
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WILDFIRE MITIGATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State recognizes
2 the increasing threat of wildfires to our communities, natural
3 resources, and economy, and that the State is committed to
4 proactively addressing this growing challenge through a
5 comprehensive and collaborative approach. Understanding the
6 need for a multifaceted strategy, the legislature further finds
7 that a working group composed of government agencies, fire
8 experts, economists, legal experts, industry leaders, large
9 landowners, and stakeholders is required to find solutions that
10 address the State's wildfire preparedness and mitigation
11 challenges and increase the State's wildfire preparedness and
12 mitigation practices.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

14 (1) Establish, and make an appropriation for, a wildfire
15 mitigation working group; and



1 (2) Amend appropriations made by Act 302, Session Laws of
2 Hawaii 2025, to revise the positions funded for the
3 office of the state fire marshal by that Act.

4 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department
5 of law enforcement, to be administered by the office of the
6 state fire marshal, a wildfire mitigation working group. The
7 working group shall be composed of subcommittees and identify
8 clear deliverables to:

- 9 (1) Develop a system of state tax incentives, penalties,
10 and state-level funding support for managing land to
11 adequately reduce fire risk;
- 12 (2) Chart a plan for retrofitting unsafely designed
13 subdivisions to have adequate evacuation routes;
- 14 (3) Chart the State's course to increase workforce
15 development in land management and wildfire mitigation
16 sectors;
- 17 (4) Work with industry leaders and unions to improve
18 ignition-resistant building strategies that are both
19 safe and cost-effective;



- 1 (5) Integrate food security and climate resilience
- 2 initiatives with wildfire prevention, safety, and
- 3 resilience work;
- 4 (6) Identify funding sources and launch a state-level
- 5 competitive grant funding opportunity to support fuels
- 6 management on private lands;
- 7 (7) Consider needed wildfire mitigation measures, such as
- 8 regulations identifying the vegetation-management
- 9 obligations of public and private landowners as well
- 10 as a practical vegetation management program for
- 11 landowners and public utilities; and
- 12 (8) Integrate cultural stewardship and the development of
- 13 certified wildfire resilience and stewardship
- 14 standards that encourage good-faith compliance and
- 15 responsible land management and provide clear, legally
- 16 defensible guidance for the State's communities.

17 In undertaking its work, the working group shall be
18 explicitly aligned with the State's ongoing wildfire action
19 strategy, which is being developed under the department of the
20 attorney general by the Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization
21 and is based on the Fire Safety Research Institute's findings.



1 (b) The working group shall be composed of the following
2 members:

3 (1) The state fire marshal, who shall serve as co-chair;

4 (2) The director of the office of planning and sustainable
5 development, who shall serve as co-chair;

6 (3) The chair of the house of representatives standing
7 committee with primary jurisdiction over water and
8 land;

9 (4) The chair of the senate standing committee with
10 primary jurisdiction over water and land;

11 (5) The chairperson of the Hawaiian homes commission, or
12 the chairperson's designee;

13 (6) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
14 resources, or the chairperson's designee;

15 (7) The director of transportation, or the director's
16 designee;

17 (8) The director of taxation, or the director's designee;

18 (9) The airports rescue fire chief from the airports
19 division of the department of transportation;

20 (10) The chairperson of the public utilities commission, or
21 the chairperson's designee;



- 1 (11) The insurance commissioner, or the commissioner's
- 2 designee;
- 3 (12) A representative from the land division of the
- 4 department of land and natural resources;
- 5 (13) A representative of the state fire council;
- 6 (14) A fire protection forester from the wildfire
- 7 management branch of the division of forestry and
- 8 wildlife within the department of land and natural
- 9 resources;
- 10 (15) An economist from the university of Hawaii economic
- 11 research organization, to be selected by the executive
- 12 director of the university of Hawaii economic research
- 13 organization;
- 14 (16) An economist from the university of Hawaii at Manoa,
- 15 to be selected by the president of the university of
- 16 Hawaii at Manoa;
- 17 (17) An economist from the university of Hawaii at Hilo, to
- 18 be selected by the chancellor of the university of
- 19 Hawaii at Hilo;
- 20 (18) A wildfire expert from each county, to be invited by
- 21 the state fire marshal;

- 1 (19) A representative of the ranching industry, to be
2 invited by the state fire marshal;
- 3 (20) A representative of the Hawaii Wildfire Management
4 Organization, to be invited by the state fire marshal;
- 5 (21) A Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner who has
6 knowledge of traditional land stewardship practices
7 and 'ike kupuna that support landscape-scale risk
8 reduction, ecological resilience, and long-term
9 community safety, to be invited by the chairperson of
10 the board of land and natural resources;
- 11 (22) A large landowner, to be invited by the state fire
12 marshal;
- 13 (23) A representative of an electric utility, to be invited
14 by the state fire marshal;
- 15 (24) A representative of the public, to be invited by the
16 speaker of the house of representatives; and
- 17 (25) A representative of the public, to be invited by the
18 president of the senate.
- 19 (c) The office of the state fire marshal shall provide
20 administrative support, including preparation and drafting of
21 the report in subsection (d), as required by the working group.



1 (d) The working group shall submit a complete report of
2 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
3 legislation, to the legislature no later than thirty days prior
4 to the convening of the regular session of 2028.

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for
8 the administrative expenses of the wildfire mitigation working
9 group established by section 2 of this Act.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of the
11 state fire marshal for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. Act 302, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, is
13 amended by amending section 18 to read as follows:

14 "SECTION 18. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of [~~\$2,212,000~~]
16 \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
17 year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be
18 necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 in the following manner:

- 19 (1) For fiscal year 2025-2026:
20 (A) \$206,352 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
21 position for the state fire marshal;

1 (B) \$189,804 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
2 position for one deputy state fire marshal;

3 (C) \$40,248 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
4 position for one office assistant IV;

5 [~~(D)~~] ~~\$160,000 for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)~~
6 ~~positions for fire inspectors;~~

7 ~~(E) \$240,000 for three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE)~~
8 ~~positions for fire investigators; and]~~

9 (D) \$ _____ for four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE)
10 positions for assistant fire marshals; and

11 [~~(F)~~] (E) \$1,375,596 for the operations, costs,
12 equipment, and expenses of the office of the
13 state fire marshal; and

14 (2) For fiscal year 2026-2027:

15 (A) \$214,608 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
16 position for the state fire marshal;

17 (B) \$197,400 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
18 position for one deputy state fire marshal;

19 (C) \$40,248 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
20 position for one office assistant IV;

Report Title:

OSFM; Wildfire Mitigation Working Group; Fire Marshal; Report; Positions; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Wildfire Mitigation Working Group. Requires a report to the Legislature. Requires the Office of the State Fire Marshal to provide administrative support to the working group. Appropriates funds. Revises the appropriations made by Act 302, SLH 2025. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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