URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO FORGIVE THE STATE'S OUTSTANDING FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE LOAN BALANCE FOR FEDERAL LOANS BORROWED TO CONTINUE TO PAY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.

WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and massive unemployment across the country, states have depleted their unemployment benefit trust funds, and some have borrowed money through federal loans from the United States Treasury to continue paying unemployment benefits; and

WHEREAS, according to data from the United States Treasury, Hawaii has the eighth largest unemployment benefit payout debt owed to the federal government of any state, totaling $700,700,000 as of January 2020; and

WHEREAS, currently states have approximately two years to repay the federal loans for continued unemployment benefit payouts; and

WHEREAS, after two years, the federal portion of unemployment taxes will automatically increase each year for businesses in the State until the debt is repaid; and

WHEREAS, to date, there is no national plan in place to extend the interest-free treatment, timeline, or forgive these loans; and

WHEREAS, as of December 2020, the State has the highest rate of unemployment in the country at 9.3 percent; and

WHEREAS, the State may need to further borrow federal money to pay for unemployment benefits; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021, that the United States Congress is urged to:

(1) Forgive the State's outstanding federal unemployment insurance loan balance for federal loans borrowed to continue to pay for unemployment benefits; and

(2) Not penalize states for any debts acquired due to emergency COVID-19 related funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and all members of the Hawaii Congressional Delegation.

OFFERED BY: [Signature]