

MAR 07 2025

## SENATE 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  
11

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  
18

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  
28 the post-fire environment than the majority of native  
29 vegetation; and  
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1 WHEREAS, utility companies have miles of utility lines  
2 installed throughout the State on public and private lands,  
3 including within the public rights of way and mountainous areas  
4 of the State; and

5  
6 WHEREAS, a significant portion of these public lands is  
7 covered with unmanaged grasses, trees, and other vegetation that  
8 may pose a significant wildfire risk; and

9  
10 WHEREAS, additional study into appropriate vegetation  
11 management will enable the State to develop appropriate  
12 policies, regulations, and guidance for the parties responsible  
13 for the management of vegetation on public and private lands to  
14 mitigate wildfire risk; now, therefore,

15  
16 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
17 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,  
18 that the Office of the State Fire Marshal is requested to  
19 convene a Vegetation Management Working Group (Working Group) to  
20 study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that  
21 define property owner obligations for vegetation management on  
22 public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk; and

23  
24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in its review of vegetation  
25 management, the Working Group is requested to consider the  
26 following:

- 27  
28 (1) Wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as  
29 part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate  
30 Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and  
31 Resilience Program and Wildfire Safety Strategy filed  
32 with the Public Utilities Commission as Docket No.  
33 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and  
34  
35 (2) The hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities,  
36 including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed  
37 with the Public Utilities Commission as part of a non-  
38 docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in  
39 response to Public Utilities Commission Order No.  
40 40396; and  
41



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

- (1) The State Fire Marshal, or the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations' designee, who is requested to serve as the chairperson of the Working Group;
- (2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's designee;
- (3) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (4) A representative of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy with experience in matters related to regulated public utilities, to be appointed by the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs;
- (5) A representative of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council;
- (6) A member of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- (7) A member of the Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and
- (8) The mayor of each county, or the mayor's designee; and

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

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



