WHEREAS, states including Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, and Texas have a state demographer who provides the public and state legislature with reports on state demographics, or an analysis of human population characteristics, and related socioeconomic data that may be useful to public policymakers; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii has no state demographer and relies upon statistics and data from the United States Census Bureau and various agencies and nonprofit organizations to support legislation and funding requests; and

WHEREAS, unless the Legislature requests an audit by the State Auditor, a study by the Legislative Reference Bureau, or a state-funded report by a third party, reports provided to the Legislature by various agencies and nonprofit organizations to justify their funding requests may be biased; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently funded two databases used by Homeless Continuum of Care providers to input data on the clients they serve, where previously there was only one database; and

WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, which drafted the most recent homeless report and provided data on the efficacy of various homeless programs by county, race, gender, veteran status, age, families, and length of residence, has declined to prepare another report because it would need to review two databases; and
WHEREAS, in addition to creating reports using both HUD-funded databases, a state demographer could provide periodic reports on kupuna care and kupuna caregiver program demographics to evaluate their efficacy and how equitably benefits are being distributed; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature could also benefit by having a state demographer capable of generating demographic reports on other multimillion-dollar programs funded by the State prior to the start of each regular session; 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 this body requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study to determine the need for a state demographer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to consider the pros and cons of creating an Office of the State Demographer and whether the State Auditor; Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; University of Hawaii; or other agency or department has the existing capacity to generate these types of demographic reports; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau.