

MAR 06 2008

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO BEGIN REBUILDING THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH BY 2012.

1 WHEREAS, over three thousand five hundred graduates of the
2 University of Hawaii School of Public Health programs in
3 epidemiology, environmental health, nutrition, maternal and
4 child health, gerontology, international health, health
5 administration, and community health development and education
6 now play vital roles in protecting the health of Hawaii's
7 population and the health of those in the Asia, Pacific, and
8 United States regions; and
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10 WHEREAS, over the decades, the health workforce of Hawaii
11 and the Asia-Pacific region has consisted largely of the
12 graduates of former University of Hawaii School of Public
13 Health, which once educated hundreds of public health
14 professionals a year, as the second largest graduate program in
15 the University of Hawaii system; and
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17 WHEREAS, in 1999, the University of Hawaii School of Public
18 Health lost its accreditation; and
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20 WHEREAS, in 2000, the University of Hawaii School of Public
21 Health was incorporated into the John A. Burns School of
22 Medicine as the Office of Public Health Studies; and
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24 WHEREAS, upon closure of the School of Public Health, the
25 University of Hawaii administration proposed, and the Board of
26 Regents approved, a plan to rebuild it within five years; and
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28 WHEREAS, the medical school and the Department of Health
29 have made significant strides towards the rebuilding of public
30 health education, research, and training since the closure of
31 the School of Public Health, most significantly in gaining
32 recent seven-year full accreditation from the Council on
33 Education in Public Health for a program in public health; and
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1 WHEREAS, the Department recently completed a school of
2 public health business plan, as well as increased the public
3 health faculty size from fourteen to twenty; and
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5 WHEREAS, a new, independent school of public health could
6 become a reality within three to five years, pending the
7 availability of necessary funding resources; and
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9 WHEREAS, Hawaii is at a crossroads for emerging public
10 health issues, as there is both significant public health needs
11 as well as interest by prospective students to sustain a new
12 school; and
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14 WHEREAS, a new school of public health must provide
15 distance training to prospective students living in all
16 geographic areas of Hawaii; and
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18 WHEREAS, studies have shown that a substantial percentage
19 of the public health workforce, especially those in leadership
20 and mid-level management positions, has retired or is on the
21 verge of exiting the workforce to retire; and
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23 WHEREAS, currently, Hawaii is facing a health workforce
24 crisis that will be even more critical if public health training
25 and education is not reinstated; and
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27 WHEREAS, the potential for obtaining research funds has
28 grown tremendously over the last few years, and a new school of
29 public health would provide more flexibility to respond to
30 Hawaii's public health needs including issues relating to a
31 pandemic influenza, substance use, disparities in health status,
32 environmental health problems, diabetes, elder health, injury
33 prevention, childhood obesity, bioterrorism, SARS, and other
34 local and global health challenges; and
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36 WHEREAS, without a fully accredited school of public
37 health, Hawaii is ineligible to receive maximum federal research
38 money; and
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40 WHEREAS, other states and universities are considering
41 increasing public health training and research in Hawaii and the
42 Asia-Pacific region because of the absence of a Hawaii school of
43 public health; and
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