

---

---

# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE PUBLIC CHARTER  
SCHOOL COMMISSION TO COLLABORATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF  
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO DEVELOP A STUDENT CORAL  
STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

1           WHEREAS, Hawaii's coral reefs are critical to the State's  
2 environment, culture, shoreline protection, and economy, yet  
3 they are increasingly threatened by climate change, pollution,  
4 and human activities; and

5  
6           WHEREAS, scientific research has shown that certain  
7 chemical-based sunscreen ingredients, including oxybenzone and  
8 octinoxate, contribute to coral bleaching and harm marine  
9 ecosystems when they enter nearshore waters; and

10  
11           WHEREAS, the Legislature has demonstrated leadership in  
12 coral reef protection through Act 104, Session Laws of Hawaii  
13 2018, which restricts the sale and distribution of sunscreens  
14 containing chemicals harmful to coral reefs; and

15  
16           WHEREAS, many residents and visitors wish to comply with  
17 reef-safe practices but face barriers, including limited access,  
18 higher cost, or lack of information regarding reef-safe  
19 sunscreen options; and

20  
21           WHEREAS, improving public education and awareness regarding  
22 reef-safe practices, including the use of mineral-based  
23 sunscreen, can help protect coral reefs while also promoting  
24 skin cancer prevention and public health; and

25  
26           WHEREAS, students across Hawai'i have demonstrated a strong  
27 interest, research capacity, and leadership in coral reef  
28 science, environmental stewardship, and community education; and  
29



1 WHEREAS, public charter schools in the State, such as West  
2 Hawai'i Explorations Academy on Hawai'i Island, have demonstrated  
3 a strong commitment to the early education of students in ocean  
4 protection and marine stewardship by integrating place-based,  
5 experiential learning focused on Hawai'i's marine environments  
6 into their curriculum; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, collaboration among the Department of Land and  
9 Natural Resources, Department of Education, State Public Charter  
10 School Commission, and interested students can strengthen coral  
11 reef restoration efforts through education, outreach and  
12 stewardship; now, therefore,  
13

14 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
15 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
16 of 2026, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Education  
17 and State Public Charter School Commission, in collaboration  
18 with the Department of Land and Natural Resources, are requested  
19 to develop a Student Coral Stewardship Program that assists with  
20 public education, outreach, and reef-safe sunscreen awareness at  
21 state beaches; and  
22

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Student Coral Stewardship  
24 Program is intended to be educational, voluntary, and non-  
25 enforcement in nature and may include student-led outreach,  
26 educational materials, and community-engagement activities  
27 informed by current scientific research; and  
28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and  
30 State Public Charter School Commission are requested to submit a  
31 report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the  
32 convening of the Regular Session of 2027 that summarizes  
33 collaborative efforts, including input and perspectives from  
34 participating students and that presents any legislative,  
35 policy, or funding recommendations necessary to advance coral  
36 reef protection and student stewardship initiatives; and  
37

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
39 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of  
40 Education, Executive Director of the State Public Charter School  
41 Commission, and Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural  
42 Resources.

