A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE METRIC SYSTEM.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that strong reasons exist for Hawaii and other states to switch to the metric system, also known as the International System of Units or SI. By using its customary system of inches, feet, ounces, and pounds, the United States is an outlier. Only two other countries—Burma and Liberia—do not utilize the metric system as their predominant means of measurement. The metric system is the language of science, medicine, international commerce, and most sports. Furthermore, learning two measurement systems is time-consuming, can be confusing; and can result in costly and dangerous conversion errors. The costs of not utilizing the metric system are quickly increasing with the trend toward globalization, which could result in the United States losing its competitive edge in science and technology and continuing to create bilateral trade impediments with other countries. The economic benefits of global interoperability greatly outweigh the challenges of converting to the metric system. Product design,
manufacturing, marketing, and labeling are all made more
difficult by having to convert measurements from one system to
another. Switching to the metric system could result in the
creation of many jobs and enable the current and future
workforce of the United States to be more prepared to work in
the international marketplace.

The purpose of this Act is to establish a task force to
copy certain topics associated with the use of the metric
system in Hawai'i.

SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department
of transportation for administrative purposes a task force to:

(1) Explore the use of the metric system for distance and
speed measurements on public signs; and

(2) Evaluate whether any problems have occurred for
tourists from metric system-based countries.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The director of transportation or the director's
designee, who shall serve as the chairperson of the
task force;

(2) The director of business, economic development, and
tourism or the director's designee;
(3) The president and chief executive officer of the Hawaii tourism authority or the president and chief executive officer's designee;

(4) The administrator of the quality assurance division of the department of agriculture, or the administrator's designee;

(5) A member of the senate, to be designated by the president of the senate; and

(6) A member of the house of representatives, to be designated by the speaker of the house of representatives.

Task force members may recommend additional members with appropriate relevant expertise to the task force, with the approval of the chairperson.

(b) Members of the task force shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred, including travel expenses.

(c) The department of transportation shall provide administrative and clerical support required by the task force.

(d) The task force shall submit a report to the legislature of its findings and recommendations, including
proposed legislation, no later than sixty days prior to the
convening of the regular session of 2020.

(e) The task force shall be dissolved on June 30, 2020.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $100,000 or so much
thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 for the
task force established pursuant to this Act.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
transportation for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY:
Report Title:
Measurements; Metric System; Signage Task Force; Appropriation

Description:
Establishes a task force within the department of transportation to explore certain topics associated with the use of the metric system in Hawaii. Appropriates funds.

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