
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a local
2 investor-owned electric utility's planned public safety power
3 shutoff program, implemented on July 1, 2024, aims to reduce
4 wildfire risks by proactively shutting off power in high-risk
5 areas during specific weather conditions. While the program is
6 critical for public safety, its implementation poses significant
7 operational challenges for public schools. Presently, fifteen
8 department of education schools and one public charter school
9 are identified as vulnerable to planned public safety power
10 shutoff events. These power outages may disrupt essential
11 services, including communication systems, water access, meal
12 programs, and accommodations for students and staff that are
13 reliant on electricity-dependent medical devices or assistive
14 technologies.

15 The legislature further finds that maintaining school
16 operations during planned public safety power shutoff events is
17 vital to ensuring educational continuity, providing access to



1 meals, and maintaining a sense of normalcy for students. This
2 is especially critical for students in remote or rural areas,
3 where schools often serve as essential community hubs. To meet
4 this need, schools must prepare for prolonged power outages by
5 implementing measures such as backup power solutions, access to
6 shelf-stable food and clean water, and fire safety protocols.

7 The devastating 2023 Maui wildfires underscore the
8 importance of preparedness and inter-agency coordination in
9 mitigating the impacts of emergencies, and the United States
10 Department of Education's after-action report highlighted areas
11 for improvement, many of which align with the challenges posed
12 by the planned public safety power shutoff program.

13 Additionally, the department of education has implemented
14 measures to support recovery and resilience for Maui schools
15 affected by the 2023 Maui wildfires. These include monthly
16 working group meetings to address fire mitigation, hazardous
17 brush clearance, and community engagement. Funds from the
18 United States Department of Education's School Emergency
19 Response to Violence program have been allocated for critical
20 recovery efforts, including mental health services,



1 transportation for displaced students, and substitute teachers
2 to support staff well-being.

3 The legislature recognizes that lessons learned from the
4 2023 Maui wildfires and the department of education's subsequent
5 actions provide a strong foundation for addressing the
6 challenges of the planned public safety power shutoff program.
7 However, additional funding is essential to implement long-term
8 solutions, such as establishing regional hubs equipped with
9 emergency supplies, procuring backup power sources, and
10 providing comprehensive training for staff. These efforts will
11 ensure schools can remain operational during planned public
12 safety power shutoff events, safeguarding the well-being of
13 students and staff while maintaining access to essential
14 services.

15 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
16 funds to the department of education to support public schools
17 impacted by a local investor-owned electric utility's planned
18 public safety power shutoff program.

19 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and



1 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
2 year 2026-2027 for the department of education to support public
3 schools impacted by a local investor-owned electric utility's
4 planned public safety power shutoff program by:

- 5 (1) Assessing alternative power solutions;
- 6 (2) Assessing the feasibility of establishing regional
7 emergency hubs;
- 8 (3) Developing contingency plans and training to maintain
9 school operations during outages;
- 10 (4) Assessing fire safety measures; and
- 11 (5) Assessing and developing accommodations for
12 electricity-dependent students and staff.

13 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
14 of education for the purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Planned Public Safety Power Shutoff; Response; Department of Education; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to support public schools impacted by a local investor-owned electric utility's planned public safety power shutoff program. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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