

MAR 11 2022

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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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URGING THE GOVERNOR TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
TO ESTABLISH A GAMBLING TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP AN EVIDENCE-  
BASED FRAMEWORK WITH AN APPRAISAL OF THE RESOURCES  
NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH AND SAFETY AND  
MITIGATE GAMBLING-RELATED HARM IN ORDER TO GUIDE FUTURE  
GAMBLING LEGISLATION IN THE STATE OF HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, in the face of an unprecedented and historic  
2 budget shortfall as a result of the ongoing coronavirus disease  
3 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the State of Hawaii must seek  
4 alternative means of revenue by continuing to diversify and  
5 expand its economy; and  
6

7 WHEREAS, legalized gambling in Hawaii remains a popular  
8 idea and resurfaces in some form in nearly every legislative  
9 session as a mechanism to generate additional state revenues to  
10 maintain important social programs, create jobs, expand economic  
11 growth, and to help Hawaii compete in an increasingly  
12 competitive global tourism market; and  
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14 WHEREAS, presently, Hawaii is one of only two states in the  
15 country to have an outright ban on all forms of gambling, along  
16 with Utah, while all other states permit legal gambling in some  
17 form or another, whether it be charitable games, state  
18 lotteries, or other games; and  
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20 WHEREAS, there is also strong opposition to legalized  
21 gambling in Hawaii based on concerns that it would negatively  
22 impact the public's health and safety based on gambling's  
23 addictive effect and other potential harms that may arise,  
24 including impacts on lower-income individuals, implications of  
25 sex trafficking, domestic violence, increased criminal activity,  
26 increased high school drop-out rates, and undesirable tourism  
27 effects; and  
28



1 WHEREAS, to date, opposition to legalized gambling has  
2 resulted in the swift rejection and dismissal of ideas and  
3 proposals before there is an adequate opportunity to debate and  
4 discuss the efficacy of allowing regulated gambling in Hawaii;  
5 and

6  
7 WHEREAS, it is important to protect the people of Hawaii  
8 from harm, as the people are a valuable natural resource and  
9 should be protected like any of Hawaii's delicate ecosystems;  
10 and

11  
12 WHEREAS, it is also important to achieve a more productive  
13 and advanced discourse on whether the State should pursue  
14 legalized gambling by examining public health and safety  
15 concerns, which will also lower the bureaucratic burden by  
16 ensuring that any steps toward legalized gambling are scientific  
17 and data-driven; now, therefore,

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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first  
20 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022, the  
21 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of  
22 Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and the Department  
23 of Health are requested to convene a gambling task force to  
24 develop an evidence-based research and policy framework that  
25 will guide future policy and decision-making surrounding  
26 legalizing gambling in Hawaii to address the following:

- 27  
28 (1) An assessment of the negative impacts of gambling  
29 before and after initiation of legalized gambling to  
30 include a baseline prevalence study to establish the  
31 current state of gambling along the spectrum from  
32 recreational to problem gambling by demographic  
33 variables such as age, gender, location, and community  
34 membership;  
35  
36 (2) A focused evaluation of gambling and vulnerable  
37 populations to include the attitudes of individuals of  
38 these groups and how they would be positively and  
39 negatively affected by legalized gambling and the  
40 necessary safeguards to amplify the positive and  
41 mitigate the negative consequences;  
42



- (3) Identify a responsible gambling framework for regulation of gambling operators to include evaluation of card-based systems, limit setting strategies, player ambassadors, and other mechanisms used internationally to assist players in making informed choices and engaging positive play;
- (4) Assess integrated tourism planning to understand, at multiple levels, how to maximize strategic differentiation in any tourism-based gaming product and to minimize cannibalistic effects on local populations;
- (5) Develop economic impact studies to assess the effect of gaming facilities on communities and the feasibility of asset-based incentive programs for specific communities;
- (6) Provide evidence-based strategies for education of youth and prevention of underage gambling as well as development of an identification and treatment network for those with gambling problems; and
- (7) Develop training and certification for problem gambling counselors as well as operator staff and employees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the research should be funded by a dedicated protected revenue stream, outside of the general fund, to ensure independent analysis of the following key research inquiries to:

- (1) Evaluate the disparities between the Honolulu Police Department's reported number of illegal gambling rooms, which ranged between seventy to one hundred, with the number of gambling arrests, which included fifty-one in 2020 and thirty-four in 2019;
- (2) Address reports issued by the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women and law enforcement agencies regarding legalized gambling's implications to sex trafficking, domestic violence, dropout rates, and



undesirable tourism effects to determine whether the information provided was evidence-based and considered in the appropriate contexts; and

- (3) Identify the appropriate prevention, education, and treatment options for what one study estimated at \$26.3 million in social costs to the State from twenty thousand problematic and ten thousand pathological gamblers in Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the long-term policy goals of any future gambling legislation include:

- (1) Culturally competent policy analysis and policy recommendations;
- (2) Understanding of the range of impacts based on gambling type (slots, table games, race and sports, daily fantasy, poker, bingo, keno, and lottery);
- (3) Optimal locations for gaming facilities and site-specific feasibility studies;
- (4) Regulatory recommendations, including licensing, compliance, and suspicious activity monitoring;
- (5) Workforce capabilities assessments and development of training programs; and
- (6) Protections and incentives for vulnerable populations and native Hawaiians to develop responsible gambling habits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

- (1) The Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, or the Director's designee, who shall serve as the chair of the task force;
- (2) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;



- (3) The Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, or the Director's designee;
- (4) The Attorney General or the Attorney General's designee;
- (5) A member of the public with knowledge of legalized gambling, to be invited by the President of the Senate to participate; and
- (6) A member of the public with knowledge of legalized gambling, to be invited by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to participate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism shall provide administrative support to the task force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2023 and 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall dissolve on June 30, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Director of Health; Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; and Attorney General.

OFFERED BY:



