
HOUSE 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

6
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

11
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

17
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

21
22 WHEREAS, presently, there are no rules or regulations in
23 place for these WWOOFing exchange programs; and

24
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,

29
30 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
31 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
32 of 2017, that the Legislature requests the Department of



1 Agriculture examine WWOOFing in Hawaii, and collaborate with the
2 Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to review relevant
3 Hawaii labor laws, and make recommendations on how to protect
4 these workers; and
5

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
7 submit a report on the prevalence of WWOOFing in the State,
8 whether any safeguards should be established to protect persons
9 participating in WWOOFing in the State, and include proposed
10 legislation, if any, to the Legislature not later than twenty
11 days prior to the convening of the 2018 Regular Session; and
12

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
14 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the
15 chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and the Director of
16 Labor and Industrial Relations.
17
18
19

