

JAN 28 2026

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

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

1       SECTION 1. This Act is recommended by the governor for  
2 immediate passage in accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
3 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

4       SECTION 2. The legislature finds that the August 2023 Maui  
5 wildfires were the deadliest natural disaster in Hawaii's  
6 history and one of the worst wildfires in the United States in  
7 over a century. Beyond the immediate destruction, survivors  
8 continue to face toxic exposures, respiratory illness, and  
9 mental health trauma. Children, first responders, kupuna, and  
10 medically vulnerable individuals remain at especially high risk.

11       In response, the university of Hawaii and its partners  
12 established the Maui wildfire exposure study and the Maui health  
13 registry, which together represent the most comprehensive social  
14 and health biomonitoring effort ever conducted in state history.  
15 To date, more than two thousand residents have received services  
16 including medical and mental health screenings, biomonitoring,  
17 and referrals to care. Community trust has been built with

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1 members of Maui's diverse community, including immigrant  
2 community members.

3 The legislature further finds that additional funding is  
4 needed to expand and sustain these services, with a focus on  
5 children and other high-risk populations, and to ensure long-  
6 term follow-up through the Maui health registry for up to five  
7 thousand individuals.

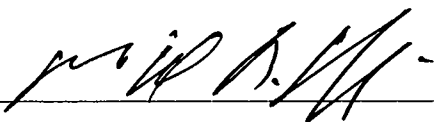
8 The purpose of this Act is to make an emergency  
9 appropriation to the university of Hawaii to expand and sustain  
10 the Maui wildfire exposure study and Maui health registry.

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,500,000 or so much  
13 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for the  
14 university of Hawaii to expand and sustain the Maui wildfire  
15 exposure study and Maui health registry, to include follow-up  
16 and expanded services for children, first responders, kupuna,  
17 and medically vulnerable residents.

18 SECTION 4. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the  
19 university of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

21  
22 INTRODUCED BY:



23 BY REQUEST

# S.B. NO. 3160

**Report Title:**

UH; Maui Wildfire Exposure Study; Maui Health Registry;  
Emergency Appropriation

**Description:**

Makes an emergency appropriation for fiscal year 2025-2026 to the University of Hawaii to expand and sustain the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study and Maui Health Registry.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

## JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: University of Hawaii

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

PURPOSE: To make an emergency appropriation for fiscal year 2025-2026 to expand and sustain the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study and Maui Health Registry, enabling long-term follow-up services for up to 5,000 individuals impacted by the 2023 Maui wildfires.

MEANS: Emergency appropriation of general funds for fiscal year 2025-2026.

JUSTIFICATION: The Maui Wildfire Exposure Study (MauiWES) and the Maui Health Registry were established to address the urgent and long-term health needs created by the 2023 Maui wildfires. MauiWES is the most comprehensive social and health biomonitoring effort ever conducted in Hawaii's history, providing a model for disaster recovery and resilience. To date, more than 2,000 residents have already received services – including medical and mental health screenings, biomonitoring, and immediate referrals to care. The program has built deep trust across Hawaii's diverse communities, ensuring that even the most underserved residents are reached and supported.

This appropriation will enable MauiWES and the Maui Health Registry to continue providing ongoing support to enrolled residents and expand services, with priority given to children and high-risk groups. While initial funding for MauiWES was provided by the Major Disaster Fund, those funds are expiring. To ensure the ongoing ability to track progress and deliver assistance to residents of Maui, additional

funding must be appropriated to cover the costs for this fiscal year.

Impact on the public: MauiWES and the Maui Health Registry provide direct, life-changing services to residents affected by the wildfires. Families receive free medical and mental health screenings, same-day results, and immediate referrals to trusted health-care providers, ensuring no one falls through the cracks. By expanding to serve up to 5,000 individuals, with a focus on children, first responders, kupuna, and medically vulnerable residents, the program safeguards those at highest risk. Beyond individual services, MauiWES produces the most comprehensive social and health dataset in state history, giving decision-makers real-time evidence to guide policies, improve disaster response, and reduce long-term health costs. For the public, this means healthier families today and stronger, more resilient communities prepared for tomorrow.

Impact on the department and other agencies: The University of Hawaii and its partners will be able to efficiently expand and sustain services through MauiWES and the Maui Health Registry, ensuring continuity of care and follow-up for wildfire survivors. State and county health agencies will directly benefit from the comprehensive data collected, which provides real-time evidence to guide resource allocation, emergency response, and long-term public health planning. By identifying health issues early and connecting residents to timely care, the program helps prevent costly hospitalizations and long-term complications, ultimately reducing the financial burden on the State's health care system. This investment strengthens interagency coordination while delivering both immediate relief and long-term fiscal savings for Hawaii.

GENERAL FUND: \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM  
DESIGNATION: UOH-100, UOH-110.

OTHER AFFECTED  
AGENCIES: Department of Budget and Finance.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.