
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES TO COLLABORATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO DEVELOP AND PROPOSE A FRAMEWORK FOR A STUDENT CORAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, the State's coral reefs are critical to the
2 State's environment, culture, shoreline protection, and economy,
3 yet they are increasingly threatened by climate change,
4 pollution, 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, the Legislature has demonstrated leadership in
12 coral reef protection through Act 104, Session Laws of Hawaii
13 2018, 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 the State have demonstrated a
27 strong interest, research capacity, and leadership in coral reef
28 science, environmental stewardship, and community education; and

29



1 WHEREAS, public charter schools in the State, such as West
2 Hawai'i Explorations Academy on Hawai'i Island, have demonstrated
3 a strong commitment to the early education of students in ocean
4 protection and marine stewardship by integrating place-based,
5 experiential learning focused on the State's marine environments
6 into their curriculum; and
7

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

14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
16 that the Division of Aquatic Resources of the Department of Land
17 and Natural Resources is requested to collaborate with the
18 Department of Education and State Public Charter School
19 Commission to develop and propose a framework for a Student
20 Coral Stewardship Program that assists with public education,
21 outreach, and reef-safe sunscreen awareness at state beaches;
22 and
23

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

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Aquatic
31 Resources is requested to submit a report to the Legislature no
32 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
33 Session of 2027 that summarizes collaborative efforts, including
34 input and perspectives from participating students, and that
35 presents any legislative, policy, or funding recommendations
36 necessary to advance coral reef protection and student
37 stewardship initiatives; and
38

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
40 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
41 Board of Land and Natural Resources, Superintendent of
42 Education, Administrator of the Division of Aquatic Resources,



1 and Executive Director of the State Public Charter School
2 Commission.

