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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
DIVISION TO ENSURE THAT DESTINATIONS TO WHICH THE STATE'S  
RECYCLABLE WASTE IS TRANSPORTED FOR OUT-OF-STATE PROCESSING  
ABIDE BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AS OUTLINED BY THE  
BASEL CONVENTION.

1           WHEREAS, prior to China's import ban on recyclable plastics  
2 in January 2018, seventy percent of the world's plastic waste  
3 was exported to China; and  
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5           WHEREAS, since China's import ban on recyclable plastics,  
6 recyclable plastic waste shipments to Southeast Asian countries  
7 have increased exponentially; for example, exports of recycling  
8 from the United States to Thailand increased almost seven  
9 thousand percent in one year; and  
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11           WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii exported approximately 10,500,000  
12 pounds of plastic, 8,500,000 pounds of aluminum, and 32,100,000  
13 pounds of glass and bi-metal for recycling; and  
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15           WHEREAS, Hawaii collection companies choose where to send  
16 the State's recyclable waste based on factors including shipping  
17 costs, contracts, and the amount the buyer is willing to pay;  
18 and  
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20           WHEREAS, in 2019, Hawaii shipped its recyclable plastics,  
21 aluminum, glass, and bi-metal nationally to states including  
22 California, Georgia, Maryland, and Oregon, and internationally  
23 to China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and South  
24 Korea; and  
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26           WHEREAS, much of the recyclable waste that is shipped to  
27 United States destinations from Hawaii is subsequently sent  
28 overseas for end-of-life processing; and  
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1 WHEREAS, end-of-life processing for recyclable plastics and  
2 waste in many of the countries in which Hawaii's recyclable  
3 waste ultimately arrives are often handled in a manner that  
4 cause harm to human health and local environments; and

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6 WHEREAS, in response to public outcry in the 1980s  
7 following the discovery of deposits of toxic wastes imported  
8 from abroad in Africa and other parts of the developing world,  
9 the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements  
10 of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, commonly referred to as  
11 the Basel Convention, was adopted on March 22, 1989, and entered  
12 into force in 1992; and

13  
14 WHEREAS, the objective of the Basel Convention is to  
15 protect human health and the environment from the effects of  
16 hazardous wastes and other wastes; and

17  
18 WHEREAS, the Basel Convention is a multilateral  
19 environmental agreement under the auspices of the United Nations  
20 Environmental Program and was created to reduce the movement of  
21 hazardous and other wastes between nations, specifically with  
22 the intent of preventing transfer of hazardous waste from  
23 developed to less developed countries; and

24  
25 WHEREAS, the United States of America is a signatory to the  
26 Basel Convention but not a party; and

27  
28 WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2021, the Basel Convention  
29 was amended to require trade controls for all mixed plastic  
30 waste not destined for environmentally-sound recycling; and

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32 WHEREAS, the Department of Health oversees waste disposal  
33 and recycling in the State; and

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35 WHEREAS, each county in the State handles its respective  
36 waste processing independent of the other counties; now,  
37 therefore,

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39 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
40 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
41 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Health's  
42 Environmental Management Division is urged to ensure that  
43 destinations to which the State's recyclable waste is



1 transported for out-of-state processing abide by the  
2 environmental standards as outlined by the Basel Convention; and  
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are urged to  
5 ensure that destinations to which their respective county's  
6 recyclable waste is transported for out-of-state processing  
7 abide by the health and safety standards as outlined by the  
8 Basel Convention; and  
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
11 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director  
12 of Health, and mayors of each county.

