

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3264

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 28 2018

RE: S.R. No. 109

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2018
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred S.R. No. 109 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION URGING VARIOUS GOVERNMENT ENTITIES TO DEVELOP, UPDATE, AND INTRODUCE POLICIES RELATED TO HELICOPTER AIR TOURS AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to urge various government entities to develop, update, and introduce policies related to helicopter air tours at the state and national level.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the County of Hawai'i, Office of the Mayor; Hawaii Island Coalition Malama Pono; one individual; and a petition with one hundred ninety names.

Your Committee finds that Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, on the island of Hawai'i, is managed by the Director of the National Park Service, which is a bureau of the United States Department of the Interior, and has more non-essential tour helicopter overflights than any other individual park in the nation. Your Committee further finds that in recent years, helicopter noise as a result of commercial air tour flights over residential areas in the east Hawai'i region of the island of Hawai'i has reached an unprecedented level. Residents in Hāmākua, Hilo, Mountain View, Puna, Volcano, and Ka'ū have continued to raise issues of overflights, noise complaints, and safety with the state



Department of Transportation, Honolulu Flight Standards District Office of the Federal Aviation Administration, and air tour helicopter operators.

Your Committee additionally finds that it has been fourteen years since the Federal Aviation Administration and National Park Service initially asked for comments on an Air Tour Management Plan Environmental Assessment and seven years since a preliminary draft Air Tour Management Plan for Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park was published. However, there is still no final Air Tour Management Plan for Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and the only rules that govern helicopter and fixed wing air tours over the airspace of the Hawaiian islands are contained in the decade-old Hawai'i Air Tour Common Procedures Manual. This measure therefore urges various government entities to develop, update, and introduce policies related to helicopter air tours at the state and national level, including completing the Air Tour Management Plan for Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Haleakalā, and other designated national parks throughout the nation; updating the Hawai'i Air Tour Common Procedures Manual; and working with community stakeholders to address concerns related to noise complaints and safety issues.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Government Operations that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 109 and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Government
Operations,


DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



