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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FIRES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that development in the  
2 outlying fringe of metropolitan areas and in rural areas is  
3 increasing the size of the wildland-urban interface, the area  
4 where structures and other human development meet or intermingle  
5 with undeveloped wildland. The expansion of the wildland-urban  
6 interface in recent decades has significant implications for  
7 wildfire management and impact. A growing wildland-urban  
8 interface creates an environment in which fire can move readily  
9 between structural and vegetation fuels, and it increases the  
10 likelihood that wildfires will threaten structures and people.  
11 Firewise Hawaii is a collaborative effort involving builders,  
12 homeowners, insurers, mortgage brokers, landscapers, fire  
13 service, community leaders, planners, developers, local and  
14 state agencies, and others in the effort to protect people,  
15 property, and natural resources from the risk of wildland fire  
16 before a fire starts. This approach emphasizes community  
17 responsibility for planning in the design of a safe community as  
18 well as effective emergency response, and individual



1 responsibility for safer home construction and design,  
2 landscaping, and maintenance.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish the firewise Hawaii  
4 program in the division of forestry and wildlife, department of  
5 land and natural resources, to address the growing fire danger  
6 in wildland-urban interface areas.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 183, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
8 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
9 designated and to read as follows:

10 "§183- Firewise Hawaii program. (a) As used in this  
11 chapter, "firewise communities" are those that have a wildfire  
12 emergency action plan in place, or are interested in preparing  
13 an action plan to: avoid potential wildfire emergencies by  
14 addressing and correcting wildland fire hazards, prepare  
15 themselves in the event a wildfire threatens, and educate the  
16 community on wildfire prevention.

17 (b) There is hereby established the firewise Hawaii  
18 program in the department. The department shall administer this  
19 section through the administrator of the forestry and wildlife  
20 division.

21 (c) Duties of the program office may included, but are not  
22 limited to the following:



- 1        (1) Providing technical assistance and support to firewise  
2        communities by providing technical expertise in  
3        firewise, GIS risk mapping, guidelines for creating  
4        risk mitigation ordinances, and community grant  
5        program participation requirements;
- 6        (2) Developing a public outreach plan to include printed  
7        material and a firewise Hawaii web site with  
8        information on creating defensible space and reducing  
9        wildfire risk, as well as community meetings for  
10       public education;
- 11       (3) Providing firewise communities with a generalized risk  
12       assessment, maps, and data describing a community's  
13       general wildland fuels and fire risks; and
- 14       (4) Providing firewise communities with specific  
15       assessment technology for use in the detailed  
16       community assessment work.
- 17       **§183- Firewise Hawaii special fund.**    (a) There is  
18       established in the state treasury the firewise Hawaii special  
19       fund, into which shall be deposited:
- 20       (1) Grant moneys or other contributions from federal,  
21       state, or county government sources or private



1           entities to support operations of the firewise Hawaii  
2           program; and

3           (2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the firewise  
4           Hawaii special fund.

5           (b) The Hawaii firewise special fund shall be administered  
6 by the division of forestry and wildlife, department of land and  
7 natural resources. All moneys in the fund shall be expended by  
8 administrator of the forestry and wildlife division to carry out  
9 the purposes of the program and to fund staff positions,  
10 including, but not limited to, a contract coordinator and field  
11 office specialists."

12           SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$           or so  
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 to be  
15 deposited into the firewise Hawaii special fund.

16           SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the firewise  
17 Hawaii special fund the sum of \$           for the purposes of  
18 the firewise Hawaii program.

19           The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
20 land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

21           SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.

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**Report Title:**

Firewise Hawaii Program; Special Fund

**Description:**

Establishes the firewise Hawaii program in the department of land and natural resources to address the growing fire danger in wildland-urban interface areas. Creates the firewise Hawaii special fund. Makes an appropriation.

