

MAR 07 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE SUMMARIZING SPECIFIC SAFETY-RELATED INFORMATION FOR EACH GENERAL AVIATION AND COMMERCIAL TOUR OPERATOR IN THE STATE, POST AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF EACH REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE, AND ADOPT RULES REQUIRING THE PUBLIC POSTING OF THE INFORMATION AT EVERY LOCATION OF EACH OPERATOR.

1 WHEREAS, general aviation and commercial helicopter flights
2 are popular activities in Hawaii that have been economically
3 successful for some private companies; and
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5 WHEREAS, general aviation and commercial helicopter flights
6 over residential areas can create safety hazards, such as the
7 2019 crash on a street in Kailua on Oahu that resulted in three
8 deaths, the risk of which may be increased in the absence of
9 currently available safety practices and mechanisms; and
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11 WHEREAS, following the 2019 crash in Kailua, the Chair of
12 the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) stated that
13 "each crash underscores the urgency of improving the safety of
14 charter flights by implementing existing [board] safety
15 recommendations," and called for small aircraft flight safety
16 improvements; and
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18 WHEREAS, NTSB has made repeated recommendations for safety
19 enhancements in the helicopter tour and charter industry,
20 including the use of crash-resistant fuel systems, flotation
21 devices for flights over water, and terrain awareness and
22 warning systems to reduce the risk of controlled flight into
23 terrain; and
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25 WHEREAS, the implementation of safety measures such as
26 crash-resistant fuel tanks can significantly reduce the risk of
27 post-crash fires, a factor that has contributed to fatalities in
28 multiple aviation accidents; and
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30 WHEREAS, helicopters operating in the State frequently fly
31 over the ocean and remote terrain where emergency landings may



1 be required, and the presence of emergency flotation devices are
2 a critical factor in survivability in the event of an unplanned
3 water landing; and

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5 WHEREAS, radar and terrain awareness technology have proven
6 effective in enhancing pilot situational awareness and reducing
7 the likelihood of accidents caused by poor visibility, weather
8 conditions, or pilot disorientation; and

9
10 WHEREAS, ensuring public access to safety-related
11 information regarding the presence or absence of flotation
12 devices, radar technology, and crash-resistant fuel tanks in
13 helicopters used for commercial and general aviation flights
14 would empower consumers and the public to make informed
15 decisions regarding their safety; and

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17 WHEREAS, increased transparency in the aviation industry
18 would encourage helicopter tour operators and charter companies
19 to adopt best practices in aviation safety, thereby reducing
20 risks to passengers, crew, and the public at large; and

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22 WHEREAS, providing detailed safety information aligns with
23 broader efforts to enhance consumer protections and uphold the
24 State's commitment to safeguarding its residents and visitors
25 from avoidable risks; now, therefore,

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27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
29 that the Department of Transportation is requested to submit an
30 annual report to the Legislature summarizing specific safety-
31 related information for each general aviation and commercial
32 tour operator in the State, post an electronic copy of each
33 report on the Department's website, and adopt rules requiring
34 the public posting of the information at every location of each
35 operator; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report is requested to
38 include the:

- 39 (1) Name of any person, whether an individual or legal
40 entity, who has twenty percent or more ownership
41 interest in every general aviation, helicopter tour,
42 or charter flight operator, and the name of any



1 general aviation or commercial tour operator company
2 owned by the person within the last ten years;

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4 (2) Amount and type of liability insurance maintained by
5 each general aviation and commercial tour operator;

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7 (3) Minimum amount of pilot training hours required by
8 each general aviation and commercial tour operator;
9 and

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11 (4) Participation of each company in any nationally
12 recognized safety program, such as the Tour Operators
13 Program of Safety, which develops air tour safety
14 standards; and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for each aircraft operated in
17 the State, the Department of Transportation is requested to
18 report the type and amount of general liability insurance
19 carried by the operator and whether each aircraft has installed:

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21 (1) Flotation devices;

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23 (2) Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast technology;

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25 (3) Crash resistant tanks; and

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27 (4) Any other provisions as determined by the department
28 as necessary or advisable to promote public safety and
29 consumer disclosure; and

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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each annual report is requested
32 to be made available to the public via electronic posting on the
33 Department of Transportation's website; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of
36 Transportation is requested to require each general aviation and
37 commercial tour operator to publicly post in each of their
38 places of business a summary of the information provided in each
39 report; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the National
3 Transportation Safety Board and Director of Transportation.

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OFFERED BY: 

