

MAR 13 2015

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO PURCHASE THE KOHALA DITCH SYSTEM IN THE DISTRICT OF NORTH KOHALA ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, the 22.5 mile Kohala Ditch, completed in 1906, is  
2 the lifeline for agriculture in North Kohala on the island of  
3 Hawaii; and

4  
5 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch passes over public and private  
6 lands; and

7  
8 WHEREAS, Kamehameha Schools owns the land at Honokane Nui  
9 that provides water to the Kohala Ditch system, which is owned  
10 and operated by the Morrison Grove Capital Investment Company;  
11 and

12  
13 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch is one of the last, if not the  
14 last, ditch not controlled by the State of Hawaii; and

15  
16 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch is a legacy project, essential to  
17 what Kohala has been, is today, and will be in the future; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, a 6.7 magnitude earthquake in Kiholo Bay on  
20 October 15, 2006, caused extensive damage to the Kohala Ditch  
21 system, with the most severely impacted sector being Flume No. 1  
22 between Honokane Nui and the Niulii Well; and

23  
24 WHEREAS, the damage to the Kohala Ditch caused the flow of  
25 water to stop, which adversely impacted farmers, ranchers,  
26 businesses, the community, and the entire State; and

27  
28 WHEREAS, the Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for  
29 emergency repairs and the United States Congress also  
30 appropriated \$2,000,000 for general repairs of the Kohala Ditch  
31 irrigation system; and

32  
33 WHEREAS, the expenditure of state and federal  
34 appropriations were vital in restoring the Kohala Ditch, which



1 became operational in late 2010 and has since served the public  
2 good, welfare, and economy; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, since its restoration, the Kohala Ditch has been  
5 periodically inoperative as a result of flash flooding that has  
6 caused ditch infrastructure failures, which have imposed water  
7 shortages on farmers, ranchers, businesses, and residents; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, thunderstorm conditions from December 21 to 22,  
10 2014, generated heavy downpour that caused additional damage to  
11 the Kohala Ditch; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, Flume No. 10 sustained severe damage, including  
14 the washing away of the concrete pier that holds up the center  
15 of the flume, and the west side pier sustained damage when the  
16 center pier fell over, which has resulted in the partial  
17 collapse of the flume; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, other portions of the Kohala Ditch have sustained  
20 damage that impacts water usage and access; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch is currently undergoing  
23 maintenance and recovery operations that may continue to cause  
24 interruption and hardship to farmers, ranchers, and residents  
25 through May 2015; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, repairing the Kohala Ditch has been and continues  
28 to be a major undertaking, and ensuring its long-term viability  
29 is an equally daunting task; and  
30

31 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch is more than just a historical  
32 artifact; it is critical to the future of sustainable  
33 diversified agriculture in Kohala; and  
34

35 WHEREAS, the Kohala Ditch system is a critical water source  
36 for local farmers and an important resource to the community of  
37 the island of Hawaii; and  
38

39 WHEREAS, investment in the management of the Kohala Ditch  
40 could provide better water resource distribution for the  
41 community of North Kohala; and  
42



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1 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii should assume a more active  
 2 role in the maintenance of the Kohala Ditch system to ensure  
 3 that Kohala Ditch users, including farmers, ranchers,  
 4 businesses, and residents, have a major stakeholder to work with  
 5 regarding the timely maintenance of and improvements to the  
 6 Kohala Ditch infrastructure; now, therefore,

7  
 8 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
 9 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015,  
 10 that the Department of Agriculture and Department of Land and  
 11 Natural Resources are requested to develop a plan to purchase  
 12 the entire Kohala Ditch system in the District of North Kohala  
 13 on the island of Hawaii; and

14  
 15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
 16 and Department of Land and Natural Resources collaborate with  
 17 appropriate private landowners, Kohala Ditch users, and the  
 18 Kohala Ditch Foundation to determine the optimal management plan  
 19 that will ensure the long-term management, viability,  
 20 sustainability, and operation of the Kohala Ditch; and

21  
 22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
 23 serve as the lead agency to determine the estimated cost of  
 24 purchasing the Kohala Ditch and report its findings and  
 25 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
 26 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
 27 the Regular Session of 2016; and

28  
 29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 30 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of  
 31 Agriculture, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural  
 32 Resources, and President of the Kohala Ditch Foundation Board of  
 33 Directors.

34  
 35  
 36

*J. Pa. Gish*  
*Rouf d. Bel*

OFFERED BY: *Maione R. Inouye*  
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