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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WILDFIRE MITIGATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State recognizes  
2 the increasing threat of wildfires to our communities, natural  
3 resources, and economy, and that the State is committed to  
4 proactively addressing this growing challenge through a  
5 comprehensive and collaborative approach. Understanding the  
6 need for a multifaceted strategy, the legislature further finds  
7 that a working group comprised of government agencies, fire  
8 experts, economists, legal experts, industry leaders, large  
9 landowners, and stakeholders is required to find solutions that  
10 address the State's wildfire preparedness and mitigation  
11 challenges and increase the State's wildfire preparedness and  
12 mitigation practices.

13           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

14           (1) Establish, and make an appropriation for, a wildfire  
15           mitigation working group; and



1 (2) Amend appropriations made by Act 302, Session Laws of  
2 Hawaii 2025, to revise the positions funded for the  
3 office of the state fire marshal by that Act.

4 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
5 of law enforcement, to be administered by the office of the  
6 state fire marshal, a wildfire mitigation working group. The  
7 working group shall be comprised of subcommittees and identify  
8 clear deliverables to:

- 9 (1) Develop a system of state tax incentives, penalties,  
10 and state-level funding support for managing land to  
11 adequately reduce fire risk;
- 12 (2) Chart a plan for retrofitting unsafely designed  
13 subdivisions to have adequate evacuation routes;
- 14 (3) Chart the State's course to increase workforce  
15 development in land management and wildfire mitigation  
16 sectors;
- 17 (4) Work with industry leaders and unions to improve  
18 ignition-resistant building strategies that are both  
19 safe and cost-effective;



- 1 (5) Integrate food security and climate resilience
- 2 initiatives with wildfire prevention, safety, and
- 3 resilience work;
- 4 (6) Identify funding sources and launch a state-level
- 5 competitive grant funding opportunity to support fuels
- 6 management on private lands; and
- 7 (7) Integrate cultural stewardship and the development of
- 8 certified wildfire resilience and stewardship
- 9 standards that encourage good-faith compliance and
- 10 responsible land management and provide clear, legally
- 11 defensible guidance for the State's communities.
- 12 (b) The working group shall be comprised of the following
- 13 members:
- 14 (1) The state fire marshal, who shall serve as co-chair;
- 15 (2) The director of the office of planning and sustainable
- 16 development, who shall serve as co-chair;
- 17 (3) The chair of the house of representatives standing
- 18 committee on water and land;
- 19 (4) The chair of the senate standing committee on water,
- 20 land, culture, and the arts;



- 1           (5) The chairperson of the Hawaiian homes commission or
- 2           their designee;
- 3           (6) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
- 4           resources or their designee;
- 5           (7) The director of transportation or their designee;
- 6           (8) The director of taxation or their designee;
- 7           (9) The airports rescue fire chief from the airports
- 8           division of the department of transportation;
- 9           (10) The chairperson of the public utilities commission or
- 10          their designee;
- 11          (11) A representative from the land division of the
- 12          department of land and natural resources;
- 13          (12) A representative of the state fire council;
- 14          (13) A fire protection forester from the wildfire
- 15          management branch of the division of forestry and
- 16          wildlife within the department of land and natural
- 17          resources;
- 18          (14) An economist from the university of Hawaii economic
- 19          research organization, to be selected by the executive
- 20          director of the university of Hawaii economic research
- 21          organization;



- 1       (15) An economist from the university of Hawaii at Manoa,  
2             to be selected by the president of the university of  
3             Hawaii at Manoa;
- 4       (16) An economist from the university of Hawaii at Hilo, to  
5             be selected by the chancellor of the university of  
6             Hawaii at Hilo;
- 7       (17) A wildfire expert from each county, to be invited by  
8             the state fire marshal;
- 9       (18) A representative of the ranching industry, to be  
10            invited by the state fire marshal;
- 11       (19) A representative of the Hawaii wildfire management  
12            organization, to be invited by the state fire marshal;
- 13       (20) A Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner who has  
14            knowledge of traditional land stewardship practices  
15            and `ike kupua that support landscape-scale risk  
16            reduction, ecological resilience, and long-term  
17            community safety, to be invited by the chairperson of  
18            the board of land and natural resources;
- 19       (21) A large landowner, to be invited by the state fire  
20            marshal;



1 (22) A representative of the public, to be invited by the  
2 speaker of the house of representatives; and

3 (23) A representative of the public, to be invited by the  
4 president of the senate.

5 (c) No member of the working group shall be subject to  
6 chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, solely because of that  
7 member's participation on the working group.

8 (d) The office of the state fire marshal shall provide  
9 administrative support as required by the working group.

10 (e) The working group shall submit a complete report of  
11 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed  
12 legislation, to the legislature no later than thirty days prior  
13 to the convening of the regular session of 2028.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for  
17 the administrative expenses of the wildfire mitigation working  
18 group established by section 2 of this Act.

19 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of the  
20 state fire marshal for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 4. Act 302, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, is  
2 amended by amending section 18 to read as follows:

3 "SECTION 18. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of [~~\$2,212,000~~]  
5 \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
6 year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be  
7 necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 in the following manner:

8 (1) For fiscal year 2025-2026:

9 (A) \$206,352 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
10 position for the state fire marshal;

11 (B) \$189,804 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
12 position for one deputy state fire marshal;

13 (C) \$40,248 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
14 position for one office assistant IV;

15 [~~(D) \$160,000 for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)~~  
16 ~~positions for fire inspectors;~~

17 ~~(E) \$240,000 for three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE)~~  
18 ~~positions for fire investigators; and]~~

19 (D) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE)  
20 positions for assistant fire marshals; and





1           SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.  
3           SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

OSFM; Wildfire Mitigation Working Group; Fire Marshal; Report; Positions; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Wildfire Mitigation Working Group. Requires a report to the Legislature. Requires the Office of the State Fire Marshal to provide administrative support to the working group. Appropriates funds. Revises the appropriations made by Act 302, SLH 2025. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

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