

MAR 16 2026

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO COLLABORATE TO ESTABLISH A
FORMAL, LONG-TERM COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM TO EXPAND,
EQUITABLY DISTRIBUTE, AND SUSTAIN TREE-CANOPY COVERAGE
ACROSS PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATE WIDE.

1 WHEREAS, increasing heat in Hawaii threatens student health
2 and limits outdoor-learning and recreational opportunities
3 across public schools statewide; and
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5 WHEREAS, only twenty-one percent of elementary schools
6 currently meet the recommended thirty-percent tree-canopy
7 coverage needed to provide adequate shade and cooling; and
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9 WHEREAS, Title I schools and schools that serve lower-
10 income communities often have less tree-canopy coverage and
11 suffer from higher heat exposure, raising significant concerns
12 about equity; and
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14 WHEREAS, in addition to lowering the temperature on school
15 campuses through shade, transpiration, and reduction of the
16 heat-island effect, trees also absorb storm water, clean the
17 air, beautify spaces, and help achieve state and county
18 environmental goals; and
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20 WHEREAS, there are twenty-nine agricultural or natural-
21 resource programs on Department of Education campuses statewide,
22 where tree propagation, planting, and care offer relevant
23 educational opportunities for students; and
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25 WHEREAS, the Department of Land and Natural Resources,
26 through its Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program,
27 successfully partnered with the Department of Education under a
28 2025 Memorandum of Agreement to implement the Shade Trees for



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1 Schools initiative and successfully partnered in 2024 in a Fruit
2 Trees for Schools pilot program initiative on campuses with
3 agricultural programs; and
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5 WHEREAS, these efforts demonstrate strong demand and
6 measurable benefits but have been tied to specific short-term
7 funding opportunities; now, therefore,
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9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
10 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026, the
11 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Land
12 and Natural Resources and Department of Education are requested
13 to establish a formal, long-term collaborative program to
14 expand, equitably distribute, and sustain tree-canopy coverage
15 across public schools statewide; and
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the program is requested to
18 incorporate and plan for the long-term maintenance of the trees
19 and the selection of species and locations that would ensure
20 durable climate, health, and educational benefits for Hawaii's
21 students; and
22

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body supports the creation
24 of staff positions to implement and sustain the work of this
25 formal, long-term collaborative program; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
28 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
29 Board of Land and Natural Resources and Superintendent of
30 Education.
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OFFERED BY: 

