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## HOUSE 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  
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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  
30



1 WHEREAS, when the Molokai ferry service ended, Sea Link  
2 stated that it would be very difficult for a heavily regulated,  
3 nonsubsidized ferry service to operate in the face of  
4 competition with air travel options that are heavily subsidized  
5 by the federal government; and  
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7 WHEREAS, since the closure of the Molokai ferry service in  
8 October 2016, air transportation has been the only option for  
9 travel between Molokai and the other major islands; and  
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11 WHEREAS, a renewed ferry service between the islands of  
12 Molokai and Maui would provide a practical, cost-effective way  
13 for residents, visitors, and workers to travel between the two  
14 islands, and provide a safe way for those with disabilities to  
15 travel interisland; now, therefore,  
16

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
18 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
19 of 2017, that the Department of Transportation is requested to  
20 study the need for and feasibility of establishing a government-  
21 subsidized interisland ferry system between the islands of  
22 Molokai and Maui; and  
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of  
25 Transportation is requested to consider the potential costs,  
26 financing options, and parameters of a ferry system; and  
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of  
29 Transportation is requested to also consider whether use of a  
30 ferry system would be advantageous for visitors, school athletic  
31 teams, and those who require disability accommodations; and  
32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of  
34 Transportation is requested to report its findings and  
35 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
36 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
37 the Regular Session of 2018; and  
38



# H.R. NO. 22

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

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FEB 14 2017

