value of the parcels; and
- 24
- 25 (2) Any appropriations, proposed legislation, or
- 26 administrative action necessary to accomplish the
- 27 goals; and
- 28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor,
 31 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,
 32 Executive Director of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development
 33 Corporation, and Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

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OFFERED BY:



MAR 10 2017

