

MAR 10 2017

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO NEGOTIATE LAND EXCHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING PRIVATE LANDS SUITABLE FOR LONG-TERM DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION IN EXCHANGE FOR STATE LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED FOR AFFORDABLE, WORKFORCE, AND OTHER HOUSING FOR HAWAII RESIDENTS.

1 WHEREAS, agriculture was the economic mainstay for many of
2 Hawaii's rural communities; and

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4 WHEREAS, the agricultural industry, specifically sugar cane
5 and pineapple, had a greater stake in how and where communities
6 grew; and

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8 WHEREAS, over the past four decades, communities have
9 witnessed the end of the era of Hawaii's plantation heritage;
10 and

11
12 WHEREAS, in 1971, the Kahuku sugar mill closed; in 1996,
13 the Waialua sugar mill closed; in 2008, Del Monte fresh produce
14 ended operations; and in 2016, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar
15 Company ended sugar operations; and

16
17 WHEREAS, a recent report released by the Department of
18 Agriculture, Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline 2015,
19 shows a dramatic change in agricultural land over the last
20 thirty-five years as sugar production and pineapple production
21 have downsized; and

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23 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Agriculture, there
24 are 151,830 acres of agricultural land in crop production today
25 compared to 350,830 acres in crop production in 1980; and

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27 WHEREAS, it is the State's responsibility under article XI,
28 section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution to conserve and
29 protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture,
30 increase agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the
31 availability of agriculturally suitable lands; and

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33 WHEREAS, Hawaii's agricultural production is insufficient
34 to meet the State's food consumption needs, and this over-



1 reliance on imported food creates critical health, safety and
2 security issues for Hawaii, the State's sustainable future, and
3 preparedness in the event of future disaster, emergency, or
4 crisis; and

5
6 WHEREAS, attempts to stimulate diversified agriculture in
7 the private sector through regulatory controls and land use and
8 zoning restrictions is not sufficient to address the business
9 needs and subsidies necessary to effectively and significantly
10 increase diversified agriculture to the extent necessary to
11 avoid Hawaii's agricultural self-sufficiency crisis; and

12
13 WHEREAS, over the past few years, the State has made it a
14 priority to shift toward sustainability in agriculture and
15 decreasing our food imports; and

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17 WHEREAS, Act 55, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, amends the
18 Hawaii State Planning Act to create a new state policy to
19 promote economically competitive activities that increase
20 Hawaii's agricultural self-sufficiency, including the increased
21 purchase and use of Hawaii-grown food and food products by
22 residents, businesses, and governmental bodies; and

23
24 WHEREAS, large tracts of agricultural land, including those
25 formerly used for pineapple and sugar cane, are now fallow; and

26
27 WHEREAS, these lands provide a unique opportunity for the
28 State to fulfill the intent of the Hawaii State Constitution
29 regarding diversified agriculture and agricultural self-
30 sufficiency through acquisition of suitable agricultural land
31 for long-term leases for diversified, bona fide agricultural
32 operations to increase agricultural production; and

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34 WHEREAS, the State is facing a crisis in homelessness,
35 affordable housing, workforce housing, and other housing
36 inventory for Hawaii's residents; and

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38 WHEREAS, according to the December 2016 Report to the
39 Hawaii State Legislature in response to Act 127, Session Laws of
40 Hawaii 2016, by the special action team on affordable rental
41 housing, there is an estimated statewide need for approximately



1 24,551 housing units in the five-year period from 2016 to 2020;
2 and
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4 WHEREAS, the lack of suitable, entitled lands for
5 development of appropriate housing is a major contributing
6 factor to the housing crisis, and substantial obstacles and
7 delays in entitling such lands result in discouraging
8 development, lowering housing inventory, and raising housing
9 prices, among other negative effects; and
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11 WHEREAS, land exchanges, the exchange of state lands in
12 other states for privately owned lands to meet the needs of and
13 to mutually benefit both parties, have provided public benefit
14 in the areas of conservation, economic growth, ecology, and
15 recreation; and
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17 WHEREAS, land exchanges present a viable method of
18 addressing the many housing and agricultural issues facing the
19 State because land exchanges present a win-win situation where
20 the State is able to negotiate a mutually beneficial exchange of
21 developable state lands for housing in exchange for privately
22 owned agricultural lands for farming; now, therefore,
23

24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
25 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017,
26 that the Governor is requested to negotiate land exchanges for
27 the purpose of acquiring private lands suitable for long-term
28 diversified agriculture production in exchange for state lands
29 to be acquired by private parties for development of affordable,
30 workforce, and other housing for Hawaii residents; and
31

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor coordinate with
33 the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Land and
34 Natural Resources, and any other department or agency of the
35 State that holds title to or an assignment of state land that
36 may be appropriate for exchange; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the negotiations endeavor to:
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- 40 (1) Obtain large tracts of suitable agricultural lands for
41 the State to lease to farmers for diversified
42 agriculture; and



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 2 (2) Provide to private parties suitable urban lands along
 3 the rail transit corridor on Oahu for development of
 4 affordable housing, workforce housing, and other
 5 housing inventory for Hawaii residents, and mixed use
 6 commercial and accessory uses within areas designated
 7 for transit-oriented development and other appropriate
 8 urbanized areas on Oahu; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to
 11 submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days
 12 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018 on:
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14 (1) The feasibility of any land exchanges of agricultural
 15 parcels of high interest to the State in exchange for
 16 urbanized lands along the rail transit corridor on
 17 Oahu for appropriate private development of housing
 18 negotiated by the Governor, a list of lands suitable
 19 for such an exchange, and a description and the market
 20 value of the parcels; and
 21

22 (2) Any appropriations, proposed legislation, or
 23 administrative action necessary to accomplish the
 24 goals; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 27 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the
 28 Board of Land and Natural Resources, Executive Director of the
 29 Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation, and
 30 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.
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 33

OFFERED BY:

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