
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

1 WHEREAS, Hawai'i'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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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30 WHEREAS, public charter schools in the State, such as West
31 Hawai'i Explorations Academy on Hawai'i Island, have demonstrated



1 a strong commitment to the early education of students in ocean
2 protection and marine stewardship by integrating place-based,
3 experiential learning focused on Hawai'i's marine environments
4 into their curriculum; and

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

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

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

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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
28 Natural Resources is requested to submit a report to the
29 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
30 the Regular Session of 2027 that summarizes collaborative
31 efforts, including input and perspectives from participating
32 students, and that presents any legislative, policy, or funding
33 recommendations necessary to advance coral reef protection and
34 student stewardship initiatives; and

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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
37 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
38 Board of Land and Natural Resources, Superintendent of



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1 Education, and Executive Director of the State Public Charter
2 School Commission.

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OFFERED BY: Mrs. E. Lower

FEB 20 2026

