

MAR 14 2012

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A VOTER
PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE ON VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTER
TURNOUT IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's voter turnout percentage has
2 significantly declined since statehood in 1959, when voter
3 turnout stood at ninety-four percent of registered voters; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii presently ranks among the bottom of the
6 fifty states in the percentage of registered voters who turn out
7 to vote; and
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9 WHEREAS, voter turnout in Hawaii stood at thirty-seven
10 percent in the 2008 primary election and sixty-six percent in
11 the 2008 general election; and
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13 WHEREAS, voter turnout in Hawaii stood at forty-three
14 percent in the 2010 primary election and fifty-six percent in
15 the 2010 general election; and
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17 WHEREAS, voter participation is the hallmark of an
18 effective democracy; and
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20 WHEREAS, diminishing voter participation rates mean that
21 fewer people are involved in the selection of elected officials
22 and this threatens to undermine the strength of a representative
23 form of government; and
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25 WHEREAS, innovative efforts have been undertaken in other
26 states to successfully reduce barriers to voting and encourage
27 voter participation; now, therefore,
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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth
30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012, the
31 House of Representatives concurring, that the Lieutenant



1 Governor is requested to convene a voter participation task
2 force to:

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- 4 (1) Study voter participation rates in Hawaii, including
5 voter turnout among registered voters and all eligible
6 voters;
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- 8 (2) Review existing laws and practices regarding voter
9 registration in Hawaii, including requirements for
10 community groups conducting voter registration drives,
11 and identify barriers to voting;
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- 13 (3) Analyze ways to improve Hawaii's voter registration
14 and voter turnout, including voter modernization
15 efforts to potentially improve voter participation
16 including but not limited to election day
17 registration, online registration, universal or
18 automatic voter registration, voting by mail, voter
19 registration drives, and shortening the thirty-day
20 deadline for voter registration, and assess the
21 feasibility of implementing those efforts in Hawaii;
22 and
- 23
- 24 (4) Study best practices or innovations in other states
25 that have resulted in improved voter participation and
26 the feasibility of implementing those practices in
27 Hawaii; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter participation task
30 force include:

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- 32 (1) One representative of the Office of Elections;
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- 34 (2) One representative of each of the offices of the City
35 Clerk for the City and County of Honolulu and the
36 County Clerk for the County of Kauai, County of Maui,
37 and County of Hawaii;
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- 39 (3) One representative of the University of Hawaii
40 political science or public administration department,
41 to be selected by the President of the Senate;
- 42
- 43 (4) One representative of the University of Hawaii
44 political science or public administration department,



1 to be selected by the Speaker of the House of
2 Representatives;

3
4 (5) Two representatives, one to be selected by the
5 President of the Senate and one to be selected by the
6 Speaker of the House of Representatives, each from a
7 separate nonpartisan public interest group that works
8 on voting and elections issues; and

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10 (6) Two members representing young eligible voters to be
11 selected by the President of the Associated Students
12 of the University of Hawaii; and

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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all members of the task force
15 shall be registered voters in the State of Hawaii; and

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Lieutenant Governor convene
18 the first meeting of the task force no later than July 1, 2012;
19 and

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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force submit a
22 preliminary report on its activities no later than twenty days
23 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2013; and

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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter participation task
26 force report its findings and recommendations, including
27 proposed legislation, if any, to the Legislature no later than
28 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
29 2014; and

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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter registration task
32 force and the Lieutenant Governor be available to provide
33 testimony to the Legislature on measures and for informational
34 briefings; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter participation task
37 force cease to exist on the day of the adjournment of the
38 Regular Session of 2014; and

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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
41 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Lieutenant Governor,
42 Chief Election Officer, City Clerk of Honolulu, Kauai County
43 Clerk, Maui County Clerk, Hawaii County Clerk, President of the
44 University of Hawaii System, Chair of the Department of



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1 Political Science at the University of Hawaii, Chair of the
2 Department of Public Administration at the University of Hawaii,
3 and President of the Associated Students of the University of
4 Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY:




