A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SISTER-STATE RELATIONSHIPS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that during its service in World War II, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion, composed almost entirely of second-generation Japanese-American soldiers, many from Hawaii, together earned seven presidential unit citations, two meritorious service plaques, thirty-six army commendation medals, and eighty-seven division commendations. Individual soldiers in these units were awarded a combined eighteen thousand decorations.

The legislature also finds that in September 1944, the men of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team were assigned to the invasion of southern France under the 7th Army and took part in the drive into the Vosges mountains. Over the course of four weeks that fall, they liberated the towns of Bruyeres and Biffontaine, in the Department of Vosges, and also rescued the 141st Regiment's 1st Battalion, known as the "Lost Battalion",
which had been cut off from its division and surrounded by enemy troops for four days.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team's actions to liberate Bruyeres on October 30, 1944, were so heroic that a monument in the town, dedicated to the soldiers, proclaims that they "reaffirmed an historic truth here that loyalty to one's country is not modified by racial origin," and "[t]hese Americans, whose ancestors were Japanese, . . . broke the back-bone of the German defense". Based on their shared history, cities of Bruyeres and Honolulu in 1961 established a sister-city relationship that continues today.

The legislature further finds that the department of business, economic development, and tourism has established close working relationships with foreign governments and non-governmental organizations, federal agencies, and national organizations. Many of these relationships have been established pursuant to the department of business, economic development, and tourism's sister-state program. These sister-state relationships raise Hawaii's international profile, attract dynamic cooperative programs, and stimulate Hawaii's economy. The legislature finds that establishing a sister-state
relationship with the Department of Vosges in France would serve
to promote economic benefits to both states, including cross-
cultural tourism, in addition to an historic friendship,
significant cultural ties, and general goodwill.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
department of business, economic development, and tourism to
establish a sister-state relationship with the Department of
Vosges, France.

SECTION 2. The department of business, economic
development, and tourism shall evaluate, make recommendations,
and establish, exempt from section 229-3, Hawaii Revised
Statutes, a sister-state relationship between the State and the
Department of Vosges in France.

The department of business, economic development, and
tourism shall submit a report to the legislature no later than
twenty days prior to the regular session of 2020, and each
subsequent legislative session until the sister-state
relationship is fully established. The report shall detail the
department's progress, findings, and recommendations, including
any proposed legislation, relating to the evaluation and
establishment of a sister-state relationship with the Department of Vosges, France.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:
Report Title:
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Sister-State Relationship; Establishment; Biffontaine; Bruyères; Department of Vosges; France

Description:
Requires the Hawaii sister-state committee to evaluate, develop recommendations, and establish a sister-state relationship with the Department of Vosges, France.

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