WHEREAS, Hawaii receives consistent rainfall, has advantageous geology for aquifers, and has high-quality drinking water stores; and

WHEREAS, recent findings raise concerns about the long-term water security for the State as members of the scientific community, including the University of Hawaii, have documented troubling trends in recent decades, including reduced rainfall, higher evaporation rates, and declining stream flows; and

WHEREAS, evidence suggests that rainfall has decreased by twenty-two percent in Hawaii over the last thirty years; and

WHEREAS, while computer models differ markedly in their predictions regarding precipitation patterns and water availability in Hawaii over the coming decades, the unmistakable observed trend is one of decreasing rainfall and increased incidence of drought; and

WHEREAS, if the current trend holds, by 2030 Hawaii will receive only three quarters of the rain that fell in 1985; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii has recently made progress on increasing water reuse, conservation, and recharge through the statewide Fresh Water Initiative, which aims to increase fresh water supply by one hundred million gallons per day by 2030; and

WHEREAS, Act 42, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, authorized the counties to charge user fees to create and maintain any
stormwater management or infrastructure, which encourages water recharge and encourages the protection of water resources; and

WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu has been the leader in evaluating the merits of a stormwater utility for Oahu as a way to better manage stormwater, increase green infrastructure for improved water recharge, and demonstrate more accountability for stormwater program operations; and

WHEREAS, Act 170, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, requires all state and county facilities to use reclaimed water for non-potable uses by December 31, 2045; and

WHEREAS, Act 141, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, requires the adoption of Universal Plumbing Code updates, among other building code and standard updates, within two years of official publication; and

WHEREAS, because of Act 141, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, plumbing code updates will take effect for all counties in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Kauai County has been the leader on plumbing code updates that provide more stringent rules on water conservation and further details on water reuse design standards; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, S.R. No. 74, S.D. 2, required a water reuse task force to be organized to discuss how to scale water reuse in Hawaii and overcome barriers; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Legislature provided for two water reuse demonstration projects; and

WHEREAS, Act 202, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, requires the Department of Health to adopt rules for on-site non-potable water reuse systems, which will provide invaluable information to developers and engineers; and

WHEREAS, multiple entities, including government, non-profit, business, and academics, are collaborating to enhance water conservation reuse and recharge in the State to ensure
fresh water access for current and future generations; 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 counties and Department of Health are requested to continue to work on sustainable water measures and support ongoing water conservation efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are requested to update plumbing codes to the most recent versions before mandatory deadlines take effect; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are requested to contemplate developing stormwater utilities to encourage sustainable stormwater management practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is requested to continue work on developing on-site non-potable water reuse system rules to ensure the safe and efficient use of recycled water at the building level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties and Department of Health are requested to continue to support ongoing efforts to enhance fresh water supplies in Hawaii and increase water conservation, reuse, and recharge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Health, Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, Mayor of the County of Hawaii, Mayor of the County of Maui, and Mayor of the County of Kauai.

OFFERED BY:  

FEB 27 2020