

MAR 08 2024

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# SENATE RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO FURTHER ASSIST MAUI WILDFIRE VICTIMS BY AMENDING ITS REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE DIRECT LEASE PROGRAM TO REQUIRE THAT PROPERTIES QUALIFYING FOR THE PROGRAM AND USED BY LAHAINA RESIDENTS AS TEMPORARY HOUSING BE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF LAHAINA, RATHER THAN WITHIN FORTY MILES.

1           WHEREAS, under the federal Direct Lease program, the  
2 Federal Emergency Management Agency has been leasing ready-to-  
3 occupy residential properties for use as temporary housing for  
4 families displaced by the Maui wildfires; and

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6           WHEREAS, one requirement of the program is that each  
7 eligible residential property be located within forty miles of  
8 Lahaina, Maui; and

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10           WHEREAS, it appears that the forty-mile distance was  
11 determined according to a method described in the FEMA Direct  
12 Housing Guide, July 2021, which states:

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14           "Additionally, the reasonable commuting distance will be  
15 established by the JFO-IA-Direct Housing during applicant  
16 matching, which is the 'Mean Travel Time to Work,' as  
17 determined by the most recent U.S. Census Bureau  
18 QuickFacts. This figure will be doubled to produce the  
19 number of miles to be used as a search radius for available  
20 housing resources from the affected area. When the terrain  
21 of the affected area presents unusual impacts on travel  
22 distance (e.g., mountainous terrain), consult with HQ-IA-  
23 Direct Housing and RAD to establish a more accurate measure  
24 of reasonable commuting distance."

25 ; and

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27           WHEREAS, according to the United States Census Bureau  
28 QuickFacts for Lahaina census-designated place, "mean travel  
29 time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2018-2022" was  
30 18.8 minutes; and

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1           WHEREAS, current morning and late afternoon travel time  
2 from Maui Lani and other locations that are far outside Lahaina,  
3 but within the forty-mile distance, can exceed one hour and have  
4 been growing longer due to traffic from increased tourism and  
5 trucks hauling fire debris, with daily traffic standstills  
6 becoming inevitable; and

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8           WHEREAS, instead of merely experiencing doubled commute  
9 times, Lahaina wildfire victims participating in the Direct  
10 Lease program are facing commute times of triple or quadruple  
11 their commute times before the disaster; and

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13           WHEREAS, businesses of Lahaina and the surrounding areas  
14 have lost workers due to long commutes from their temporary  
15 residences to work; and

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17           WHEREAS, keeping Lahaina residents in Lahaina is critical  
18 for community preservation; and

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20           WHEREAS, due to the unique mountains and limited roadways  
21 of Maui, which "presents an unusual impact on travel distance,"  
22 the Federal Emergency Management Agency should decrease the  
23 distance for eligible residential properties of the Direct Lease  
24 program to allow wildfire victims to continue living in Lahaina  
25 or close to Lahaina; now, therefore,

26  
27           BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second  
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024,  
29 that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is requested to  
30 amend its requirements under the Direct Lease program for Maui  
31 wildfire victims to require that properties qualifying for the  
32 program be within twenty miles of Lahaina, rather than within  
33 forty miles; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Federal Emergency Management  
3 Agency Administrator and Maui Emergency Management Agency  
4 Administrator.

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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JW', is written over a horizontal line that serves as a signature line.