HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL OCEAN POLICY AND CREATE A REGIONAL OCEAN PLANNING BOARD IN HAWAII, AND REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PROVIDE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC REGION.

WHEREAS, federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Parks Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, currently administer over one hundred forty laws affecting the nation's fresh and salt water resources with little coordination among them; and

WHEREAS, the lack of coordination between federal agencies creates confusion that could result in policies and actions that may harm the overall health of Hawaii's island ecosystems and oceans; and

WHEREAS, the increasing demands on ocean resources threaten the fragile health of marine ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, if ocean policies are poorly planned or managed, prime fishing grounds may be irreparably harmed and fishing access may be threatened; and

WHEREAS, poor ocean resource planning may also cause ocean recreation, developing aquaculture facilities, and emerging wind, wave, and tidal energy facilities to come into spatial conflict; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama assembled an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force to recommend a comprehensive policy to protect and restore the oceans, Great Lakes, and Pacific island ecosystems; and
WHEREAS, a public meeting was held in Honolulu in September 2009 at which over three hundred individuals voiced their approval of a regional process and supported extending the overarching efforts to all aquatic ecosystems and federal agencies that monitor and protect them; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of invasive species damage reef ecosystems, costing hundreds of millions of dollars per year in lost tourism and fish replenishment; and

WHEREAS, bottom-dwelling invasive fish that out-compete native sport fish for food, degradation of wetland areas, and harmful algae blooms all harm the State's recreational and sport fishing industry; and

WHEREAS, with restoration efforts providing a short-term economic boost, the revitalization of traditional, cultural, and commercial activities like fishing and tourism would provide long-term dividends for the future of the State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the Legislature requests President Barack Obama to establish, by executive order, a national policy to protect, maintain, and restore the health of marine ecosystems and to provide for a guaranteed steady source of funding for ocean and coastal conservation and management in order to implement the new policy and ensure it is carried out by the federal agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that President Obama is requested, to the extent possible, to ensure that states carry out the national ocean policy through comprehensive, science-based, and precautionary management of marine resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that President Obama is requested to establish a Regional Ocean Council for Hawaii and the surrounding exclusive economic zones that emphasizes stakeholder and public participation and engagement throughout all steps of the process, including development, adoption, implementation, adaptation, and evaluation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Congress is requested to provide necessary funding for this effort; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States and to the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.

OFFERED BY:  

MAR 10 2010