SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE COUNTIES, IN COORDINATION WITH THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS, CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE STATE'S CONVERSION TO AN ELECTION BY MAIL SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, (Act 136), which appropriates funds to implement and administer a statewide election by mail system, requires that all elections statewide be conducted by mail, beginning with the 2020 primary election; and

WHEREAS, Section 11-109(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), as established by Act 136, only requires the counties to establish a single voter service center located at the office of the clerk; and

WHEREAS, Section 11-109, HRS, only allows additional locations to be established within a county as may be designated by the county clerk to service the needs of the county's voters; and

WHEREAS, Act 136 also does not contain any provisions for a transition plan as the State moves to all-mail elections; and

WHEREAS, the county of Hawaii covers the 4,028 square mile island of Hawaii; the county of Maui encompasses the various islands of Maui, Kaho‘olawe, Lāna‘i, and Molokai; the city and county of Honolulu covers the metropolitan island of Oahu; and the county of Kauai covers the island of Kauai; and

WHEREAS, from times of the American Civil War, there has been a disparity between how one votes in urban and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, not only is this disparity evident along party lines, but also through the methods and means of how these populations vote. Specifically, in Hawaii, votes from rural
areas overwhelmingly come from ballots received through
in-person and same-day registration and vote; and

WHEREAS, although 90 percent of people living in Hawaii
live in a nonrural area, the votes of the remaining ten percent
should not be neglected; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that there needs to be a
transition plan as the State executes an election by mail
system; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of
Representatives concurring, that the County Clerks of the
Counties of Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu, and Kauai should, in
coordination with the Office of Elections, create and execute a
plan that will help voters in rural areas in our State
transition to all-mail voting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Counties are especially
encouraged to establish additional voter service centers in
rural communities, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the County Clerks of the
Counties of Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu, and Kauai; the Comptroller
of the Department of Accounting and General Services; and the
Chief Election Officer of the Office of Elections.