

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

Before the Senate Committees on
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
AND
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
AND
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Thursday, February 19, 2026
3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2237
RELATING TO FIRE PREVENTION

Senate Bill 2237 requires each state agency to create and regularly update a wildfire hazard map; requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to adopt rules; specifies that the Department shall clear brush present on State lands for more than 60 days through the Community Fuels Reduction Project; requires the Department to remove certain brush from high- and medium-risk wildfire areas on State lands; and requires reports to the Legislature. **The Department appreciates the intent of this measure and offers the following comments.**

The Department supports the development of wildfire hazard mapping as a critical planning tool. However, requiring each agency to independently create and maintain separate wildfire hazard maps would likely lead to inconsistent methodologies across agencies, duplication of effort, increased administrative and technical burden, and potential confusion for policymakers, insurers, and the public. This work is most appropriately centralized within a single lead agency, such as the Department or Office of State Fire Marshal, in consultation with other agencies and subject-matter experts. The Department recommends developing one statewide wildfire hazard map, produced using current research, fire history data, fuel load assessments, climate projections, and interagency input, and updated every five years. Updating every two years, as proposed, would impose high ongoing analytical costs and staff demands without necessarily producing materially improved predictive accuracy.

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

This measure would greatly expand the Department's responsibilities under the Community Fuels Reduction Project by mandating the removal and clearing of flammable vegetation that has been present for more than 60 days, including in high- and medium-risk wildfire zones. The Department supports proactive fuels management; however, the mandates proposed in this bill would necessitate large-scale, recurring vegetation clearing across extensive state landholdings and ongoing statewide monitoring of vegetation growth, even during periods of low fire risk. Enforcing a blanket 60-day vegetation removal rule would require a substantial increase in operational capacity, including additional staff for fieldwork, environmental compliance, contract management, equipment maintenance, and oversight and reporting. Although the Department has received extra wildfire-related funding in recent years, these funds are insufficient to cover the scope of the mandates in this measure. As drafted, the bill would impose a significant unfunded operational requirement. Without substantial, ongoing funding and permanent staffing increases, the Department would be unable to implement the requirements at the necessary scale and frequency.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEES ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS; PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS; AND, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**IBEW LOCAL 1260 — TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS TO SB2237
WLA / PSM / GVO Joint Hearing — Thursday, February 19, 2026 — 3:05 PM**

Aloha Chair(s) Chris Lee, Carol Fukunaga, Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair(s) Lorraine R. Inouye, Chris Lee, Mike Gabbard, and Members of the Joint Committees:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 (IBEW 1260) offers testimony in **SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS** on SB2237.

IBEW Local 1260 represents approximately 3,000 highly skilled workers across Hawai'i and Guam who support electric utility infrastructure and critical public systems throughout our state.

IBEW 1260 supports the intent of this measure to strengthen wildfire prevention through improved vegetation management, wildfire hazard mapping, and fuels reduction efforts on state lands. Proactive land management is essential to reducing wildfire risk and protecting communities and critical infrastructure.

As the Department of Land and Natural Resources will be responsible for implementing vegetation management and fuels reduction activities, IBEW 1260 respectfully emphasizes that any work conducted near electrical infrastructure — including power lines — should be performed by a properly trained and qualified workforce due to the significant safety risks associated with working near energized facilities.

Recommended Amendment

IBEW 1260 respectfully recommends inserting language within the vegetation management and fuels reduction provisions of the measure specifying that work conducted near electrical transmission or distribution infrastructure be performed by a qualified **Line Clearance Tree Trimmer**, so that the definition provided below has clear operational effect.

Proposed Definition

“Line Clearance Tree Trimmer” means an individual of at least eighteen years of age who has successfully completed a state-approved Line Clearance Tree Trimmer apprenticeship program and who can provide satisfactory evidence of experience in high voltage line clearance tree trimming of at least one and one-half years full-time or its equivalent, but not less than three thousand hours, in the trade under the supervision of a journey worker or supervising line clearance tree trimmer.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2237

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 10:29:38 PM

Testimony for WLA on 2/19/2026 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2237 SB RELATING TO FIRE PREVENTION.

To: Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Government Operations

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: February 18, 2026

RE: Senate Bill 2237
Measure Title: RELATING TO FIRE PREVENTION.
Report Title: DLNR; State Agencies; Vegetation Management; Wildfire Hazard
Maps; Community Fuels Reduction Project; Reports

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support Senate Bill 2237. Thank you for introducing this bill.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore