WHEREAS, abandoned vehicles in the State of Hawaii are a safety issue, an environmental issue, and a parking issue; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the City and County of Honolulu towed about 1,600 abandoned vehicles and tow companies complained that their lots are overcrowded with abandoned and derelict vehicles and they do not have the space to store any more vehicles; and

WHEREAS, abandoned vehicles often become objects of graffiti and vandalism in residential areas, which makes them eyesores and a danger to nearby residents; and

WHEREAS, some of the vehicles are abandoned on public property and can remain there for months at a time; and

WHEREAS, abandoned vehicles often become occupied by homeless individuals; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Customer Services, the City and County of Honolulu has requested an additional two to four acres of land for one to two years to store abandoned vehicles; and

WHEREAS, towing companies have experienced increased operating costs in the past few years due to an increase in industrial real-estate values, which has resulted in a loss of storage lots for towed vehicles, and it is difficult to obtain additional storage lots from property owners because they are hesitant to lease their land to a towing company; and
WHEREAS, when towing companies' lots are full, they need to travel to other lots that are further away to store the abandoned vehicles, which results in higher operating costs for the towing companies; and

WHEREAS, towing companies may not be interested in county contracts because available storage lots are in areas that would increase their travel expenses; and

WHEREAS, between 2011 and 2016, about 1,440 abandoned vehicles on towing storage lots in Oahu were traced to military personnel who abandoned their vehicles when they left the island, creating further storage problems for towing companies; and

WHEREAS, military vehicles that are ferried into the State cost the counties even more than the typical abandoned vehicle, and these military vehicles make up a significant portion of abandoned vehicles in the State; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources has control over State lands that may be currently vacant and not being used for any purpose; and

WHEREAS, allowing the counties to use the Department's vacant land to store abandoned vehicles would eliminate the costs that towing companies would otherwise incur from storing abandoned vehicles on their premises; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is urged to allow the counties to use the Department's vacant state lands as storage for abandoned vehicles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is urged to give the counties the discretion to select from any available state land under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources and the Mayor of each county.

OFFERED BY:

MAR 8 2018