SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO STUDY THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VAPOR HEAT TREATMENT FOR NEUTRALIZING FRUIT FLIES ON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FOR INTERSTATE RETAIL DISTRIBUTION.

WHEREAS, vapor heat treatment is used primarily for fruits and vegetables that are hosts for fruit flies, and is an approved treatment under 7 C.F.R. 30524(c) to neutralize the Mediterranean fruit fly (Ceratitis capitata), the Oriental fruit fly (Bactrocera dorsalis), and the melon fruit fly (Bactrocera curcurbitae), which bell peppers, eggplant, Italian squash, and tomatoes may host during interstate travel from Hawaii to the mainland; and

WHEREAS, the solanum fruit fly (Bactrocera latifrons) is an additional species of fruit fly that has been detected in vegetables and fruits grown in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, the Mediterranean, Oriental, melon, and solanum fruit flies are all members of the Tephritidae family, and are pests for which the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service requires vapor heat or irradiation treatment of Hawaii grown vegetables and fruits intended for mainland retail distribution; and

WHEREAS, limited research has been done on the effectiveness of vapor heat treatment on neutralizing the solanum fruit fly, but studies have shown that an irradiation dose of 150 gray is sufficient to neutralize all fruit flies within the Tephritidae family; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is currently proposing to remove vapor heat treatment as an approved treatment for bell pepper, eggplant, Italian squash, and tomato moved interstate from Hawaii and add irradiation as an approved

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treatment for Capsium spp. (all peppers) and Curcurbita spp. (all
squash); and

WHEREAS, the removal of vapor heat treatment as an approved
treatment for vegetables and fruits moved interstate will force
Hawaii produce growers and suppliers to use irradiation
treatment for their commodities before interstate shipment; and

WHEREAS, currently, there is only one irradiation facility
in the State that treats papaya, rambutan, star fruit, lychee,
and atemoya for retail distribution on the mainland; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, a Hawaii company submitted to the United
States Nuclear Regulatory Commission an application to build and
operate near the Honolulu airport an underwater pool-type
commercial irradiator facility; and

WHEREAS, the plans for the facility are currently on hold
because the application resulted in controversy and debate
regarding the radioactive materials that are used to treat the
agricultural products, and the effect the irradiation treatment
has on the quality, appearance, or taste of the product; and

WHEREAS, in light of the controversy, irradiation treatment
in Hawaii is only limited to the facility on the Big Island, and
it is cost prohibitive for Oahu, Maui, and Kauai growers to ship
their produce to the Big Island for treatment before being sent
to the mainland for retail sale; and

WHEREAS, vapor heat treatment is a viable alternative for
Hawaii growers to treat their produce for interstate movement,
and the proposed removal from the list of approved treatments
has the potential of further denying Hawaii growers access to
mainland markets; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth
Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2007, the
House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
Agriculture is requested to study the effectiveness of vapor
heat treatment for neutralizing fruit flies on fruits and
vegetables intended for interstate retail distribution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
is requested to report its findings and recommendations to the
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Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of
the Regular Session of 2008; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Administrator of the
United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant
Health Inspection Service and the Chairperson of the Board of
Agriculture.

OFFERED BY:  Suzanne Chun Oakland

Russell Kohl