
HOUSE 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

5
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

10
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

15
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

20
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

25
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

29
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
5

6 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources has
7 the capability to provide information on the status of Hawaii's
8 coral reefs, key issues and threats facing the coral reefs, and
9 recommendations for reef-safe practices; and
10

11 WHEREAS, collaboration among the Department of Land and
12 Natural Resources, Department of Education, State Public Charter
13 School Commission, and interested students can strengthen coral
14 reef restoration efforts through education, outreach and
15 stewardship; now, therefore,
16

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
18 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
19 of 2026, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources, in
20 collaboration with the Department of Education and State Public
21 Charter School Commission, is requested to develop a Student
22 Coral Stewardship Program that assists with public education,
23 outreach, and reef-safe sunscreen awareness at state beaches;
24 and
25

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Student Coral Stewardship
27 Program is intended to be educational, voluntary, and non-
28 enforcement in nature and may include student-led outreach,
29 educational materials, and community-engagement activities
30 informed by current scientific research; and
31

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
33 Natural Resources is requested to submit a report to the
34 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
35 the Regular Session of 2027 that summarizes collaborative
36 efforts with the Department of Education and State Public
37 Charter School Commission, including input and perspectives from
38 participating students and that presents any legislative,
39 policy, or funding recommendations necessary to advance coral
40 reef protection and student stewardship initiatives; and
41



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

