
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONTINUE TO PRIORITIZE
TESTING OF FECAL INDICATOR BACTERIA LEVELS IN THE WATERS OF
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,
8 canoe paddlers, surfers, snorkelers, boaters, divers, and stand-
9 up paddlers; and
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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, additional suspected sources of pollution at Pokai
22 Bay include water runoff containing industrial pollutants from
23 local surface streets, parking lots, and sidewalks; illegally
24 moored boats; and petrochemical-based pollutants from vehicular
25 use of an adjacent boat ramp; and
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1 WHEREAS, historically, illegal dumping of dredging
2 materials and other substances has occurred at higher rates
3 along the Leeward Coast, including at Pokai Bay, than at other
4 locations on Oahu; and

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

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

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

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

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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
29 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
30 Session of 2023, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
31 Health is urged to continue to prioritize testing of fecal
32 indicator bacteria levels and any other pollutants in the waters
33 of Pokai Bay; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
36 urged to make testing of fecal indicator bacteria levels and any
37 other pollutants in Pokai Bay a priority of the Department's
38 non-point source pollution program; and

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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
41 urged to address land-based point and non-point sources of water
42 pollution into Pokai Bay; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City and County of Honolulu
2 Department of Parks and Recreation is requested to prioritize
3 renovations of the restroom facilities at Pokai Bay; and

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
6 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health
7 and Director of the City and County of Honolulu Department of
8 Parks and Recreation.

