

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2445

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 15 2024

RE: S.B. No. 2502
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred
S.B. No. 2502 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE GENERATION OF WILDFIRE
SUSCEPTIBILITY MAPS FOR HAWAII,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the University of Hawaii to establish and implement a two-year program to develop web-GIS wildfire susceptibility and vulnerability maps for the State to determine which communities, landscapes, buildings, and infrastructure are most vulnerable to future wildfires; and
- (2) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i System, Democratic Party of Hawai'i, and two individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General.



Your Committee finds that the State is susceptible to wildfire hazards. Following the August 2023 wildfires in Lahaina, additional resources, including maps and imaging of areas most vulnerable to wildfire risk, are needed to effectively plan, mitigate, and support communities statewide. Crucial data is needed to develop best mitigation strategies such as ecological forest management, defensible space, and development of greenbelts to reduce impacts of wildfires. This measure utilizes the research capabilities, outreach activities, and technical solutions from the University of Hawaii to provide full range data to help create informed policy decisions for areas most prone to wildfire risk.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language specifying that this measure addresses a matter of statewide concern; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2502, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2502, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education,



DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



