
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONDUCT A STUDY
ON THE NEED AND FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A GOVERNMENT-
SUBSIDIZED FERRY SERVICE BETWEEN THE ISLANDS OF MAUI AND
MOLOKAI.

1 WHEREAS, unlike other states, Hawaii is an island state
2 that is not linked to other states, cities, or towns via the
3 federal interstate highway system or a network of interconnected
4 state and local highways; and
5

6 WHEREAS, Sea Link began providing regular ferry service
7 between Kaunakakai, Molokai and Lahaina, Maui in 1987, serving
8 as a critical and essential lifeline for Molokai residents; and
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10 WHEREAS, when initiated, the state-subsidized ferry service
11 served as a convenient way for Molokai residents to travel to
12 and from employment on West Maui and served as an affordable
13 alternative to air travel; and
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15 WHEREAS, the State ended subsidies to the ferry service in
16 1996, and ridership declined in the face of competition from
17 federally subsidized commuter air travel; and
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19 WHEREAS, traveling by air may not be possible or practical
20 for persons with certain disabilities; and
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22 WHEREAS, it is less feasible for high school athletic teams
23 to travel between Molokai and Maui by air because of the high
24 costs of transporting dozens of students, along with heavy and
25 bulky athletic equipment; and
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27 WHEREAS, high school athletic teams on both Molokai and
28 Maui relied heavily on the ferry service as the only cost-
29 effective way to travel between the two islands; and



1
2 WHEREAS, when the Molokai ferry service ended, Sea Link
3 stated that it would be very difficult for a heavily regulated,
4 nonsubsidized ferry service to operate in the face of
5 competition with air travel options that are heavily subsidized
6 by the federal government; and
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8 WHEREAS, since the closure of the Molokai ferry service in
9 October 2016, air transportation has been the only option for
10 travel between Molokai and the other major islands; and
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12 WHEREAS, a renewed ferry service between the islands of
13 Molokai and Maui would provide a practical, cost-effective way
14 for residents, visitors, and workers to travel between the two
15 islands, and provide a safe way for those with disabilities to
16 travel interisland; now, therefore,
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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
20 of 2017, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
21 Transportation is requested to study the need for and
22 feasibility of establishing a government-subsidized interisland
23 ferry system between the islands of Molokai and Maui; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of
26 Transportation is requested to consider the potential costs,
27 financing options, and parameters of a ferry system; and
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of
30 Transportation is requested to also consider whether use of a
31 ferry system would be advantageous for visitors, school athletic
32 teams, and those who require disability accommodations; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of
35 Transportation is requested to report its findings and
36 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
37 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
38 the Regular Session of 2018; and
39



H.C.R. NO. 47

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
 2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of
 3 Transportation.
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 5
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OFFERED BY:

Lyn DeCorte

[Signature]

[Signature]

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Sen. Quirk

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Tom Bunn

FEB 14 2017

