
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO ASSESS ENVIRONMENTAL AND
CONSERVATION INITIATIVES NEEDED TO TRANSITION VOLCANO,
HAWAII, INTO A BIOSPHERE AREA THAT PROMOTES ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND COMPLEMENTS THE
NEIGHBORING HAWAIIAN ISLANDS BIOSPHERE RESERVE.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Islands Biosphere Reserve was a
2 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
3 (UNESCO) biosphere reserve that was comprised of Hawaii
4 Volcanoes National Park and Haleakala National Park; and
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6 WHEREAS, UNESCO biosphere reserves are recognized for their
7 commitment to balancing human activity with environmental
8 conservation and sustainable development; and
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10 WHEREAS, to become a UNESCO biosphere reserve, an area must
11 be nominated by its national government and meet certain
12 criteria related to conservation, sustainable development, and
13 scientific research; and
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15 WHEREAS, although Hawaii Volcanoes National Park met these
16 high environmental and conservation standards, the greater
17 Volcano, Hawaii, area suffers from many issues that threaten its
18 environment and natural resources; and
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20 WHEREAS, Volcano, Hawaii, has been subject to invasive
21 plant species, Rapid Ohia Death, ungulates, declining native
22 plant populations, and forest loss and degradation; and
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24 WHEREAS, Volcano, Hawaii, should adopt similar
25 environmental and conservation initiatives as Hawaii Volcanoes
26 National Park; now, therefore,
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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
29 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



1 of 2025, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is
2 requested to convene a working group to assess environmental and
3 conservation initiatives needed to transition Volcano, Hawaii,
4 into a biosphere area that promotes environmental sustainability
5 and community well-being and complements the neighboring
6 Hawaiian Islands Biosphere Reserve; and

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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
9 to consist of the following individuals:

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11 (1) The State Representative from House District 5, who
12 shall serve as Chair of the working group; and
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14 (2) A representative from the Volcano Community
15 Association, to be invited by the Chair of the working
16 group; and

17
18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
19 to:

- 20
21 (1) Conduct a literature review that assesses existing
22 reports and studies that provide insight into the
23 environment, natural resources, and socioeconomic
24 conditions of Volcano, Hawaii;
25
26 (2) Develop best practices for native ohia forest
27 stewardship that inform sustainable development, land
28 use, green infrastructure development, and water
29 resource management;
30
31 (3) Develop a community engagement strategy that increases
32 education and awareness of environmental issues in
33 Volcano, Hawaii;
34
35 (4) Develop a monitoring and evaluation system that tracks
36 the progress of environmental and conservation
37 initiatives in Volcano, Hawaii; and
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39 (5) Identify potential buffer zones and conservation
40 easements for activities that support ohia forest
41 preservation and sustainable development; and
42



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
2 to determine the scope of the actions and initiatives to be
3 conducted in the biosphere area; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
6 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
7 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature and the
8 Hawaii County Council no later than twenty days prior to the
9 convening of the Regular Session of 2026; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
12 Natural Resources is requested to provide any necessary
13 administrative support to the working group, including the
14 preparation and drafting of the report; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group shall cease
17 to exist on June 30, 2026; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
20 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the Volcano
21 Community Association Board of Directors.

