
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS OF EACH COUNTY, HUMANE SOCIETIES IN EACH COUNTY, AND MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE STATE TO COLLABORATE TO CREATE AND DISSEMINATE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO HIGHLIGHT THE DANGERS OF, AND ADVOCATE AGAINST THE USE OF, ILLEGAL FIREWORKS IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE COMMUNITY, PETS, AND WILDLIFE.

1 WHEREAS, illegal fireworks in Hawaii pose a significant
2 safety, environmental, and health issue and this body finds it
3 necessary for agencies across the islands to disseminate a
4 public service announcement (PSA) concerning fireworks safety;
5 and

6
7 WHEREAS, past PSAs have been effective in changing
8 attitudes and behaviors regarding tobacco, and this body seeks
9 to do likewise with a fireworks PSA; and

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11 WHEREAS, fireworks are viewed in many communities in Hawaii
12 as merely harmless fun; and

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14 WHEREAS, in just twenty-four hours, from December 31, 2023,
15 to January 1, 2024, the Honolulu Fire Department responded to
16 twenty-three fireworks-related fires; and

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18 WHEREAS, during this period, Honolulu Emergency Medical
19 Services responded to seven fireworks-related injuries,
20 including to keiki and kupuna, that were disfiguring and will
21 have life-long consequences for the injured individuals; and

22
23 WHEREAS, during December 2023 alone, the Department of Law
24 Enforcement confiscated sixteen tons of illegal fireworks and
25 since its inception, the Department has seized thirty-five
26 thousand pounds of fireworks; and
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1 WHEREAS, fireworks can also trigger a military veteran's
2 post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as seven percent of all
3 veterans on average will suffer from PTSD during their
4 lifetimes; and

5
6 WHEREAS, however, of the more recent veterans of the
7 Persian Gulf war, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation
8 Enduring Freedom, thirty percent will experience PTSD during
9 their lifetimes; and

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11 WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of
12 Veterans Affairs, fireworks may cue memories of combat or
13 explosions and may be reminders of intense fires or gun
14 violence; and

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16 WHEREAS, according to The Humane Society of the United
17 States, during holidays involving fireworks, pet animals are
18 often frightened from the noise and commotion of fireworks,
19 causing them to flee from familiar environments, often becoming
20 lost; and

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22 WHEREAS, the bright lights from fireworks frequently cause
23 animals to run into the streets, and wildlife rehabilitation
24 centers are often flooded with all sorts of wildlife affected by
25 fireworks; and

26
27 WHEREAS, leading up to the 2023 New Year Celebration, the
28 Hawaiian Humane Society estimated that twenty percent of pets
29 will go missing on New Year's Eve and that in 2022, it received
30 seventy to eighty animals after the New Year celebration; and

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32 WHEREAS, as an isolated archipelago, Hawaii is home to many
33 unique and endemic species of wildlife, including twenty-six
34 forest bird species, and most of these species are considered
35 vulnerable, near-threatened, threatened, endangered, or
36 critically endangered; and

37
38 WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
39 Administration has stated that the trash from fireworks poses
40 major risks to animals because sea birds and marine animals can
41 mistake this debris for food, resulting in malnutrition,



1 internal injuries, intestinal blockage, starvation, and even
2 death; and

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4 WHEREAS, the effects of illegal fireworks are significant
5 and wide-ranging, including the physical injuries to and
6 psychological effects on individuals, displacement of pets, and
7 negative impacts on wildlife; now, therefore,

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9 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
10 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
11 Session of 2024, that the Department of Law Enforcement, fire
12 departments and police departments of each county, humane
13 societies in each county, and media organizations throughout the
14 State are urged to collaborate to create and disseminate public
15 service announcements to highlight the dangers of, and advocate
16 against the use of, illegal fireworks in order to protect the
17 health and safety of the community, pets, and wildlife; and

18
19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
20 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Law Enforcement;
21 Fire Chiefs of the Honolulu Fire Department, Hawaii Fire
22 Department, Maui Fire Department, and Kauai Fire Department;
23 Police Chiefs of the Honolulu Police Department, Hawaii Police
24 Department, Maui Police Department, and Kauai Fire Department;
25 President and CEO of the Hawaiian Humane Society; President of
26 the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Island Humane Society; CEO
27 of Maui Humane Society; Executive Director of Kauai Humane
28 Society; President and General Manager of Hawaii News Now;
29 General Manager of KHON2; President & General Manager of KITV;
30 President & General Manager of Hawaii Public Radio; President of
31 iHeartMedia in Honolulu; President & Publisher of the *Honolulu*
32 *Star-Advertiser*; Editor and General Manager of Honolulu Civil
33 Beat; Editor of the *Hawaii Tribune Herald*; Editor of *West Hawaii*
34 *Today*; Publisher of *The Maui News*; and Editor of *The Garden*
35 *Island*.

