

MAR 14 2012

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

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- 29 (1) One representative of the Office of Elections;  
30
- 31 (2) One representative of each of the offices of the City  
32 Clerk for the City and County of Honolulu and the  
33 County Clerk for the County of Kauai, County of Maui,  
34 and County of Hawaii;  
35
- 36 (3) One representative of the University of Hawaii  
37 political science or public administration department,  
38 to be selected by the President of the Senate;  
39
- 40 (4) One representative of the University of Hawaii  
41 political science or public administration department,  
42 to be selected by the Speaker of the House of  
43 Representatives;  
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1 (5) Two representatives, one to be selected by the  
2 President of the Senate and one to be selected by the  
3 Speaker of the House of Representatives, each from a  
4 separate nonpartisan public interest group that works  
5 on voting and elections issues; and  
6

7 (6) Two members representing young eligible voters to be  
8 selected by the President of the Associated Students  
9 of the University of Hawaii; and  
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all members of the task force  
12 shall be registered voters in the State of Hawaii; and  
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Lieutenant Governor convene  
15 the first meeting of the task force no later than July 1, 2012;  
16 and  
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force submit a  
19 preliminary report on its activities no later than twenty days  
20 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2013; and  
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter participation task  
23 force report its findings and recommendations, including  
24 proposed legislation, if any, to the Legislature no later than  
25 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of  
26 2014; and  
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter registration task  
29 force and the Lieutenant Governor be available to provide  
30 testimony to the Legislature on measures and for informational  
31 briefings; and  
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the voter participation task  
34 force cease to exist on the day of the adjournment of the  
35 Regular Session of 2014; and  
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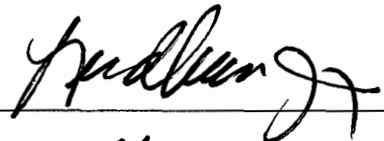
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
38 Resolution be transmitted to the Lieutenant Governor, Chief  
39 Election Officer, City Clerk of Honolulu, Kauai County Clerk,  
40 Maui County Clerk, Hawaii County Clerk, President of the  
41 University of Hawaii System, Chair of the Department of  
42 Political Science at the University of Hawaii, Chair of the  
43 Department of Public Administration at the University of Hawaii,



1 and President of the Associated Students of the University of  
2 Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY:

  
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