
SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE TO PRIORITIZE THE RESTORATION AND PROTECTION OF ADDITIONAL WETLANDS AND ANCHIALINE POOLS.

1 WHEREAS, wetlands are a vital part of Hawaii's environment
2 and ecosystem, and the State has an obligation to protect them;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, the State's water quality standards and other
6 legal protections that apply to stream systems and "waters of
7 the State" also apply to Hawaii's wetlands; and
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9 WHEREAS, the County of Maui requires wetlands to be
10 restored and protected beyond what is minimally required by the
11 Clean Water Act, Coastal Zone Management Act, or other federal
12 laws, and requires all discretionary permits issued by the
13 County to comply with this policy; and
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15 WHEREAS, the protection and restoration of wetlands helps
16 enhance wildfire and drought resistance; reduces the magnitude
17 of floods; and provides valuable habitats for flora, fauna, and
18 endangered species; and
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20 WHEREAS, wetlands also act as filters for stream, storm,
21 and urban runoff, preventing high levels of sediment from
22 reaching the ocean; and
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24 WHEREAS, without the natural filters offered by wetlands,
25 coral reefs, aquatic life, and recreational ocean activities
26 would be threatened; and
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28 WHEREAS, it is financially prudent for the State to prevent
29 the degradation of wetlands, because, once degraded, wetlands
30 can be cost-prohibitive to restore and maintain; and
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1 WHEREAS, without further protections, the State's
2 anchialine pools are also at risk of degradation, threatening the
3 pools' rare ecosystems and species; now, therefore,
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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
6 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
7 that the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of
8 Forestry and Wildlife is urged to prioritize the restoration and
9 protection of additional wetlands in the State; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Agricultural
12 Resources is also urged to apply the protective policies
13 afforded to wetlands to the State's anchialine pools; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division is requested to
16 ensure that the protection of wetlands, especially wetlands in
17 Kihei on the Island of Maui, is prioritized over development
18 concerns, where feasible; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
21 Resolution be transmitted to the Chair of the Board of Land and
22 Natural Resources, Administrator of the Division of Forestry and
23 Wildlife, and Native Ecosystem Protection and Management
24 Manager.

