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LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
WATER AND LAND

Tuesday April 7, 2026
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

In consideration of
HOUSE RESOLUTION 132, HOUSE DRAFT 1
and
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 140, HOUSE DRAFT 1

House Resolution 132 and House Concurrent Resolution 140, House Draft 1, urge state agencies with land in West Maui to implement and enforce vegetation management, fuel reduction, defensible space, and emergency access measures to lower wildfire risk for Lahaina and nearby communities. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the goals of this resolution and offers the following comments.**

The Department supports proactive measures such as fuel reduction, creating defensible space, and improving ingress and egress routes, as these are key elements of a comprehensive wildfire risk mitigation strategy that align with ongoing efforts by state and county agencies.

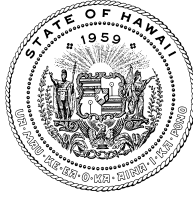
The Department of the Attorney General has contracted the Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization to develop a statewide wildfire action strategy based on recommendations from the Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI). This initiative represents a coordinated, science-based approach to wildfire risk reduction across Hawai'i. The Department recommends that the implementation of the actions outlined in this resolution align with the FSRI recommendations and be guided by the upcoming statewide wildfire action strategy, which should serve as the baseline framework for prioritization and execution. Doing so will help ensure consistency across agencies, focus efforts on the highest-risk areas, and make the most effective use of limited resources.

Wildfire risk must be managed across the entire landscape. While the resolutions focus on parcels managed by agencies, effective mitigation requires coordinated efforts among state, county, and private lands, as well as the creation and ongoing maintenance of strategic fuel treatments. The Department supports initiatives that promote cross-boundary coordination and sustained management over time.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of

DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

April 07, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Room 411

In consideration of

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 140, HOUSE DRAFT 1 /

HOUSE RESOLUTION 132, HOUSE DRAFT 1

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.

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports with comments** HCR140, HD1 / HR132, HD1, which urges 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.

As noted in the measure, HHFDC controls substantial lands in the Lahaina area, including the Villages of Leialii, which encompass roughly 1,128 acres of state-owned land mauka of the Lahaina Civic Center.

Public safety is of utmost importance to HHFDC. We recognize the urgency of reducing hazardous vegetation and strengthening defensible space around residential communities, temporary housing areas for wildfire survivors, schools, and major evacuation routes. We are committed to working closely with the Office of the State Fire Marshal, DLNR, DHHL, DOE, DAGS, County of Maui, and other partners to meet the expectations set forth in this resolution. Also, this effort will align with the recommendations of the Hawaii Wildlife Management Organization and the Fire Safety Research Institute.

Since the 2023 wildfires, HHFDC has expanded firebreaks on our lands in Lahaina that border developed lands. We note, however, that maintenance of the firebreaks comes at additional cost, and implementing additional measures such as ground clearing and wide-scale vegetation

management would require substantial dedicated funding and possibly additional field personnel and contract management staff.

With appropriate resources, HHFDC is prepared to support the full scope of the directives of this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.