

MAR 11 2022

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PRIORITIZE TESTING AND RESEARCH OF BEACH SAND CONTAMINATION LEVELS AT POKAI BAY AND REQUESTING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION TO PRIORITIZE RENOVATIONS OF THE RESTROOM FACILITIES AT POKAI BAY.

1 WHEREAS, Pokai Bay is one of the most-visited ocean areas  
2 on Oahu's Leeward Coast because of its wide sandy beach and  
3 relatively calm waters; and

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5 WHEREAS, because it is protected by an offshore breakwater,  
6 Pokai Bay maintains calm conditions year-round, which makes it  
7 an ideal location for many ocean users including swimmers, canoe  
8 paddlers, surfers, snorkelers, boaters, divers, and stand-up  
9 paddlers; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, despite Pokai Bay's pristine appearance of  
12 crystal-blue waters and white sand, it is sadly the site of  
13 pollution from multiple sources including runoff from  
14 surrounding surfaces, illegal dumping, and user-induced  
15 contaminants; and

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17 WHEREAS, over the last decade, beach users and local  
18 community members have reported the presence of health and  
19 environmental hazards at Pokai Bay; and

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21 WHEREAS, water runoff containing industrial pollutants  
22 washed from local surface streets, parking lots, and sidewalks,  
23 as well as pollution from illegally moored boats and  
24 petrochemical-based pollutants caused by vehicular use of an  
25 adjacent boat ramp, are additional suspected sources of  
26 pollution; and

27  
28 WHEREAS, historically, illegal dumping of dredging  
29 materials and other substances have occurred at higher rates



1 along the Leeward Coast, including at Pokai Bay, than at other  
2 locations on Oahu; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, the significant use of Leeward Coast beaches for  
5 camping and associated activities of daily life by homeless  
6 persons, such as bathing, are suspected of having introduced  
7 higher than normal levels of bacteria to the sand and waters at  
8 Pokai Bay, resulting in a rash of staph infections and other  
9 health problems among regular beach users; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, a 2015 study by professors and researchers at the  
12 University of Hawaii at Manoa's Department of Civil and  
13 Environmental Engineering found that beach sand holds more fecal  
14 indicator bacteria (FIB) than seawater; and

15  
16 WHEREAS, based upon the results of this study, the beach  
17 sand at Pokai Bay may be found to retain pollutants from the  
18 restroom facilities in the area, specifically rinse-off from the  
19 showers and fecal bacteria from toilet plumbing; and

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21 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has the supplies to test  
22 seawater, and occasionally tests the seawater in Pokai Bay  
23 specifically for FIB, which decays at slower rates in the beach  
24 sand than in seawater; now, therefore,

25  
26 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first  
27 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,  
28 that the Department of Health is urged to prioritize testing and  
29 research of FIB levels and any other pollutants of the beach  
30 sand at Pokai Bay; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
33 urged to make testing and research of FIB levels and any other  
34 pollutants in beach sand at Pokai Bay a priority of the  
35 Department's non-point source pollution program; and

36  
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
38 urged to develop a plan to increase water circulation at Pokai  
39 Bay to improve water quality and mitigate environmental and  
40 health risks caused by pollution and contaminants in the water;  
41 and



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
2 requested to collaborate with other appropriate state and county  
3 agencies to develop the plan to increase water circulation; and  
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is  
6 requested to submit a report of its collaborative activities,  
7 including significant findings, cost estimates, and any proposed  
8 legislation to increase water circulation at Pokai Bay, to the  
9 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
10 the Regular Session of 2023; and  
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that based upon the Department of  
13 Health's testing and research of FIB in the beach sand at Pokai  
14 Bay, the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and  
15 Recreation is requested to prioritize renovations of the  
16 restroom facilities at Pokai Bay; and  
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
19 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and Director  
20 of the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and  
21 Recreation.  
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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

