

MAR 08 2024

---

# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATEWIDE FIREFIGHTING  
HELICOPTER PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, due to its geographical isolation, Hawaii faces  
2 major barriers to effective wildfire response; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, while other states may request out-of-state  
5 firefighting agencies under mutual aid agreements to assist in  
6 coordinated firefighting efforts due to closer proximity and  
7 connected land mass, Hawaii's geographical isolation and unique  
8 topography make it increasingly difficult to request similar  
9 assistance, only compounding the challenges that local  
10 firefighters face in response to a wildfire; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, the threat of wildfires has increased in recent  
13 decades due to climate change, adverse weather events, and drier  
14 environmental conditions necessitating the State to adapt its  
15 firefighting methodology; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, the adoption of a unified, state-driven approach  
18 to firefighting would enhance fire safety throughout the State;  
19 and  
20

21 WHEREAS, a statewide firefighting helicopter program is  
22 imperative for the State to fortify resilience against wildfires  
23 and enhance emergency management and response capabilities; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, the individual counties currently operate  
26 firefighting helicopters and other resources, that are difficult  
27 to deploy outside of a county during times of mass emergencies;  
28 and  
29

30 WHEREAS, a helicopter's ability to rapidly intervene in  
31 remote and inaccessible areas dramatically increases  
32 firefighting capabilities, and if equipped with state of the art  
33 technology can deliver targeted water drops, fire retardant, and



1 other fire suppression agents with precision to maximize the  
2 efficiency of suppression efforts; now, therefore,

3

4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second  
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024, the  
6 House of Representatives concurring, that a statewide  
7 firefighting helicopter program is requested to be established;  
8 and

9

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature is urged to  
11 appropriate the necessary funds to create a dedicated statewide  
12 firefighting helicopter program to fortify Hawaii's resilience  
13 against wildfires, enhance emergency response capabilities,  
14 protect the State's natural resources, and ensure the safety of  
15 the State's residents and visitors; and

16

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide firefighting  
18 helicopter program is requested to retrofit, maintain, staff,  
19 operate, and support firefighting helicopters or contract for  
20 the provision of these services and enter into agreements with  
21 state and county fire departments and emergency management  
22 agencies to establish policies and procedures for the deployment  
23 of firefighting helicopters; and

24

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
26 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Speaker of  
27 the House of Representatives; President of the Senate,  
28 Administrator for the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and  
29 Chair of the State Fire Council.

30

31

32

OFFERED BY:

