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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING EACH COUNTY NOT TO ISSUE ANY PERMIT OR SPECIAL PERMIT FOR ANY RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANY WETLAND OR TIDAL AREA WITHIN ONE HUNDRED FEET OF THE SHORELINE UNLESS THE COUNTY FIRST SOLICITS PUBLIC INPUT AT A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING.

1           WHEREAS, pursuant to section 46-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
2 zoning in each county must be accomplished within the framework  
3 of a long-range, comprehensive general plan prepared to guide  
4 the overall future development of the county, as well as, to  
5 ensure the greatest benefit for the State as a whole; and  
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7           WHEREAS, among the county zoning powers is the power to  
8 prohibit or restrict erection of structures or the location of  
9 buildings in areas bordering natural watercourses; and  
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11           WHEREAS, wetlands are lands or areas, such as tidal flats  
12 and swamps, that contain a lot of soil moisture and protect and  
13 maintain water quality in other near-shore habitats; and  
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15           WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of  
16 Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, at  
17 one time Hawaii contained an estimated fifty-nine thousand acres  
18 of wetlands, but has lost approximately twelve per cent of those  
19 original wetland acres over the last two hundred years; and  
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21           WHEREAS, the protection provided by wetlands is  
22 particularly important for coral reefs occurring seaward of  
23 coastal wetlands because the wetlands shield the reefs from  
24 sediment, turbidity, and pulses of fresh water during periods of  
25 heavy rain; and  
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27           WHEREAS, in addition, wetlands are habitats to native and  
28 endangered species, and provide, directly or through the food  
29 chain, prey organisms for reef and open coastal fishery  
30 resources; and  
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1 WHEREAS, anglers spend millions of dollars fishing in  
2 Hawaii's waters and support thousands of jobs here; and

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4 WHEREAS, commercial fishing is a growing part of Hawaii's  
5 economy, with commercial dockside landings valued at over  
6 \$69,000,000 in a single year; and

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8 WHEREAS, despite their significance to Hawaii's  
9 environment, wetlands are increasingly threatened by urban  
10 sprawl as the wetlands are drained, dredged, and filled to  
11 provide land for residential and commercial development; and

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13 WHEREAS, development of wetland and tidal areas for these  
14 purposes could overturn years of environmental protection and  
15 progress achieved under the federal Clean Water Act; and

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17 WHEREAS, no county in the State should issue a permit or  
18 special permit for any residential or commercial development of  
19 any wetland or tidal area without first soliciting public input  
20 at a public informational meeting; now, therefore,

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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
23 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
24 Session of 2008, that each county in the State is urged not to  
25 issue any permit under sections 46-4 or 205-5, Hawaii Revised  
26 Statutes, or any special permit under 205-6, Hawaii Revised  
27 Statutes, for any residential or commercial development of any  
28 wetland or tidal area within one hundred feet of the shoreline  
29 unless the county first solicits public input at a public  
30 informational meeting; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are requested to  
33 hold the public informational meetings in the affected  
34 communities and solicit public input at the meeting regarding  
35 whether to approve, deny, or conditionally approve the proposed  
36 development; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for purposes of this  
39 Resolution:

- 40  
41 (1) "Shoreline" has the same meaning as defined in section  
42 205A-1.  
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(2) "Tidal" means the presence of periodically rising and falling or flowing or ebbing waters; and

(3) "Wetland" means land or areas, such as tidal flats and swamps that contain a lot of soil moisture; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of each county in the State, and the Director of each county planning department.

OFFERED BY:

*Mele C. Grace*  
*Henry E. ...*  
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FEB 21 2008

