

MAR 07 2025

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# SENATE 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.

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  
27 extremely high fine fuel loads, and grow back more vigorously in



1 the post-fire environment than the majority of native  
2 vegetation; and

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

8  
9 WHEREAS, a significant portion of these public lands is  
10 covered with unmanaged grasses, trees, and other vegetation that  
11 may pose a significant wildfire risk; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, additional study into appropriate vegetation  
14 management will enable the State to develop appropriate  
15 policies, regulations, and guidance for the parties responsible  
16 for the management of vegetation on public and private lands to  
17 mitigate wildfire risk; now, therefore,

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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
20 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the  
21 House of Representatives concurring, that the Office of the  
22 State Fire Marshal is requested to convene a Vegetation  
23 Management Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and  
24 make recommendations for regulations that define property owner  
25 obligations for vegetation management on public and private  
26 property to mitigate wildfire risk; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in its review of vegetation  
29 management, the Working Group is requested to consider the  
30 following:

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32 (1) Wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as  
33 part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate  
34 Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and  
35 Resilience Program and Wildfire Safety Strategy filed  
36 with the Public Utilities Commission as Docket No.  
37 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and

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39 (2) The hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities,  
40 including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed  
41 with the Public Utilities Commission as part of a non-  
42 docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in



1 response to Public Utilities Commission Order No.  
2 40396; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested  
5 to include the following members:

- 6  
7 (1) The State Fire Marshal, or the Director of Labor and  
8 Industrial Relations' designee, who is requested to  
9 serve as the chairperson of the Working Group;  
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11 (2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's  
12 designee;  
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14 (3) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or  
15 the Chairperson's designee;  
16  
17 (4) A representative of the Department of Commerce and  
18 Consumer Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy with  
19 experience in matters related to regulated public  
20 utilities, to be appointed by the Director of Commerce  
21 and Consumer Affairs;  
22  
23 (5) A representative of the Hawaii Invasive Species  
24 Council;  
25  
26 (6) A member of the House of Representatives, to be  
27 appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
28 Representatives;  
29  
30 (7) A member of the Senate, to be appointed by the  
31 President of the Senate; and  
32  
33 (8) The mayor of each county, or the mayor's designee; and

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

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39 (1) A representative of a cooperative electric utility;  
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41 (2) A representative of an investor-owned electric  
42 utility;



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(3) A representative of a telecommunications carrier;

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

(5) A landowner that owns more than one thousand acres of land in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations is requested to provide administrative support to the Working Group, including drafting of the report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to dissolve on June 30, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations; Director of Transportation; Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, who is requested to transmit copies of this Concurrent Resolution to all regulated telecommunications carriers; Mayors of the Counties of Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii and Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu; President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.; Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative; and President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 1260.

OFFERED BY: *Shirley R. Brown*

