
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING STATE AGENCIES THAT OWN OR CONTROL LAND IN WEST MAUI TO IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE AGGRESSIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, FUEL REDUCTION, DEFENSIBLE SPACE, AND EMERGENCY ACCESS MEASURES TO REDUCE WILDFIRE RISK TO LAHAINA AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES.

1 WHEREAS, Act 302, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025 (Act 302),
2 established the Office of the State Fire Marshal within the
3 Department of Law Enforcement for administrative purposes and
4 charged the Office with reviewing and assessing the fire risk of
5 the State, coordinating fire protection efforts among local
6 agencies, and conducting inspections of state buildings and
7 facilities to ensure fire safety compliance; and

8
9 WHEREAS, Act 302 allowed the Office of the State Fire
10 Marshal to oversee development of a statewide wildfire hazard
11 map and to facilitate vegetation management, defensible space,
12 and other fuel modification activities through a community risk
13 reduction program; and

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15 WHEREAS, Act 302 further required the Office of the State
16 Fire Marshal to submit a biennial report to the Legislature
17 regarding community risk reduction and the establishment,
18 administration, and enforcement of defensible space
19 requirements, thereby reflecting a clear statewide policy that
20 wildfire-risk reduction on public lands is an ongoing government
21 responsibility and not a discretionary afterthought; and

22
23 WHEREAS, the this body has continued to consider additional
24 vegetation-management measures to reduce wildfire risk,
25 including proposals to require owners and persons in control of
26 hazardous fire-area property to maintain effective firebreaks
27 and clear flammable vegetation, to establish a community fuels
28 reduction project on state lands adjacent to communities, to
29 require trimming of hazardous vegetation near utility corridors
30 and public rights-of-way by public and private property owners,



1 and to treat hazardous vegetation as a public nuisance subject
2 to abatement; and

3
4 WHEREAS, reports on the Lahaina wildfire and its aftermath
5 documented that state-owned lands formed part of the larger,
6 unmanaged, fire-prone grassland landscape around Lahaina and
7 that West Maui remained at high wildfire risk because invasive
8 grasses lacked active management, placing the State on clear
9 notice that similar conditions can again serve as a conduit for
10 the spread of fire into developed areas if hazardous fuels are
11 not systematically reduced; and

12
13 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development
14 Corporation controls substantial lands in the Lahaina area,
15 including the Villages of Leialii, which are situated on
16 approximately 1,128 acres of state-owned land mauka of the
17 Lahaina Civic Center, and the State previously leased
18 approximately twenty acres adjacent to the Lahaina Civic Center
19 from the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation for
20 public use and expansion of civic facilities; and

21
22 WHEREAS, temporary housing areas for wildfire survivors
23 were developed on approximately fifty-seven acres mauka of the
24 Lahaina Civic Center, and reporting on the temporary housing
25 areas emphasized both the presence of brush conditions before
26 development and the critical role of an emergency evacuation
27 route in allowing escape from Lahaina during the August 2023
28 Maui wildfires; and

29
30 WHEREAS, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands has direct
31 interests in West Maui, including the Leialii Hawaiian homestead
32 community located just minutes west of Lahaina, and the possible
33 transfer of hundreds of additional acres within the Villages of
34 Leialii project further demonstrates the Department's
35 substantial and growing land-management responsibility in this
36 fire-prone corridor; and

37
38 WHEREAS, the Department of Education likewise controls and
39 operates critical school lands and facilities in Lahaina, and
40 the State found it necessary after the August 2023 Maui
41 wildfires to construct a 2.5-mile emergency evacuation route
42 from the Lahainaluna fire lane to the Lahaina Bypass, with



1 additional access improvements, before Lahaina schools could
2 safely reopen, confirming the severe ingress and egress
3 constraints affecting this area; and
4

5 WHEREAS, community concern remains acute regarding rampant
6 vegetation growth on large parcels near homes, schools,
7 evacuation corridors, and temporary housing areas for wildfire
8 survivors, and public reporting one and two years after the
9 Lahaina disaster continued to describe broad stretches of
10 unmanaged flammable grass on Maui and to emphasize that large
11 property owners need to do more to reduce fuel loads; and
12

13 WHEREAS, the winter of 2025 into 2026 brought repeated
14 periods of heavy rain, flood watches, and saturated ground
15 conditions in the County of Maui, and while the storms reduced
16 immediate dryness in some areas, it is a reasonable inference
17 that repeated winter rain events have accelerated vegetative
18 growth that may cure into additional wildfire fuel as conditions
19 dry later in the year;
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21 WHEREAS, it is vital that the efforts to protect West Maui
22 from the risk of wildfire should be undertaken in alignment with
23 the work currently being performed by the Hawaii Wildfire
24 Management Organization through the recommendations of the Fire
25 Safety Research Institute; now, therefore,
26

27 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
28 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
29 of 2026, that state agencies owning or controlling land in West
30 Maui, including the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development
31 Corporation, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Department of
32 Accounting and General Services, Department of Land and Natural
33 Resources, and any other applicable state agencies, are urged to
34 immediately identify, prioritize, and abate hazardous
35 vegetation, invasive grasses, and other combustible growth on
36 lands in or adjacent to Lahaina and nearby West Maui communities
37 for the purpose of reducing the risk of wildfires; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that applicable state agencies are
40 urged to establish and maintain defensible space, fuel breaks,
41 and other appropriate fuel-modification measures on state-owned
42 or -controlled lands bordering residential communities, schools,



1 temporary housing areas for wildfire survivors, major evacuation
2 corridors, and other occupied or vulnerable areas in West Maui;
3 and
4

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that applicable state agencies are
6 urged to inspect and maintain all existing emergency access
7 roads, fire lanes, gates, and potential secondary ingress and
8 egress routes serving or affecting state-owned or -controlled
9 lands in West Maui, and where any existing routes are incomplete
10 or inadequate, to work with the Office of the State Fire
11 Marshal, Department of Transportation, Maui Emergency Management
12 Agency, and County of Maui to accelerate additional emergency-
13 access improvements; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of the State Fire
16 Marshal is urged to use its authority to inspect state buildings
17 and facilities, assess fire risk, coordinate fire protection
18 efforts, and support community risk reduction to assist in
19 evaluating state-owned or -controlled lands in West Maui and in
20 recommending site-specific corrective actions, including
21 vegetation management, defensible space, and emergency access
22 improvements; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Housing Finance and
25 Development Corporation, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and
26 Department of Education are urged to give immediate priority to
27 parcels in and around the Lahaina Civic Center, Leialii,
28 Lahainaluna, Princess Nahienaena Elementary School, Lahaina
29 Intermediate School, and other state-associated facilities or
30 lands where hazardous vegetation and constrained evacuation
31 routes could endanger residents, students, staff, or wildfire
32 survivors; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
35 Natural Resources, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Department
36 of Accounting and General Services, Hawaii Housing Finance and
37 Development Corporation, and any other applicable state agencies
38 are requested to submit a report of their efforts to the
39 Legislature no later than December 31, 2026; and
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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
42 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Adjutant General,



1 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,
2 Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, Superintendent of
3 Education, Director of Transportation, Executive Director of the
4 Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation,
5 Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and
6 State Fire Marshal.

