
HOUSE 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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24 WHEREAS, the Wildfire Prevention Working Group also found
25 that guinea grass, fountain grass, molasses grass, and
26 buffelgrass can form continuous fuel beds, ignite easily, attain



1 extremely high fine fuel loads, and grow back more vigorously in
2 the post-fire environment than the majority of native
3 vegetation; and

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5 WHEREAS, utility companies have miles of utility lines
6 installed throughout the State on public and private lands,
7 including within the public rights of way and mountainous areas
8 of the State; and

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

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14 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that
15 the Tree Industry average annual fatal-incident rate is thirty
16 (30) times greater than the All-Industry average annual fatal-
17 incident rate; and

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19 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that other state
20 jurisdictions have recognized the additional hazard presented to
21 individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near
22 electric utility facilities and have adopted state law requiring
23 minimum safety standards, training and qualifications for
24 individuals performing such work; and

25
26 WHEREAS, additional study into appropriate vegetation
27 management will enable the State to develop appropriate
28 policies, regulations, and guidance for the parties responsible
29 for the management of vegetation on public and private lands to
30 mitigate wildfire risk and establish minimum safety standards,
31 training, and qualifications for individuals performing line
32 clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities;
33 now, therefore,

34
35 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
36 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
37 of 2025, the Senate concurring, that the Office of the State
38 Fire Marshal is requested to convene a Vegetation Management
39 Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and make
40 recommendations for regulations that define property owner
41 obligations for vegetation management on public and private
42 property to mitigate wildfire risk , as well as minimum safety



1 standards, training, and qualifications for individuals
2 performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric
3 utility facilities; and

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in its review of vegetation
6 management, the Working Group is requested to consider the
7 following:

- 8
9 (1) Wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as
10 part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate
11 Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and
12 Resilience Program and Wildfire Safety Strategy filed
13 with the Public Utilities Commission as Docket No.
14 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and
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16 (2) The hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities,
17 including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed
18 with the Public Utilities Commission as part of a non-
19 docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in
20 response to Public Utilities Commission Order No.
21 40396; and

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
24 to include the following members:

- 25
26 (1) The State Fire Marshal, who is requested to serve as
27 the chairperson of the Working Group;
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29 (2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's
30 designee;
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32 (3) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or
33 the Chairperson's designee;
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35 (4) A representative of the Department of Commerce and
36 Consumer Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy with
37 experience in matters related to regulated public
38 utilities, to be appointed by the Director of Commerce
39 and Consumer Affairs;
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41 (5) A representative of the Hawaii Invasive Species
42 Council;



1 (6) A member of the House of Representatives, to be
2 appointed by the Speaker of the House of
3 Representatives;

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5 (7) A member of the Senate, to be appointed by the
6 President of the Senate; and

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8 (8) The mayor of each county, or the mayor's designee; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
11 to invite the following individuals to be members of the Working
12 Group:

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14 (1) A representative of a cooperative electric utility;

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16 (2) A representative of an investor-owned electric
17 utility;

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19 (3) A representative of a telecommunications carrier;

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21 (4) A representative of the International Brotherhood of
22 Electrical Workers, Local 1260; and

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

