
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE COUNTY GOVERNMENTS TO REVIEW THEIR RESPECTIVE
GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE TO IDENTIFY ORGANIZATIONAL RISKS OF
CORRUPTION AND ETHICAL VIOLATIONS AND TO DEVELOP SYSTEMATIC
IMPROVEMENTS TO SUCH RISKS.

1 WHEREAS, the House of Representatives adopted House
2 Resolution No. 9 (2022) to establish the Commission to Improve
3 Standards of Conduct; and
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5 WHEREAS, House Resolution No. 9 requests the Commission
6 ensure state laws and rules relating to standards of conduct of
7 public officers and employees contain clear standards,
8 enforcement, and penalties and provide recommendations to
9 increase awareness of, compliance with, and deterrent effects of
10 the Code of Ethics, lobbying laws, campaign finance laws, and
11 other relevant laws and rules; and
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13 WHEREAS, pursuant to House Resolution No. 9, the Commission
14 to Improve Standards of Conduct convened regularly throughout
15 2022 to diligently review, discuss, and consider the issues
16 presented, submitted an interim report to the house of
17 representatives outlining areas of immediate and long-term
18 focus, then continued its work with input from the public and
19 invited individuals and agencies to issue a final report with
20 various recommendations and accompanying proposed legislation;
21 and
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23 WHEREAS, the strength and stability of our democratic
24 government rely upon the public's trust in government
25 institutions, including the expectation that officers act
26 ethically with prudence, integrity, and sound judgement; and
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28 WHEREAS, an essential goal of the Commission was to provide
29 recommendations that would help restore public trust in



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1 government and increase the level of transparency in its
2 operations and accountability of individuals; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Hawaii State Constitution places a duty on all
5 civil servants to "exhibit the highest standards of ethical
6 conduct"; and

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8 WHEREAS, recent allegations of corruption and ethics
9 violations were made against several county officials throughout
10 the State; and

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12 WHEREAS, in the City and County of Honolulu, several
13 Department of Planning and Permitting employees were charged
14 with and pled guilty to accepting bribes in exchange for
15 expediting the permitting process for projects; and

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17 WHEREAS, in the County of Hawaii, a former Hawaii County
18 housing official was charged with and later plead guilty to one
19 felony charge of honest services wire fraud, after accepting
20 nearly \$2,000,000 in bribes and kickbacks in exchange for the
21 approval of affordable housing credits; and

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23 WHEREAS, in the County of Maui, a former Maui County
24 official was accused by federal prosecutors of taking \$2,000,000
25 in bribes to steer \$19,000,000 in contracts to certain companies
26 and charged with conspiracy to deprive the public of their right
27 to honest services; and

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29 WHEREAS, these events have shaken the public's trust in the
30 strength and integrity of the county governments; and

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32 WHEREAS, to implement the recommendations of the Commission
33 to Improve Standards of Conduct, a review of each county's
34 government structure, including identifying problems and
35 developing systematic improvements that will prevent future
36 situations involving corruption and ethical violations, is
37 needed to help restore the public's trust in government; now,
38 therefore,

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40 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
41 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
42 Session of 2023, the Senate concurring, that the county



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1 governments are urged to review their respective government
 2 structure to identify organizational risks of corruption and
 3 ethical violations and to develop systematic improvements to
 4 such risks; and

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 6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties, when performing
 7 their respective reviews, are urged to:

- 8
 9 (1) Examine and identify any gaps or shortfalls in
 10 government structure that could have contributed to
 11 the recent cases involving corruption or ethics
 12 violations by county employees within their respective
 13 jurisdictions;
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 15 (2) Consult with and use existing state and county
 16 resources and department and agency personnel to carry
 17 out the objectives of this Concurrent Resolution; and
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 19 (3) Develop mechanisms for county-level independent
 20 oversight of executive departments; and

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 22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 23 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of the City
 24 and County of Honolulu; Mayors of the Counties of Hawaii, Kauai,
 25 and Maui; Chairperson of the Honolulu City Council; and
 26 Chairpersons of the Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui County Councils.
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OFFERED BY: _____

