
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ENDORISING AND SUPPORTING THE ALA WAI WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP AND
REQUESTING A REPORT ON PROGRESS MADE BY THE PARTNERSHIP.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is highly vulnerable to natural disasters,
2 including hurricanes, floods, and droughts; and
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4 WHEREAS, the State and counties are challenged to design,
5 finance, construct, operate, and maintain various water
6 infrastructure, including infrastructure for fresh water, waste
7 water, and stormwater; and
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9 WHEREAS, Waikiki generates approximately eight percent of
10 Hawaii's gross domestic product, seven percent of the State's
11 employment, and nine percent of state tax revenues; and
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13 WHEREAS, a one percent annual chance exceedance flood
14 event, or the "one-hundred-year flood", in the Ala Wai
15 watershed, including Waikiki, would affect approximately 1,358
16 acres within the watershed and over 3,000 properties with an
17 estimated \$318,000,000 in structural damages alone; and
18

19 WHEREAS, in March 2006, as much as ten million gallons of
20 raw sewage were dumped into the Ala Wai Canal following the
21 rupture of a sewer line due to heavy rains, and as recently as
22 August 2015, heavy rains caused a major sewage spill, forcing
23 temporary closure of beaches in Waikiki; and
24

25 WHEREAS, as of May 2015, under Act 42, Session Laws of
26 Hawaii 2015, the counties have the authority to establish and
27 charge user fees to create and maintain any stormwater
28 management system or infrastructure; and
29

30 WHEREAS, the economic risk to the Waikiki area from a
31 category 4 hurricane hitting Honolulu could result in an



1 estimated \$30,000,000,000 in economic losses and structural
2 damages; and

3
4 WHEREAS, the state-sponsored United States Army Corps of
5 Engineers Ala Wai Canal Flood Mitigation Project (Ala Wai
6 Project) is only being designed to reduce riverine flood risks
7 from the one hundred-year flood in the Ala Wai watershed,
8 including Waikiki; and

9
10 WHEREAS, in addition to flood risk reduction, the original
11 scope of work for the Ala Wai Project also included ecosystems
12 restoration, water quality enhancements, and other community
13 benefits; and

14
15 WHEREAS, the Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with
16 the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, hosted and invited
17 participation by the public, private, philanthropic, and non-
18 governmental sectors in the January 2015 "Hawai'i Disaster Risk
19 Workshop: Mitigating Catastrophic Disaster Risk and Building
20 Resilience in the Ala Wai Watershed"; and

21
22 WHEREAS, the objectives of this workshop were to:

- 23
24 (1) Raise awareness of natural disaster risk and
25 vulnerability in the Ala Wai watershed, including the
26 economic and social consequences of a natural disaster
27 to Waikiki's residential, tourism, and business
28 communities;
- 29
30 (2) Examine options for mitigating risk and improving
31 community resilience through gray and green
32 infrastructure investments;
- 33
34 (3) Explore the opportunities to transfer disaster risk
35 from the government to private markets and leverage
36 public resources to catalyze private investment in
37 resilience through new partnerships; and
- 38
39 (4) Identify strategies to engage the community to create
40 shared value and build locally appropriate solutions
41 to urban design and ecosystem restoration; and



1 WHEREAS, an action agenda was agreed upon moving forward
2 from the workshop into 2015, and the Ala Wai Watershed
3 Partnership (Partnership) coalesced as the working group to
4 further the five steps of the action agenda of the workshop; and
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6 WHEREAS, the Partnership is a voluntary partnership of
7 state, county, federal, business, and nongovernmental leaders
8 from many sectors, including engineering, planning and design,
9 flood mitigation and stormwater management, coastal hazards and
10 climate change mitigation and adaptation, economic development,
11 business, finance, insurance, social science, extension and
12 education, philanthropy, and others, that is ready to support
13 shared goals of increasing the resilience and sustainability of
14 the Ala Wai watershed and Waikiki; and
15

16 WHEREAS, the Partnership and Ala Wai Project may help
17 demonstrate how, as outlined in President Obama's Climate Action
18 Plan, climate resilience can create shared value for local
19 communities, mitigate the damage resulting from current and
20 future climate-related events, and close the national
21 infrastructure gap by leveraging innovative partnerships; and
22

23 WHEREAS, the Partnership and Ala Wai Project, as a result
24 of Hawaii's social, cultural, and economic connections to small
25 island developing states, may be a model for climate resiliency
26 projects in the Pacific islands, Caribbean, and other regions
27 facing increasing climate-related challenges; and
28

29 WHEREAS, the Partnership and Ala Wai Project could be
30 featured at the United States-hosted 2016 International Union
31 for the Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress in
32 Hawaii as a high-level commitment to support resilient
33 infrastructure investments through innovative financing and
34 public-private partnerships, while also restoring and protecting
35 critical watersheds; and
36

37 WHEREAS, a state commitment to the action agenda of the
38 Partnership will help to:

- 39
40 (1) Ensure progress on the critical flood risk reduction
41 objectives of the Ala Wai Project;



- 1 (2) Reintegrate ecosystem restoration, water quality
2 enhancements, and other community benefits into an Ala
3 Wai Project scope;
4
- 5 (3) Promote public-private partnerships that improve and
6 sustain the ability of local governments to design,
7 finance, construct, operate, and maintain various
8 infrastructure;
9
- 10 (4) Attract local, regional, national, and global
11 attention to pressing infrastructure investment needs,
12 while providing innovative design and community
13 engagement to enhance resilience and sustainability in
14 Hawaii;
15
- 16 (5) Strengthen Hawaii's partnerships with federal
17 agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers,
18 United States Environmental Protection Agency,
19 President's Task Force on Climate Preparedness and
20 Resilience, National Oceanic and Atmospheric
21 Administration, and others; and
22
- 23 (6) Serve as a model for complex infrastructure
24 investments regionally and nationally; now, therefore,
25

26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
28 Session of 2016, the Senate concurring, that this body endorses
29 and supports the Ala Wai Watershed Partnership and its
30 integrated approach to increase resilience and sustainability in
31 the Ala Wai watershed and Waikiki through five action steps,
32 which include:
33

- 34 (1) Continuing the Partnership's efforts to increase
35 awareness about catastrophic natural disaster risk,
36 and facilitate stakeholder engagement in designing,
37 funding, building, and maintaining integrated
38 infrastructure systems that improve the resilience of
39 vulnerable communities in the Ala Wai watershed and
40 Waikiki;
41
- 42 (2) Investigating insurance, reinsurance, and risk
43 transfer solutions, including parametric insurance, to
44 help mitigate current and future climate risks that



1 place substantial financial and political burdens on
2 the state economy and state and county governments;
3

4 (3) Investigating a community investment vehicle to align
5 public funds and catalyze private investment in
6 designing, building, and maintaining resilient
7 infrastructure;
8

9 (4) Investigating new and innovative financing strategies
10 for climate resilient infrastructure projects in the
11 Ala Wai watershed, including stormwater capture and
12 reuse, water efficiency measures, and insurance
13 premium securitization; and
14

15 (5) Coordinating a prize competition that connects local
16 and world-class urban planners, engineers, and
17 designers with business groups, policy makers, and
18 community leaders in the Ala Wai watershed to design
19 climate resilient infrastructure and support ecosystem
20 restoration; and
21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the Ala Wai
23 Watershed Partnership is requested to submit a report on the
24 progress of the Ala Wai Watershed Partnership toward the action
25 steps and in raising financial support for the Partnership to
26 the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
27 of the Regular Session of 2017; and
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the White House Council
31 on Environmental Quality; White House Office of Management and
32 Budget; Governor; Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu; and
33 United States Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District.

