WHEREAS, water constitutes Hawai‘i's most precious natural, economic, and cultural resource; and

WHEREAS, water has sustained countless generations of people in Hawai‘i, beginning with the first settlers to the islands— the Native Hawaiians— who developed efficient and sustainable ways of harnessing the resource for their agricultural and aquacultural systems; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai‘i Constitution provides that, along with other natural resources, water is a public trust resource to be managed and regulated for the benefit of the people, and mandates the setting of overall water conservation policies by a water resources agency; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, the Fourteenth Legislature enacted the State Water Code, codified in Chapter 174C, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to provide guidance and direction for the managing and safeguarding of Hawai‘i's water resources; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), through the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM), drafted the Prototype Water Conservation Plan to develop policies and procedures that could be applied to typical government facilities statewide addressing both potable and non-potable water demands, identifying practical water conservation measures, and developing implementation schedules and budgets; and

WHEREAS, the Prototype Water Conservation Plan called for the preparation of a larger, more comprehensive State agency water conservation plan; however, this was never finalized and to this day remains unimplemented; and
WHEREAS, population increase and urban development in Hawai‘i have resulted in a serious imbalance between water use and available water resources; and

WHEREAS, the total fresh water available for urban use is beginning to reach the limit before desalination and other costly measures become necessary; and

WHEREAS, every day hundreds of gallons of potable water are wasted because of inefficient water management systems, leaky faucets, unreppaired underground leaks, and use of irrigation systems that water more frequently and longer than soils are able to accept or plants need, causing runoff and ponding, and constantly swamping certain areas; and

WHEREAS, broken sprinkler heads can often be seen in public places, along highways and in parks, and on private property, visibly wasting water; and

WHEREAS, improvements to indoor plumbing fixtures, such as shower heads and faucet aerators, have increased water savings, yet readily available improvements to outdoor landscaping water fixtures have not been widely adopted; and

WHEREAS, because most potable water must be electrically pumped to upland reservoirs to provide users with steady water pressure, infrastructure, maintenance, and repair costs cause an increase in the cost of providing clean water; and

WHEREAS, water conservation is a low-cost way to expand available water resources and engage the public in the collective effort to safeguard Hawai‘i’s water resources; and

WHEREAS, the economy has forced state offices to cut back staff and reduced their ability to accomplish longstanding, but incomplete, goals relating to water conservation; and

WHEREAS, landscaping industry groups, conservation groups, and major water users are willing and able to assist in the completion of the long-awaited statewide plan for water conservation, and to facilitate its implementation; and
WHEREAS, to ensure there is enough water now and in the future for all of Hawai‘i's people, immediate steps must be taken to make the most efficient use of the state's existing water supplies; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2010, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources, in partnership with the Commission on Water Resource Management, is urged to immediately complete the drafting of a comprehensive statewide plan for water conservation to establish a set of clear and comprehensive policies and procedures to protect and conserve Hawai‘i's valuable water resources, particularly addressing landscaping; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Commission on Water Resource Management are requested to include the landscaping industry and conservation groups in the development of a sound and achievable statewide plan for water conservation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested to submit a report of its progress to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

OFFERED BY:

[Signatures]

FEB 25 2010