SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE WATER BOARDS FROM EACH COUNTY TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF LAUNCHING A WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM THAT PROMOTES THE INSTALLATION OF RAINWATER CATCHMENT SYSTEMS ON RESIDENCES FOR NON-POTABLE USAGE.

WHEREAS, Hawaii has a finite amount of groundwater filtered through the porous volcanic rock of each island; and

WHEREAS, the United States General Accounting Office predicts that Hawaii will experience shortages over the next decade, and in particular, Maui and Oahu with areas of high growth could tap out underground water supplies in less than twenty years; and

WHEREAS, past water shortages led the Maui County Council to pass the "Show Me the Water" ordinance in December 2007, which requires developers to substantiate a reliable long-term water supply before receiving zoning or subdivision approvals, with some exceptions; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's geographic isolation makes the State vulnerable in the event of a depleted watershed; and

WHEREAS, roofs on residences offer ample square footage for the collection of rainwater; and

WHEREAS, in Australia, the world leader in the technology for capturing rainwater, the Government of Queensland has a model conservation program that provides rebates to homeowners for the installation of rain catchment systems; and

WHEREAS, in Japan there is no national legislation governing the practice of rainwater harvesting, but local governments are active in promoting rainwater harvesting by way of subsidies, such as the City of Kobe, which will subsidize up to two-thirds of the cost of installation; and
WHEREAS, the state of Texas provides a Sales Tax Redemption for water efficiency equipment that includes rainwater harvesting systems; and

WHEREAS, the use of rain catchment systems is not new to Hawaii and has been historically used in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, expertise exists in Hawaii through Hawai'i Rainwater Catchment, a partnership website serving those who use rainwater catchment in Hawai'i, and whose partners include the Hawai'i Rainwater Catchment Systems Association, the County of Hawaii, the University of Hawai'i, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and Natural Resources and Environmental Management; and

WHEREAS, the promotion of Hawaii's solar industry with rebates and tax credits serves as a model for a resource conservation initiative; and

WHEREAS, vendors now offer a wide range of economical systems for rainwater harvesting; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the House of Representatives concurring, that the water boards from each county are requested to study the feasibility of launching a water conservation program that promotes the installation of rainwater catchment systems on residences for non-potable usage, such as watering yards, washing cars, flushing toilets, etc.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the water boards from each county are requested to report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2009, on the feasibility of launching a water conservation program in their respective counties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the City and County of Honolulu Board of Water Supply, the County of Hawaii Water
Board, the County of Kauai Board of Water Supply, and the County of Maui Board of Water Supply.

OFFERED BY: 

[Signatures]

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