

MAR 07 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO IDENTIFY EXISTING LARGE TREES ALONG EVACUATION ROUTES AND TRIM, SPRAY, OR REMOVE TREES HAVING THE POTENTIAL TO OBSTRUCT THE EVACUATION ROUTE; CONDUCT COMPREHENSIVE RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR SPECIFIC HIGH-RISK TREES; IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES IN URBAN FORESTRY; AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY-BASED DISASTER PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVES.

1 WHEREAS, every second of potential evacuation time during
2 an impending natural disaster makes a difference in protecting
3 the lives of the State's residents; and
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5 WHEREAS, it is essential that evacuation routes be clear
6 and free of obstructions to enable speedy evacuation during an
7 emergency; and
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9 WHEREAS, large trees planted along thoroughfares that
10 provide access to coastal communities may potentially obstruct
11 these roads during an evacuation; and
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13 WHEREAS, if an obstructed road is the only means by which
14 to flee an evacuation zone, any obstruction of the roadway may
15 needlessly endanger lives; and
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17 WHEREAS, obstructions along evacuation routes may also
18 prevent emergency response vehicles and personnel from getting
19 to or returning from an evacuation zone, thus preventing
20 lifesaving support from reaching those who critically need it;
21 and
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23 WHEREAS, large trees planted along roadways can also damage
24 roads due to root overgrowth; now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
27 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
28 that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency is requested to
29 identify existing large trees along evacuation routes and trim,
30 spray, or remove trees having the potential to obstruct the
31 evacuation route; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency is requested to conduct comprehensive risk assessments for specific high-risk trees and make its findings public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency is requested to implement best practices in urban forestry, including proper pruning, storm-resistant tree selection, and implementation of responsible planting guidelines; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency is requested to strengthen community-based disaster preparedness initiatives to ensure that residents are educated about evacuation procedures without unnecessarily sacrificing environmental resilience; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Transportation; Adjutant General, Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and Deputy Director for Highways.

OFFERED BY: Kurt Ferrelle

