HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-92

FILED

APR 9 2026

PURSUANT TO ROH Sec. 1-2.5

RESOLUTION

INITIATING AMENDMENTS TO THE REVISED CHARTER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU 1973 (AMENDED 2017 EDITION), AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE CREATION OF AN OCEAN SAFETY COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, ocean safety is a public safety necessity for an island municipality like that of the City and County of Honolulu ("City"); and

WHEREAS, ocean lifesaving services performed by City personnel include ocean rescues, emergency medical treatment, mobile patrol and response, and education and prevention strategies directed toward 24 million beachgoers on O'ahu annually; and

WHEREAS, the City's ocean safety operations along O'ahu's 227 miles of coastline currently include 271 Water Safety Officers, eight rescue ski teams, and 42 lifeguard towers in operation from 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, the need for the City to have a dedicated ocean safety department has been a topic of discussion for several years, but with the State of Hawai'i's recent complete transfer of all emergency medical services functions on O'ahu to the City, the need for a separate department of ocean safety has become more urgent; and

WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") finds that City's ocean safety department would be best administered by a board, creating accountability and oversight similar to that provided by the City's Fire Commission and Police Commission over the Honolulu Fire Department and Honolulu Police Department, the City's other public safety departments; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Charter Section 15-101, the Council may initiate, by resolution, amendments to the Charter; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Charter Section 15-102.1, the Mayor's approval is required for any Charter amendment proposed by the Council at a general election held in a year ending in a "4" or an "8"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu:

1. That the following question be placed on the 2024 general election ballot:

RESOLUTION

"Shall the Revised City Charter be amended to create an Ocean Safety Commission to review and make recommendations on certain activities of the Department of Ocean Safety and its Chief?"

2. That Article VI of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition), as amended ("Executive Branch – Managing Director and Agencies Directly Under the Managing Director"), be amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately designated by the Revisor of the Charter and to read as follows:

"**Section 6- . Ocean Safety Commission –**

There shall be an ocean safety commission, which shall consist of five members. The commission may appoint such staff and engage consultants as necessary for the performance of its duties. The commission shall be governed by the provisions of Section 13-103 of this charter.

Section 6- . Powers, Duties and Functions –

The ocean safety commission shall:

(a) Adopt rules necessary for the conduct of its business and review rules for the administration of the department of ocean safety.

(b) Review the annual budget prepared by the ocean safety chief and make recommendations thereon to the mayor and the council.

(c) Review the department's operations, as deemed necessary, for the purpose of recommending improvements to the ocean safety chief.

(d) Evaluate at least annually the performance of the ocean safety chief and submit a report on the evaluation to the mayor and the council.

(e) Review personnel actions within the department for conformance with the policies under Section 6- 02 of this chapter.

(f) Hear complaints of citizens concerning the department or its personnel and, if deemed necessary, make recommendations to the ocean safety chief on appropriate corrective actions.

(g) Submit an annual report to the mayor and the council on its activities. Except for purposes of inquiry or as otherwise provided in this charter, neither the commission nor its members shall interfere in any way with the administrative affairs of the department."

3. That in Section 2 of this resolution, new Charter material is underscored. When revising, compiling, or printing these Charter provisions for inclusion in the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition), as amended, the Revisor of the Charter need not include the underscoring.

4. That the Revisor of the Charter, in revising, compiling, or printing the Charter, may change capitalization or the form of numbers and monetary sums for the sake of uniformity.

   If the Charter provisions amended pursuant to this resolution are amended by any other Charter amendment(s) approved by the electors at the 2024 general election, the Revisor of the Charter, in revising, compiling, or printing the Charter:

   a. May designate or redesignate articles, chapters, sections, or parts of sections, and rearrange references thereto; and

   b. Shall, except as otherwise expressly provided in this resolution or in the other resolution(s) amending these Charter provisions, give effect, to the extent possible, to all of the amendments approved.

5. That upon adoption of this resolution by the Council and its approval by the Mayor, the City Clerk is directed to:

   a. Prepare the necessary ballots with the question contained in this resolution and with spaces for "yes" and "no" votes on the question for presentation to the electors at the 2024 general election. The City Clerk may make technical and nonsubstantive changes to the form of the question presented in order to conform it to the form of other Charter amendment questions presented to the electors at the same election; and

   b. Publish the above-proposed Charter amendments at length in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the City and County of Honolulu at least 45 days prior to their submission to the electors at the 2024 general election.

RESOLUTION

6. That upon approval of the Charter amendment question posed in Section 1 of this resolution by a majority of the electors voting thereon, as duly certified, the Charter amendments proposed in this resolution shall take effect on January 1, 2025.

INTRODUCED BY:

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DATE OF INTRODUCTION: _____

_____

APR 9 2024
Honolulu, Hawai'i

_____
Councilmembers

APPROVED this ___ day of _____, 20__

FILED
APR 9 2026
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RICK BLANGIARDI, Mayor
City and County of Honolulu