

MAR 06 2020

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE COUNTIES, IN COORDINATION WITH THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS, CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE STATE'S CONVERSION TO AN ELECTION BY MAIL SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, (Act 136),
2 which appropriates funds to implement and administer a statewide
3 election by mail system, requires that all elections statewide
4 be conducted by mail, beginning with the 2020 primary election;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, Section 11-109(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS),
8 as established by Act 136, only requires the counties to
9 establish a single voter service center located at the office of
10 the clerk; and

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12 WHEREAS, Section 11-109, HRS, only allows additional
13 locations to be established within a county as may be designated
14 by the county clerk to service the needs of the county's voters;
15 and

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17 WHEREAS, Act 136 also does not contain any provisions for a
18 transition plan as the State moves to all-mail elections; and

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20 WHEREAS, the county of Hawaii covers the 4,028 square mile
21 island of Hawaii; the county of Maui encompasses the various
22 islands of Maui, Kaho'olawe, Lāna'i, and Molokai; the city and
23 county of Honolulu covers the metropolitan island of Oahu; and
24 the county of Kauai covers the island of Kauai; and

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26 WHEREAS, from times of the American Civil War, there has
27 been a disparity between how one votes in urban and rural
28 communities; and

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30 WHEREAS, not only is this disparity evident along party
31 lines, but also through the methods and means of how these
32 populations vote. Specifically, in Hawaii, votes from rural
33 areas overwhelmingly come from ballots received through
34 in-person and same-day registration and vote; and



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1 WHEREAS, although 90 percent of people living in Hawaii
 2 live in a nonrural area, the votes of the remaining ten percent
 3 should not be neglected; and

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 5 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that there needs to be a
 6 transition plan as the State executes an election by mail
 7 system; now, therefore,

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 9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
 10 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, that the County
 11 Clerks of the Counties of Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu, and Kauai
 12 should, in coordination with the Office of Elections, create and
 13 execute a plan that will help voters in rural areas in our State
 14 transition to all-mail voting; and

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 16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Counties are especially
 17 encouraged to establish additional voter service centers in
 18 rural communities, and;

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 20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 21 Resolution be transmitted to the County Clerks of the Counties
 22 of Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu, and Kauai; the Comptroller of the
 23 Department of Accounting and General Services; and the Chief
 24 Election Officer of the Office of Elections.

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OFFERED BY:

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James Mercedes Kim
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