
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE ON
AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's voter turnout percentage has
2 significantly declined since statehood in 1959, when turnout
3 stood at ninety-four percent of registered voters; and
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5 WHEREAS, the percentage of registered voters in Hawaii who
6 turn out to vote now ranks among the lowest of the fifty states;
7 and
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9 WHEREAS, voter participation is the hallmark of an
10 effective democracy; and
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12 WHEREAS, an improved process of automatic voter
13 registration would be beneficial to the public and reduce any
14 inconvenience currently experienced; and
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16 WHEREAS, the Legislature believes that an automatic voter
17 registration process would increase accuracy and efficiency; and
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19 WHEREAS, removing barriers to registration for eligible
20 voters is the first step to increasing voter participation; and
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22 WHEREAS, automatic voter registration would provide
23 eligible voters with the opportunity to register to vote when
24 applying for or renewing a driver's license or state
25 identification card unless the eligible voter affirmatively
26 declines to be registered; and
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28 WHEREAS, voter registration through a routine and necessary
29 transaction, such as driver's licensing or renewal, increases
30 voter registration efficiency and effectiveness and voter
31 turnout; and
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1 WHEREAS, automatic voter registration utilizes information
2 that the government has already collected; and
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4 WHEREAS, current federal laws authorize the electronic
5 transfer of voter registration information from the counties and
6 Department of Transportation to election officials and the
7 statewide voter registration system; and
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9 WHEREAS, nothing in the transfer of data would interfere
10 with any election official's authority or obligation, under
11 state or federal law; and
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13 WHEREAS, six states and the District of Columbia have
14 already successfully enacted automatic voter registration
15 systems; and
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17 WHEREAS, in 2016, Oregon implemented an automatic voter
18 registration system, and more than 270,000 eligible voters
19 registered via the system, forty three percent of whom voted in
20 the 2016 general election, thus helping Oregon set a new state
21 record for the number of votes cast; and
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23 WHEREAS, automatic voter registration increases security
24 and results in improved accuracy of voter rolls through the use
25 of an encrypted system to transfer data rather than using paper
26 forms; and
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28 WHEREAS, automatic voter registration would produce long-
29 term cost savings for the State, since processing paper voter
30 registration forms costs almost thirty times more than using
31 electronic registration; and
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33 WHEREAS, innovative efforts have been undertaken in other
34 states to successfully reduce barriers to voting, encourage
35 voter participation, and make voting more convenient; now,
36 therefore; now, therefore,
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38 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
39 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
40 of 2017, that the Office of Elections is requested to convene an
41 automatic voter registration task force to:
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- 1 (1) Review current data systems used by the Department of
2 Transportation and the counties to identify
3 collaborative ways to streamline data transfers;
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- 5 (2) Review existing federal and state laws and practices
6 regarding voter registration, including the Help
7 America Vote Again Act of 2002 and the National Voter
8 Registration Act of 1993, and consider ways to bring
9 the State into compliance with existing federal law
10 and to avail the State of potential funding;
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- 12 (3) Determine the feasibility, cost savings, and fiscal
13 impact of implementing automatic voter registration in
14 the State; and
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- 16 (4) Determine the feasibility, cost savings, and fiscal
17 impact of implementing automatic permanent absentee
18 voter registration upon the application or renewal of
19 a driver's license in the State; and
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- 21 (5) Propose legislation that would implement the automatic
22 voter registration process; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include:

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- 26 (1) One representative from the Office of Elections;
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- 28 (2) One representative from the Office of Hawaiian
29 Affairs;
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- 31 (3) One representative from each of the offices of the
32 City Clerk for the City and County of Honolulu and the
33 County Clerk for the County of Kauai, County of Maui,
34 and County of Hawaii;
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- 36 (4) One representative from the Department of
37 Transportation;
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- 39 (5) One representative appointed by the Senate President;
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- 41 (6) One representative appointed by the Speaker of the
42 House of Representatives; and



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2 (7) One representative appointed by the Governor; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all members of the task force
5 shall be registered voters in the State; and
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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Elections is
8 requested to convene the first meeting of the task force no
9 later than July 1, 2017; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
12 Bureau is requested to assist the task force as necessary; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
15 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including
16 proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty
17 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force and the
20 Legislative Reference Bureau are requested to be available to
21 provide testimony to the Legislature and for informational
22 briefings; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall cease to
25 exist on the day of the adjournment of the Regular Session of
26 2018; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
29 Resolution be transmitted to the Chief Election Officer,
30 Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian
31 Affairs, Director of Transportation, Director of the Legislative
32 Reference Bureau, Clerk of the City and County of Honolulu,
33 Clerk of the County of Kauai, Clerk of the County of Maui, and
34 Clerk of the County of Hawaii.
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