
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONVENE A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TO STUDY, EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS THAT DEFINE PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATIONS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DEFINE A LINE CLEARANCE TREE TRIMMER AND ESTABLISH MINIMUM SAFETY STANDARDS, TRAINING, AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS PERFORMING LINE CLEARANCE TREE TRIMMING AT OR NEAR ELECTRIC UTILITY FACILITIES.

1 WHEREAS, on August 8, 2023, catastrophic wildfires swept
2 through various communities on the island of Maui; and
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4 WHEREAS, the wildfires significantly impacted human life
5 and the health, community housing, education, economy, and
6 environment of Maui residents; and
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8 WHEREAS, the presence of grass, trees, and other vegetation
9 adjacent to or under electric utility lines is a significant
10 fire risk; and
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12 WHEREAS, in response to the wildfires, in 2023 the House of
13 Representatives established six interim working groups,
14 including the Wildfire Prevention Working Group, which were
15 charged with evaluating specific topics related to the Lahaina
16 wildfire and making recommendations for specific legislative
17 action; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Wildfire Prevention Working Group found that
20 people are the primary drivers of wildfires in Hawaii, as
21 ninety-nine percent of wildfires are caused by human ignitions;
22 and
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1 WHEREAS, the Wildfire Prevention Working Group also found
2 that guinea grass, fountain grass, molasses grass, and
3 buffelgrass can form continuous fuel beds, ignite easily, attain
4 extremely high fine fuel loads, and grow back more vigorously in
5 the post-fire environment than the majority of native
6 vegetation; and

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8 WHEREAS, electric utility companies have miles of utility
9 lines installed throughout the State on public and private
10 lands, including within the public rights of way and mountainous
11 areas of the State; and

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13 WHEREAS, communication equipment, by nature, does not
14 independently create wildfire risks, making its role in
15 vegetation management appropriately limited; and

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17 WHEREAS, other states such as Oregon and Washington
18 appropriately regulate vegetation management requirements
19 specifically for electric utilities due to the unique wildfire
20 hazards posed by high-voltage power lines; and

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22 WHEREAS, a significant portion of these public lands is
23 covered with unmanaged grasses, trees, and other vegetation that
24 may pose a significant wildfire risk; and

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26 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that
27 the Tree Industry average annual fatal-incident rate is thirty
28 (30) times greater than the All-Industry average annual
29 fatal-incident rate; and

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31 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that other state
32 jurisdictions have recognized the additional hazard presented to
33 individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near
34 electric utility facilities and have adopted state law requiring
35 minimum safety standards, training and qualifications for
36 individuals performing such work; and

37
38 WHEREAS, additional study into appropriate vegetation
39 management will enable the State to develop appropriate
40 policies, regulations, and guidance for the parties responsible
41 for the management of vegetation on public and private lands to
42 mitigate wildfire risk and establish minimum safety standards,



1 training, and qualifications for individuals performing line
2 clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities;
3 now, therefore,
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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
6 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
7 of 2025, the Senate concurring, that the Office of the State
8 Fire Marshal is requested to convene a Vegetation Management
9 Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and make
10 recommendations for regulations that define property owner
11 obligations for vegetation management on public and private
12 property to mitigate wildfire risk , as well as minimum safety
13 standards, training, and qualifications for individuals
14 performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric
15 utility facilities; and
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in its review of vegetation
18 management, the Working Group is requested to consider the
19 following:
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- 21 (1) Wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as
22 part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate
23 Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and
24 Resilience Program and Wildfire Safety Strategy filed
25 with the Public Utilities Commission as Docket No.
26 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and
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- 28 (2) The hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities,
29 including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed
30 with the Public Utilities Commission as part of a
31 non-docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in
32 response to Public Utilities Commission Order No.
33 40396; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
36 to include the following members:
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- 38 (1) The State Fire Marshal, who is requested to serve as
39 the chairperson of the Working Group;
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- 41 (2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's
42 designee;



- (3) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (4) The Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (5) The Superintendent of Education, or the Superintendent's designee;
- (6) A representative of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy with experience in matters related to regulated public utilities, to be appointed by the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs;
- (7) A representative of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council;
- (8) A member of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- (9) A member of the Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and
- (10) The Mayor of each county, or the Mayor's designee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to invite the following individuals to be members of the Working Group:

- (1) A representative of a cooperative electric utility;
- (2) A representative of an investor-owned electric utility;
- (3) A representative of a communications service provider;
- (4) A representative of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1260; and



1 (5) A landowner that owns more than one thousand acres of
2 land in the State; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
5 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
6 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
7 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
8 of 2026; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department the Office of
11 the State Fire Marshal is administratively attached to, is
12 requested to provide administrative support to the Working
13 Group, including drafting of the report; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
16 to dissolve on June 30, 2026; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
19 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Department the
20 Office of the State Fire Marshal is administratively attached
21 to; Director of Transportation; Director of Commerce and
22 Consumer Affairs; Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
23 Resources; Superintendent of Education; Chairperson of the
24 Public Utilities Commission, who is requested to transmit copies
25 of this Concurrent Resolution to all regulated
26 telecommunications carriers; Mayors of the Counties of Maui,
27 Kauai, and Hawaii and Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu;
28 President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaiian Electric
29 Company, Inc.; Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the
30 Kauai Island Utility Cooperative; and President of the
31 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local
32 Union 1260.

