
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATEWIDE FIREFIGHTING
AIRCRAFT PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, due to its geographical isolation, Hawaii faces
2 major barriers to effective wildfire response; and
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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
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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
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17 WHEREAS, the adoption of a unified, state-driven approach
18 to firefighting would enhance fire safety throughout the State;
19 and
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21 WHEREAS, a statewide firefighting aircraft program is
22 imperative for the State to fortify resilience against wildfires
23 and enhance emergency management and response capabilities; and
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25 WHEREAS, the individual counties currently operate
26 firefighting helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, drones, and other
27 resources, that are difficult to deploy outside of a county
28 during times of mass emergencies; and
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30 WHEREAS, a helicopter's, fixed wing aircraft's, or drone's
31 ability to rapidly intervene in remote and inaccessible areas
32 dramatically increases firefighting capabilities, and if



1 equipped with state of the art technology can deliver targeted
2 water drops, fire retardant, and other fire suppression agents
3 with precision to maximize the efficiency of suppression
4 efforts; now, therefore,
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6 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
7 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024, the
8 House of Representatives concurring, that a statewide
9 firefighting aircraft program is requested to be established;
10 and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature is urged to
13 appropriate the necessary funds to create a dedicated statewide
14 firefighting aircraft program to fortify Hawaii's resilience
15 against wildfires, enhance emergency response capabilities,
16 protect the State's natural resources, and ensure the safety of
17 the State's residents and visitors; and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide firefighting
20 helicopter program is requested to retrofit, maintain, staff,
21 operate, and support firefighting helicopters, fixed wing
22 aircraft, or drones or contract for the provision of these
23 services and enter into agreements with state and county fire
24 departments and emergency management agencies to establish
25 policies and procedures for the deployment of firefighting
26 helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, or drones; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
29 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President
30 of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives,
31 Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and
32 Chair of the State Fire Council.

