WHEREAS, the abuse of illicit drugs in the State is an epidemic that has no place in Hawaii's families, communities, or schools; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health, the average annual number of drug poisoning deaths, or overdoses, in Hawaii nearly doubled from the 1999-2003 period (78 deaths) to the 2010-2014 period (156 deaths); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health also reports that from 2010 through 2014, drugs and medications, including prescription drugs, illicit drugs, and over-the-counter medications, were the underlying cause of death for ninety-one percent of all poisoning deaths; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that the State explore all reasonable options in combatting this public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of drug-detecting canines are well-known, and drug-detecting canines are widely utilized by law enforcement agencies across the globe; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety already deploys a special operations K9 unit to detect bombs, narcotics, and currency; and

WHEREAS, substantially increasing the size and scope of the special operations K9 unit could have a great impact on curtailing the State's drug epidemic; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Public Safety and Department of Transportation are urged to jointly convene a working group to:

1. Develop a course of action and possible operations that could be established and deployed to combat the drug epidemic in the State, including but not limited to the possibility of expanding the use of the special operations K9 unit for drug detection; and

2. Discuss cross jurisdictional issues, if any, among federal, state, and county law enforcement agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group include representatives from:

1. The United States Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration;

2. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration;

3. The Department of Public Safety;

4. The Department of Transportation;

5. The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Hawaii;

6. The Department of the Attorney General;

7. The department or office of the Prosecuting Attorney for each county;

8. Each of the county police departments;

9. Interested non-profit organizations; and

10. Other interested community stakeholders; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety and Department of Transportation are requested to jointly submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018 that includes but is not limited to:

1. Data and statistics on narcotics and money trafficking in and out of the State through the State's five major airports (Hilo International Airport, Kona International Airport, Kahului Airport, Lihue Airport, and Honolulu International Airport);

2. Data and statistics on how the drug epidemic is impacting the State's communities; and

3. A plan of action to combat the illicit drug abuse epidemic in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be dissolved on June 30, 2018; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Public Safety; Director of Transportation; United States Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, Honolulu Office; United States Drug Enforcement Administration, Special Agent in Charge, Los Angeles Division; United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii; Attorney General; Prosecuting Attorney for each county; and chief of each county police department.