HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. **25-202**

RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION AND THE HAWAIʻI CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING COOLING CENTERS IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

WHEREAS, one of the environmental impacts of climate change is the rise of temperatures globally and locally, and the City and County of Honolulu ("City"), especially urban Oʻahu, may experience intolerable levels of heat by mid-century; and

WHEREAS, extreme heat can affect public health, triggering heat exhaustion or heat stroke, which occurs when the body cannot cool itself enough to maintain a healthy body temperature; and

WHEREAS, extreme heat and heat waves often have varied effects on areas within the same jurisdiction, depending on factors such as access to air conditioning, variations in the urban tree canopy, and proximity to water sources, often exacerbating socio-economic disparities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Hawaiʻi ("State") Department of Health lists extreme heat as a critical impact of climate change on human health in Hawaiʻi; and

WHEREAS, the Honolulu Climate Change Commission ("Commission"), in its URBAN HEAT – GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ("Guidance Document"), raises serious concerns regarding the effects of extreme heat on Oʻahu, especially in heavily urbanized areas, which can be more susceptible to elevated temperatures; and

WHEREAS, the Commission makes multiple recommendations in its Guidance Document, including the overall recommendation that as a cost-saving and life-saving measure, steps should be undertaken to mitigate the impacts of rising temperatures before heat levels increase further; and

WHEREAS, the Guidance Document includes specific recommendations for a comprehensive emergency heat response plan to: 1) identify and map locations ideal for the placement of cooling centers, and 2) create an extreme heat warning system that addresses the establishment of triggering criteria, the development of extreme weather action plans for departments and the public, and coordination with the National Weather Service and relevant State agencies; and

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WHEREAS, cooling centers are facilities designated to provide relief to the public during periods of extreme heat, especially in urban centers where temperatures can rise significantly due to the urban heat island effect, thereby helping to prevent heat-related illness and reducing strains on emergency services; and

WHEREAS, cooling centers may offer air-conditioned spaces for people who lack sufficient cooling in their homes, amenities such as water or other cooling refreshments, restrooms, and medical support; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes that the City should take action now to prepare for extreme heat events, including the development of City cooling centers to provide immediate relief to vulnerable communities during periods of extreme heat; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission is a State-level, multi-jurisdictional entity that promotes ambitious, climate-neutral, and culturally-responsive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and may be able to provide guidance and assistance to the City; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it requests the City Administration and the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission to investigate the feasibility of establishing cooling centers in the City for emergency cooling during heat waves, including the utilization of existing and proposed new City and State buildings and shelters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration and the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission are requested to investigate the establishment of official levels of heat and humidity that would trigger a determination that the City is experiencing a "heat emergency" and subsequently cause City cooling centers to be activated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should the City Administration determine that cooling centers are to be established, the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency is requested to conduct outreach efforts to notify the public of the availability of the centers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission is requested to assist the City in its efforts regarding cooling centers and the development of parameters as to when to activate the centers; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor; the Managing Director; the Director of Emergency Management; the Chair of the Honolulu Climate Change Commission; the Co-Chairs of the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; and the Chief Resilience Officer and Executive Director of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency.

INTRODUCED BY:

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 16 2025
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 25-202

Introduced: 07/16/25 By: RADIANT CORDERO Committee: ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY (EES)

Title: REQUESTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION AND THE HAWAI'I CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING COOLING CENTERS IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

07/16/25	INTRO	Introduced.
07/22/25	EES	Reported out for adoption. CR-254 3 AYES: DOS SANTOS-TAM, TULBA, WEYER 1 ABSENT: TUPOLA
08/06/25	CCL	Committee report and Resolution were adopted. 8 AYES: DOS SANTOS-TAM, KIA'ĀINA, NISHIMOTO, OKIMOTO, TULBA, TUPOLA, WATERS, WEYER 1 ABSENT: CORDERO

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.

GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK

TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER