
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WILDFIRE PROTECTION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the devastation
2 wrought by the deadly wildfires on Maui on August 8, 2023,
3 illustrates the urgency to take action to reduce the risk of
4 wildfires to communities throughout Hawaii and the need to
5 increase capacity within organizations that are already working
6 on fire mitigation across the State.

7 The legislature further finds that the patchwork of county,
8 state, and private land parcels that dominate the wildland-urban
9 interface around nearly all of Hawaii's communities requires a
10 high degree of planning and coordination to implement fuels
11 mitigation at a scale that would be effective in reducing the
12 risk of wildfire.

13 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to establish within
14 the department of land and natural resources a fireshed
15 partnership program.



1 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by
2 adding a new chapter to title 12, subtitle 4, to be
3 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

4 "CHAPTER

5 FIRESHED PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

6 § -1 **Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the
7 context indicates otherwise, "department" means the department
8 of land and natural resources.

9 § -2 **Fireshed partnership program; established.** (a)

10 There is established within the department a fireshed
11 partnership program, to be overseen by a fireshed partnership
12 program coordinator, who shall be exempt from chapter 76.

13 (b) The fireshed partnership program shall:

14 (1) Establish a network of fireshed partnerships
15 consisting of agreements among managers of private,
16 county, state, and federal lands within and adjacent
17 to communities under high fire risk to plan and
18 implement fire-risk reduction through fuels
19 management, resource mapping and sharing, and
20 educational exchange;



1 (2) Leverage the technical expertise of the following
2 entities:

3 (A) Large-scale fuels management by the division of
4 forestry and wildlife of the department;

5 (B) Partnership building by the Hawaii Wildfire
6 Management Organization; and

7 (C) Risk assessment and economic analyses by the
8 university of Hawaii cooperative extension fire
9 program; and

10 (3) Identify high-priority lands and landowners, develop
11 "shovel-ready" fuels-reduction projects for contiguous
12 landscape-scale community protection, and provide
13 funding to initiate or expand fuels-reduction efforts
14 and matching funds for federal grant programs.

15 § -3 **Fireshed management special fund.** (a) There is
16 established in the state treasury the fireshed management
17 special fund, into which shall be deposited the following funds:

18 (1) Appropriations made by the legislature for deposit
19 into the fund;



1 (2) Donations and contributions made by private
2 individuals or organizations for deposit into the
3 fund;

4 (3) Grants provided by governmental agencies or any other
5 source; and

6 (4) All interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited in
7 the fund.

8 (b) Moneys in the fund shall be expended by the division
9 of forestry and wildlife of the department to support positions
10 and contracts to implement fireshed partnerships no later
11 than June 30, 2029, to accomplish the following objectives:

12 (1) Identify and map fire-related suppression resources,
13 hazardous fuels, vulnerable assets, and the specific
14 landholdings requiring fire risk mitigation;

15 (2) Develop cross-boundary partnerships and memoranda of
16 understanding among landowners and determine costs and
17 resource-sharing opportunities to plan long-term,
18 spatially-contiguous fuels-mitigation projects at
19 landscape scales; and

20 (3) Expand and develop multi-use, multi-partner
21 demonstrations of fuels-management strategies, such as



1 grazing, green strips, and fuel breaks, that will
2 reduce risk and educate local leadership and other
3 communities on best practices.

4 § -4 **Annual report.** No later than twenty days before
5 the convening of each regular session, the fireshed partnership
6 program shall submit a report to the legislature concerning its
7 activities and progress."

8 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
11 deposited into the fireshed management special fund established
12 by section -3, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

13 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the fireshed
14 management special fund established by section -3, Hawaii
15 Revised Statutes, the sum of \$ or so much thereof as
16 may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the establishment
17 and hiring of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) fireshed
18 partnership program coordinator within the department of land
19 and natural resources.

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



1 SECTION 5. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
 2 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
 3 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
 4 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
 5 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
 6 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
 7 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund
 8 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further
 9 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
 10 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
 11 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
 12 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
 13 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
 14 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- 15 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
- 16 serve the public interest; and
- 17 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
- 18 addressed by this Act.



1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

2

INTRODUCED BY:

Amy Peruso

JAN 24 2024



H.B. NO. 2721

Report Title:

Wildfire Protection; Fireshed Partnership Program; DLNR;
Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

Description:

Establishes a fireshed partnership program within the department of land and natural resources. Makes appropriations.

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