REQUESTING APPROVAL FROM THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION FOR A PROPOSED LOW-INCOME AND WORKFORCE HOUSING PROJECT LOCATED WITHIN THE FOOTPRINT OF FEDERALLY-FUNDED INTERSTATE HIGHWAY, F.A.P. NO. I-H1-1(13), EWA OF HUGH STREET IN PEARL CITY AND URGING THE GOVERNOR TO USE OHANA ZONE PILOT PROGRAM FUNDS FOR THE PROJECT.

WHEREAS, in 2018, over 6,500 individuals experienced homelessness in Hawaii, according to Partners in Care's annual point in time survey; and

WHEREAS, while market rental rates in Hawaii are among the highest in the nation and overall cost of living is the highest, average household income in the State is among the lowest; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's income to expense gap has consistently widened over the past ten years as rents, particularly in Honolulu, have consistently risen faster than both wages and inflation; and

WHEREAS, the State's stock of affordable housing stock is insufficient to meet demand, especially for the lowest income households, for which affordable housing is available to less than one-third of households; and

WHEREAS, Housing First is a nationally recognized best practice proven to be the most effective and efficient approach to help people experiencing chronic homelessness get and stay off the streets by immediately moving them from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments; and

WHEREAS, many county, state, and private interests are working together to find innovative solutions to homelessness
and Hawaii’s housing crisis that adhere to the Housing First model; and

WHEREAS, one such initiative is a planned transitional housing pilot project on Oahu to be placed on land subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration, use of which requires one or more permits or approvals from the Federal Highway Administration; and

WHEREAS, one location subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration that has been identified as a potential location for a low-income and workforce housing project is the property located beneath the H-1 viaduct, Interstate Highway, F.A.P. No. I-H1-1(13), Ewa of Hugh Street in Pearl City; and

WHEREAS, as part of the planning and preparation for the housing pilot project, the project developers will soon begin submitting preliminary applications for federal approval; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the Senate concurring, that the Federal Highway Administration is requested to approve a proposed low-income and workforce housing project located within the footprint of federally-funded interstate highway, F.A.P. No. I-H1-1(13), Ewa of Hugh Street in Pearl City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Federal Highway Administration is requested to timely process applications for permits and approvals necessary for the development of the proposed low-income and workforce housing project on land subject to Federal Highway Administration jurisdiction and timely approve applications that meet eligibility criteria; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is urged to use part of the Ohana Zones Pilot Program funds appropriated in Act 209, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, to support the development of the proposed low-income and workforce housing project under the H-1 viaduct; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Division Director of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration, Governor, Director of Transportation, and Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu.

OFFERED BY: 

Kai Ka'ana

MAR 06 2020