
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, 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

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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, this body has demonstrated leadership in coral
12 reef protection through Act 104, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018,
13 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 Hawaii 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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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
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8 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources has
9 the capability to provide information on the status of Hawaii's
10 coral reefs, key issues and threats facing the coral reefs, and
11 recommendations for reef-safe practices; and
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13 WHEREAS, collaboration among the Department of Land and
14 Natural Resources, Department of Education, State Public Charter
15 School Commission, and interested students can strengthen coral
16 reef restoration efforts through education, outreach and
17 stewardship; now, therefore,
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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
20 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
21 of 2026, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Land and
22 Natural Resources, in collaboration with the Department of
23 Education and State Public Charter School Commission, is
24 requested to develop a Student Coral Stewardship Program that
25 assists with public education, outreach, and reef-safe sunscreen
26 awareness at state beaches; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Student Coral Stewardship
29 Program is intended to be educational, voluntary, and non-
30 enforcement in nature and may include student-led outreach,
31 educational materials, and community-engagement activities
32 informed by current scientific research; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
35 Natural Resources is requested to submit a report to the
36 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
37 the Regular Session of 2027 that summarizes collaborative
38 efforts with the Department of Education and State Public
39 Charter School Commission, including input and perspectives from
40 participating students and that presents any legislative,
41 policy, or funding recommendations necessary to advance coral
42 reef protection and student stewardship initiatives; and



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2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
3 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
4 Board of Land and Natural Resources, Superintendent of
5 Education, and Executive Director of the State Public Charter
6 School Commission.

