
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH A STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has an abundance of geologic resources,
2 such as soil, rock, and mineral resources; groundwater; and
3 geothermal resources; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii faces a wide range of geologic hazards,
6 including coastal erosion, landslides, flash flooding,
7 earthquakes, volcanism, and ocean hazards; and
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9 WHEREAS, sediment-laden surface water runoff is an
10 environmental hazard that threatens nearshore water quality; and
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12 WHEREAS, watershed management planning is recognized as the
13 best approach to identify where to implement best management
14 practices to reduce surface runoff into nearshore receiving
15 waters; and
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17 WHEREAS, hazard mitigation planning is needed to reduce the
18 risk to island communities from landslides, flash flooding, and
19 wildland fires; and
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21 WHEREAS, geologic maps are essential tools for watershed
22 mapping and the development of effective watershed management
23 plans and hazard mitigation plans; and
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25 WHEREAS, Hawaii's mapping capability for purposes of
26 watershed management and hazard mitigation is insufficient
27 because of the lack of a centralized scientific office to
28 provide expertise, conduct research, and map the State's
29 resources and hazard zones for public safety and for resource
30 management planning; and



1 WHEREAS, many other states have an established geological
2 survey responsible for producing maps of natural processes,
3 assessing threats, compiling and centralizing data, coordinating
4 with other agencies, and adding a scientific dimension to
5 planning; and
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7 WHEREAS, these state geological surveys are able to receive
8 federal funding to meet their states' geological mapping
9 priorities through the United States Geological Survey's
10 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program; and
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12 WHEREAS, the United States Geological Survey created the
13 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program to produce
14 accurate geologic maps and three-dimensional framework models in
15 the United States to be used for land-use management, threat
16 assessment, conservation of natural resources, groundwater
17 management, natural-hazard mitigation, and environmental
18 protection; and
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20 WHEREAS, the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program
21 is the primary source of funds for the production of geologic
22 maps in the United States; and
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24 WHEREAS, one component of the National Cooperative Geologic
25 Mapping Program is the STATEMAP program, which provides federal
26 funds to state geological surveys to enable new geologic mapping
27 projects determined to be vital to the economic, social, or
28 scientific welfare of individual states; and
29

30 WHEREAS, geologic maps produced through the National
31 Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program provide useful data for
32 decision-makers in interpreting and evaluating their state's
33 unique natural resources and hazards and in creating effective
34 management plans; and
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36 WHEREAS, as of 2020, STATEMAP has invested more than
37 \$150,000,000 in forty-eight state geological surveys to complete
38 geologic mapping projects critical to the health and security of
39 the residents and natural resources of individual states; and
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41 WHEREAS, Hawaii is currently unable to participate in the
42 National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program and therefore



1 unable to receive STATEMAP funds because it has no state
2 geological survey; and
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4 WHEREAS, Hawaii is the only state in the nation without a
5 geological survey and is one of only two states in the nation
6 that has never received federal funds to perform geological
7 studies; and
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9 WHEREAS, without a geological survey, Hawaii is currently
10 monitoring and researching natural resources and hazards through
11 an unorganized combination of federal, state, and county
12 engineers and consultants; and
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14 WHEREAS, this unorganized system has led to a gap in
15 mapping for Hawaii, thereby limiting its mapping capability,
16 especially for purposes of watershed management and hazard
17 mitigation; and
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19 WHEREAS, a state geological survey in Hawaii would unify
20 the State's mapping capability, make Hawaii eligible to compete
21 for applicable federal funds, and provide a broader range of
22 geological information for the public and state decision-makers
23 to use in mitigation and management planning; now, therefore,
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25 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
26 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
27 of 2021, that the Legislative Reference Bureau, in collaboration
28 with the Department of Land and Natural Resources and University
29 of Hawaii, is requested to develop a plan to establish a state
30 geological survey in Hawaii; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
33 Bureau is requested to evaluate in the plan:
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- 35 (1) Proposed scopes of work for the state geologic survey,
36 including proposed ways to consolidate existing
37 functions into a state geological survey;
38
- 39 (2) Proposed organizational structures of the state
40 geological survey, including advantages and
41 disadvantages of each proposed structure;



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- 1 (3) Proposed staff positions that would be needed for the
- 2 state geological survey, including salary levels;
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- 4 (4) Proposed sources for funding or other necessary
- 5 resources; and
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- 7 (5) Enabling legislation to create the state geological
- 8 survey; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
11 Bureau is requested to consult also with the United States
12 Geological Survey, state Office of Planning, and any other
13 organization or person that the Bureau deems appropriate; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
16 Bureau is requested to submit a report of its findings and
17 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
18 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
19 the Regular Session of 2022; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
22 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of the
23 Legislative Reference Bureau, Chairperson of the Board of Land
24 and Natural Resources, Chairperson of the University of Hawaii
25 Board of Regents, and President of the University of Hawaii
26 System.
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29 OFFERED BY: 

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