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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE GOVERNOR TO REESTABLISH AN INTRA-ISLAND FERRY TO  
REDUCE TRAFFIC GRIDLOCK BETWEEN THE EWA REGION ALONG THE  
LEEWARD COAST OF OAHU AND DOWNTOWN HONOLULU BY 2015.

1           WHEREAS, in the 1970s, the City and County of Honolulu  
2 envisioned the creation of a Second City in Kapolei as a second  
3 urban core on Oahu to relieve congestion in East Oahu by  
4 distributing population growth westward; and

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6           WHEREAS, this long-term land use decision gave rise to  
7 major developments on the Ewa plains for commercial, office,  
8 residential, and industrial uses for both the government and  
9 private sector; and

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11           WHEREAS, as one of the fastest growing areas of Oahu, the  
12 Second City of Kapolei has experienced enormous population  
13 growth, from around 43,000 residents in 1990 to approximately  
14 102,000 residents in 2010, with the population projected to grow  
15 to roughly 159,000 residents by 2025; and

16  
17           WHEREAS, the Ewa region is also a dynamically growing area,  
18 with thousands of housing units being added to the Ewa plains  
19 area over the past several years, and thousands more on the  
20 drawing board; and

21  
22           WHEREAS, the growth of Kapolei and Ewa is expected to  
23 provide more than 67,000 jobs over the next decade and a half,  
24 making this area a regional commercial center and attracting  
25 customers from all parts of Oahu; and

26  
27           WHEREAS, in addition to the increasing number of residents,  
28 jobs, and homes, other new developments, including the recently  
29 opened University of Hawaii at West Oahu campus, the Kroc



1 Center, Kapolei Commons, and Hoakalei, are anticipated to result  
2 in increased vehicular flow between the Ewa region and Honolulu  
3 which will contribute to the traffic congestion already being  
4 experienced along these routes; and  
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6 WHEREAS, increased traffic congestion between the Ewa  
7 region and Honolulu has already reduced quality time for these  
8 residents and their families and has emerged as a disincentive  
9 for tourists who have wasted valuable time stuck in traffic; and  
10

11 WHEREAS, although residential development and job growth  
12 has occurred at a rapid pace decreasing the need for some  
13 residents to commute to downtown Honolulu, the Ewa Development  
14 Plan of 2011 acknowledges that commuting to downtown Honolulu  
15 from the Ewa region remains a problem with the average commute  
16 time being at least 75 minutes with 20 percent of commuters  
17 spending almost 90 minutes commuting to downtown Honolulu on a  
18 regular basis, and commuters have stated that it takes an  
19 average of 20 to 25 minutes just to get out of Ewa Beach; and  
20

21 WHEREAS, Honolulu ranked as the second-worst city in the  
22 nation for traffic congestion behind gridlocked Los Angeles, and  
23 drivers in Hawaii's crowded capital city wasted 60 hours on  
24 average sitting in traffic in 2013 compared to 50 hours the  
25 previous year, according to an annual report on traffic  
26 conditions nationwide; and  
27

28 WHEREAS, common experience demonstrates that congested  
29 conditions exist for the Ewa region because traffic is funneled  
30 onto major arterials with insufficient capacity leading from the  
31 Ewa marina, up Fort Weaver Road to the H-1 interchange, and from  
32 the H-1 interchange to downtown Honolulu; and  
33

34 WHEREAS, adopted in 2002, the Ewa Highway Master Plan  
35 identified 15 transportation improvement projects to meet  
36 expected growth by providing additional mauka-makai and East-  
37 West roadway and freeway capacity; and  
38

39 WHEREAS, most of the solutions to the problem of traffic  
40 congestion in the Ewa region, including the Second City of  
41 Kapolei, include the building of more traffic infrastructure  
42 such as roadways, demonstrated by the recently completed  
43 projects of Kualaka'i Parkway (North-South Road) and Kapolei



1 Parkway, which brought long awaited relief to the severe peak  
2 hour congestion on Fort Weaver Road for Ewa Beach, Ewa by Gentry  
3 and Ocean Pointe residents; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, an additional transportation alternative to  
6 alleviate the traffic congestion between the Ewa region of Oahu,  
7 including Kapolei, and downtown Honolulu, is the high-speed  
8 rapid transit system; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, while the high-speed rapid transit system  
11 currently being built is expected to have an impact on commute  
12 times and traffic congestion from the Ewa region of Oahu to  
13 downtown Honolulu, the project is not expected to be completed  
14 until 2019 and additional alternative means of transportation  
15 should be offered to residents and commuters of the Ewa region;  
16 and  
17

18 WHEREAS, the Ewa region will experience increased traffic  
19 congestion resulting from roadway closures and groundwork during  
20 the construction of the high-speed rapid transit system; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, an unused transportation corridor exists in the  
23 waters off the Leeward Coast of Oahu that can be utilized to  
24 transport individuals between the Ewa region to downtown  
25 Honolulu; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, surrounded by the vast Pacific Ocean, Oahu needs  
28 to take advantage of these waterways to reestablish the commuter  
29 ferry system that once sailed offshore of Oahu in 2000 and 2007;  
30 and  
31

32 WHEREAS, following a pilot project in the 1990s, the  
33 benefits of a commuter ferry system between the Ewa region and  
34 downtown Honolulu were recognized by the Legislature when Act  
35 263, Session Laws of Hawaii 2002, was enacted, authorizing the  
36 Department of Transportation to issue special facility revenue  
37 bonds not to exceed \$15,000,000 to construct facilities for a  
38 ferry service between West and East Oahu; and  
39

40 WHEREAS, a ferry system between the Ewa region and downtown  
41 Honolulu would not require environmental studies or large  
42 infrastructure costs since harbor infrastructure to support a  
43 commuter ferry system already exists in the Ewa region as well  
44 as at Honolulu Harbor in downtown Honolulu, and the ferry system



1 would be cheaper and faster to build than any land-based mode of  
2 transportation that would require miles of costly construction  
3 groundwork; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, while a commuter ferry system may provide a  
6 tangible benefit to the residents of Honolulu, particularly  
7 commuters from the Ewa region of Oahu, the tourism industry may  
8 also benefit by providing visitors to Oahu with another means of  
9 viewing the Leeward Coast of Oahu from the ocean, possibly  
10 becoming another tourist attraction; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, a commuter ferry system will reduce the volume of  
13 cars on the roadways of Oahu, which currently has more than  
14 1,000,000 registered cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles, and  
15 motorcycles; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, while commuter ferry systems have been operated  
18 between the Ewa region to downtown Honolulu, in particular,  
19 between Iroquois Point and Aloha Tower, and Kalaeloa Harbor and  
20 Aloha Tower, these ventures ceased operations for a variety of  
21 reasons; and  
22

23 WHEREAS, private companies may be interested in  
24 collaborating with the State for a public-private partnership  
25 that will provide cost savings for the State in reestablishing  
26 the commuter ferry system and constructing park-and-ride sites  
27 where commuters may park their cars and either walk to or ride a  
28 shuttle to the commuter ferry harbor sites; and  
29

30 WHEREAS, with proper forethought and planning, a commuter  
31 ferry service between the Ewa region and downtown Honolulu could  
32 be beneficial to Oahu commuters, particularly those living in  
33 the Ewa region; now, therefore,  
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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
36 Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
37 Session of 2014, the Senate concurring, that the Governor of the  
38 State of Hawaii is urged to reestablish an intra-island ferry to  
39 reduce traffic gridlock between the Ewa region along the Leeward  
40 Coast of Oahu and downtown Honolulu by 2015; and  
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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to  
43 prepare a report to the Legislature regarding the intra-island  
44 ferry system that includes:



- 1
- 2 (1) The effect the intra-island ferry had on traffic
- 3 congestion in the commute between the Ewa region and
- 4 downtown Honolulu;
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- 6 (2) The costs associated with the intra-island ferry
- 7 system, including a cost-benefit analysis of the
- 8 intra-island ferry system; and
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- 10 (3) Any necessary legislation needed to continue the
- 11 intra-island ferry system; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor submit the report,  
 14 including the Governor's findings and recommendations, to the  
 15 Legislature no later than 20 days before the convening of the  
 16 Regular Session of 2021; and

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 18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the intra-island ferry system  
 19 be reassessed after the completion of the high-speed rapid  
 20 transit system; and

21  
 22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 23 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor and the  
 24 Director of Transportation.

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 26  
 27

OFFERED BY:

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