

MAR 16 2026

SENATE CONCURRENT 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

14
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 Legislature has continued to consider
24 additional vegetation-management measures to reduce wildfire
25 risk, including proposals to require owners and persons in
26 control of hazardous fire-area property to maintain effective
27 firebreaks and clear flammable vegetation, to establish a
28 community fuels reduction project on state lands adjacent to
29 communities, to require trimming of hazardous vegetation near
30 utility corridors and public rights-of-way by public and private



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

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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 2023 Maui
28 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 2023 Maui wildfires to
41 construct a 2.5-mile emergency evacuation route from the
42 Lahainaluna fire lane to the Lahaina Bypass, with additional



1 access improvements, before Lahaina schools could safely reopen,
2 confirming the severe ingress and egress constraints affecting
3 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; now, therefore,
20

21 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
22 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026, the
23 House of Representatives concurring, that state agencies owning
24 or controlling land in West Maui, including the Hawaii Housing
25 Finance and Development Corporation, Department of Hawaiian Home
26 Lands, Department of Accounting and General Services, Department
27 of Land and Natural Resources, and any other applicable state
28 agencies, are urged to immediately identify, prioritize, and
29 abate hazardous vegetation, invasive grasses, and other
30 combustible growth on lands in or adjacent to Lahaina and nearby
31 West Maui communities for the purpose of reducing the risk of
32 wildfires; and
33

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that applicable state agencies are
35 urged to establish and maintain defensible space, fuel breaks,
36 and other appropriate fuel-modification measures on state-owned
37 or -controlled lands bordering residential communities, schools,
38 temporary housing areas for wildfire survivors, major evacuation
39 corridors, and other occupied or vulnerable areas in West Maui;
40 and
41



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that applicable state agencies are
2 urged to inspect and maintain all existing emergency access
3 roads, fire lanes, gates, and potential secondary ingress and
4 egress routes serving or affecting state-owned or -controlled
5 lands in West Maui, and where any existing routes are incomplete
6 or inadequate, to work with the Office of the State Fire
7 Marshal, Department of Transportation, Maui Emergency Management
8 Agency, and County of Maui to accelerate additional emergency-
9 access improvements; and

10
11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of the State Fire
12 Marshal is urged to use its authority to inspect state buildings
13 and facilities, assess fire risk, coordinate fire protection
14 efforts, and support community risk reduction to assist in
15 evaluating state-owned or -controlled lands in West Maui and in
16 recommending site-specific corrective actions, including
17 vegetation management, defensible space, and emergency access
18 improvements; and

19
20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Housing Finance and
21 Development Corporation, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and
22 Department of Education are urged to give immediate priority to
23 parcels in and around the Lahaina Civic Center, Leialii,
24 Lahainaluna, Princess Nahienaena Elementary, Lahaina
25 Intermediate School, and other state-associated facilities or
26 lands where hazardous vegetation and constrained evacuation
27 routes could endanger residents, students, staff, or wildfire
28 survivors; and

29
30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
31 Natural Resources, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Department
32 of Accounting and General Services, Hawaii Housing Finance and
33 Development Corporation, and any other applicable state agencies
34 are requested to submit a report of their efforts to the
35 Legislature no later than December 31, 2026; and

36
37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Adjutant
39 General, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,
40 Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, Superintendent of
41 Education, Director of Transportation, Executive Director of the
42 Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation,



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1 Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and
2 State Fire Marshal.
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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'AW', is written over a horizontal line.