

MAR 13 2013

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO IMPLEMENT A SCHEDULE OF REDUCED IRRIGATION WATER TOLL RATES AND CHARGES FOR THE ISLAND OF HAWAII THAT DIFFERENTIATES AMONG DIFFERENT IRRIGATION SYSTEM AREAS AND AGRICULTURAL USERS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF HAWAII-GROWN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES THROUGH INCREASED USE OF IRRIGATION WATER.

1 WHEREAS, section 26-16(b) and (c), Hawaii Revised Statutes,
2 authorizes the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture to, among
3 other things:

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- 5 (1) Identify problems related to agriculture and the
6 appropriate state agencies and departments needed to
7 solve the problems;
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- 9 (2) Promote the conservation, development, and utilization
10 of agricultural resources in the State; and
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- 12 (3) Assist the farmers of the State and any others engaged
13 in agriculture by research projects, dissemination of
14 information, crop and livestock reporting service,
15 market news service, and any other means of improving
16 the well-being of those engaged in agriculture and
17 increasing the productivity of the lands; and
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19 WHEREAS, chapter 167, Hawaii Revised Statutes, relating to
20 irrigation water development, authorizes the Department of
21 Agriculture to, among other things, charge and collect water
22 tolls, fees, and other charges; and

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24 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii has recognized the importance
25 of a self-sufficient and sustainable economy; and

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27 WHEREAS, approximately ninety percent of all food consumed
28 in Hawaii is imported into the State; and

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1 WHEREAS, although agricultural products are grown in
2 Hawaii, the welfare of Hawaii's people will be enhanced by
3 developing agricultural production and processing as fully as
4 possible, including the growing and processing of agricultural
5 crops, the production of livestock and poultry, aquaculture and
6 aquaponics, and the production and processing of other
7 agricultural products; and

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9 WHEREAS, expanding Hawaii's agricultural sector, with the
10 resulting local purchases of Hawaii-grown and processed
11 agricultural products, would significantly benefit the State's
12 economy, revitalize Hawaii's agricultural sector, and
13 contribute to job creation and career opportunities for
14 farmers, producers of agricultural products, ranchers, and
15 other engaged in ancillary agricultural businesses; and

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17 WHEREAS, Hawaii has substantial natural water resources on
18 each of the islands that are not currently being effectively
19 used and conserved for agricultural purposes but that can, on a
20 sustainable basis, be used in greater quantities to expand and
21 enhance Hawaii's agricultural sector and production; and

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23 WHEREAS, on the Island of Hawaii, the high cost of water
24 delivery is causing a hardship on farmers growing and desiring
25 to grow agricultural crops and poultry, ranchers engaged in the
26 production of livestock, and others desiring to develop
27 aquaculture and aquaponics, thereby making it difficult to
28 continue or undertake a sustainable agricultural business and
29 adversely affecting the Island of Hawaii's agricultural
30 productivity; and

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32 WHEREAS, the irrigation systems that currently exist
33 provide water in different areas on the Island of Hawaii, and
34 the costs of operating and maintaining these systems differ
35 depending upon the location of these irrigation systems; and

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37 WHEREAS, the water toll rates and charges for the delivery
38 of water to agricultural users in these irrigation systems have
39 been at a uniform rate on a statewide basis, which imposes
40 hardships on farmers, ranchers, and others on the Island of
41 Hawaii engaged in the growing of agricultural crops, including
42 aquaculture and aquaponics, and the production of livestock and
43 poultry located in these different irrigation systems located on
44 different islands of Hawaii; and



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2 WHEREAS, the existing water toll rates and charges do not
3 take into account the levels and amounts of water that are
4 appropriate for the various irrigation systems on the Island of
5 Hawaii to promote increased agricultural, livestock, and poultry
6 production in these different areas, and do not take into
7 account the different classes of users who often use different
8 amounts of water for agricultural production; and
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10 WHEREAS, a system of differentiated water toll rates would
11 provide opportunities to use for agricultural production the
12 currently unused water within these districts on the Island of
13 Hawaii that currently flows to the sea; and
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15 WHEREAS, as an initial step toward implementing a system of
16 differentiated water toll rates for different irrigations
17 systems and for different classes of users, there should be
18 established and implemented a differentiated water toll system
19 for the Island of Hawaii's district irrigation system; now,
20 therefore,
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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh
23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013, the
24 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
25 Agriculture is requested to implement a schedule of reduced
26 irrigation water toll rates and charges for the Island of Hawaii
27 that differentiates among different irrigation system areas and
28 agricultural users for growing of agricultural crops and the
29 production of livestock and poultry to promote the development
30 and expansion of Hawaii-grown agricultural commodities through
31 increased use of irrigation water; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
34 is requested to report to the Legislature on the implementation
35 of a system of reduced water toll rates for the Island of
36 Hawaii, as described above, no later than twenty days prior to
37 the convening of the Regular Session of 2014; and
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S.C.R. NO. 122

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
3 Board of Agriculture, Mayor of the County of Hawaii, and
4 Chairperson of the Water Board of the County of Hawaii.
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OFFERED BY:






