
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO EXPLORE MATTERS RELATED TO THE ALA WAI CANAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT.

1 WHEREAS, the Ala Wai Watershed, located in the City and
2 County of Honolulu, encompasses approximately nineteen square
3 miles, or 12,064 acres, and extends from the ridge of the Koolau
4 Mountains to the nearshore waters of Mamala Bay; and
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6 WHEREAS, the Ala Wai Watershed is made up of Makiki, Manoa,
7 and Palolo Streams, which drain into the Ala Wai Canal, a two-
8 mile-long man-made waterway constructed during the 1920s, not
9 for major flood control, but rather to drain coastal wetlands
10 and allow for the development of Waikiki; and
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12 WHEREAS, the Ala Wai Canal is owned and maintained by the
13 State, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has
14 coordinated with the State and City and County of Honolulu since
15 2001 to develop a plan to mitigate flooding in the Ala Wai
16 Watershed in the event of a major, once-in-a-century storm; and
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18 WHEREAS, an October 2004 storm that flooded Manoa Valley
19 within the Ala Wai Watershed and was described as a twenty-five-
20 year event caused an estimated \$85,000,000 in damage; and
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22 WHEREAS, the likelihood of flooding all of Waikiki and the
23 canal's tributaries is approximately one percent, considered a
24 one-hundred-year event, with potential estimated damage to three
25 thousand structures and requiring more than \$1,000,000,000 in
26 repairs; and
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28 WHEREAS, the USACE is currently negotiating terms of an
29 agreement with the State and City and County of Honolulu to
30 proceed with the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project,
31 which received approximately \$345,000,000 in federal
32 appropriations in July 2018; and
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1 WHEREAS, the appropriation requires local matching funds in
2 the amount of \$125,000,000 and a local government sponsor in
3 order to proceed with the project; and
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5 WHEREAS, structural elements of the USACE proposal includes
6 six debris/detention basins in the upper reaches of the
7 watershed's three major streams, one in-stream debris catchment
8 structure, three multi-purpose detention basins, and flood
9 control elements along the Ala Wai Canal including a three- to
10 five-foot tall wall; and
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12 WHEREAS, elements of the USACE proposal would directly
13 affect properties in the watershed, impacting and in some cases
14 displacing individuals and organizations that own or operate on
15 such properties; and
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17 WHEREAS, Oahu neighborhood boards were established by the
18 City and County of Honolulu to increase and assure effective
19 citizen participation in the decisions of government, and
20 several neighborhood boards with boundaries within the Ala Wai
21 Watershed and affected areas have expressed concerns over the
22 proposed project through meetings and adopted resolutions; and
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24 WHEREAS, issues related to the project have been brought to
25 the forefront and have now become a major area of concern to
26 members of the public, community stakeholders, and other
27 interested parties; and
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29 WHEREAS, while there have been opportunities for public
30 input and engagement in the past regarding the Ala Wai Canal
31 Flood Risk Management Project Draft Feasibility Study and
32 Environmental Impact Statement, this body finds that further
33 public engagement is warranted in order to consider those
34 concerns; now, therefore,
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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
37 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of
38 2019, that the Governor is requested to establish a working
39 group to explore matters related to the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk
40 Management Project; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
2 to:

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- 4 (1) Facilitate public meetings to encourage dialogue among
5 members of the public, community stakeholders,
6 representatives from the State, City and County of
7 Honolulu, and United States Army Corps of Engineers,
8 and other interested parties;
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- 10 (2) Record and compile concerns submitted to the working
11 group; and
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- 13 (3) Develop and assess good design options to address
14 community concerns, including but not limited to
15 mitigating disruption to schools and institutions that
16 have cultural or historical significance, minimizing
17 adverse impacts on private property owners, and
18 implementing appropriate traditional land management
19 practices for ecosystem preservation and restoration
20 including strategies for floodable development in lieu
21 of hard structures and barriers; and
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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
24 to include the following:

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- 26 (1) A representative or representatives of the USACE;
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- 28 (2) A representative or representatives of the Governor's
29 administration;
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- 31 (3) A member or members of the Hawaii State Senate;
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- 33 (4) A member or members of the Hawaii State House of
34 Representatives;
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- 36 (5) A representative or representatives of the Mayor of
37 the City and County of Honolulu's administration;
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- 39 (6) A member or members of the Honolulu City Council;
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- 41 (7) Researchers from the University of Hawaii, including a
42 representative of the Community Design Center and



