
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO EXAMINE WWOOFING IN HAWAII, REVIEW RELEVANT HAWAII LABOR LAWS, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS.

1 WHEREAS, there exists a loose network of national
2 organizations that facilitate placement of volunteers on organic
3 farms, commonly known as "WOOOFing", which can stand for either
4 World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms or Willing Workers on
5 Organic Farms; and
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7 WHEREAS, there are several organizations that advertise on
8 college campuses across the United States and other outlets to
9 recruit young students to work on organic farms in exchange for
10 room and board; and
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12 WHEREAS, once WWOOFers arrive at their host farms, they can
13 be exposed to dangerous conditions such as cramped boarding
14 accommodations that may not meet public health standards,
15 extended working hours, inadequate or nonexistent bathroom
16 facilities, drug use, and sexual assault; and
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18 WHEREAS, WWOOFing has become popular in Hawaii and some
19 WWOOFers find themselves stuck in the State, often in poverty,
20 after completing their agreed-upon time on the farm; and
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22 WHEREAS, presently, there are no rules or regulations in
23 place for these WWOOFing exchange programs; and
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25 WHEREAS, the Legislature believes there is a need to
26 evaluate these placements to determine if regulations, such as
27 certification, permitting, or registration, would reduce the
28 risks associated with WWOOFing in Hawaii; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
2 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
3 of 2017, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature requests
4 the Department of Agriculture examine WWOOFing in Hawaii, and
5 collaborate with the Department of Labor and Industrial
6 Relations to review relevant Hawaii labor laws, and make
7 recommendations on how to protect these workers; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
10 submit a report on the prevalence of WWOOFing in the State,
11 whether any safeguards should be established to protect persons
12 participating in WWOOFing in the State, and include proposed
13 legislation, if any, to the Legislature not later than twenty
14 days prior to the convening of the 2018 Regular Session; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the
18 chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and the Director of
19 Labor and Industrial Relations.
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