

MAR 08 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND MAUI COUNTY TO INVESTIGATE AND ENFORCE APPLICABLE LAWS AGAINST LANDLORDS WHO ARE ENDING RENTAL AGREEMENTS TO HOUSE FEMA-ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS THROUGH THE DIRECT LEASE PROGRAM OR THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, nearly three thousand households were displaced by
2 the August 2023 Maui wildfires; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Legislature is examining potential tools for
5 rent control in Maui County; and

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7 WHEREAS, Maui is experiencing a housing crisis due to the
8 lack of available units; and

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10 WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and
11 the State are utilizing short-term housing through the Direct
12 Lease Program, Rental Assistance Program, and non-congregate
13 shelters to house both FEMA-eligible and ineligible households;
14 and

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16 WHEREAS, FEMA's Direct Lease Program has inflated the
17 rental market by paying three hundred sixty-six percent above-
18 market rates to landlords who will house FEMA-eligible
19 households; and

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21 WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services Rental Assistance
22 Program (RAP) pays above-market rates to house FEMA ineligible
23 households; and

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25 WHEREAS, incidents have been reported on Maui where
26 homeowners are not renewing lease agreements with existing
27 tenants, displacing them to make room for FEMA-eligible
28 households through the Direct Lease Program and the ineligible
29 households supported through RAP; and
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1 WHEREAS, these incidents have raised concerns about
2 fairness, housing stability, and the impact on tenants who are
3 being displaced; and

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5 WHEREAS, the Governor's emergency proclamation established
6 a moratorium on evictions in Lahaina; and

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8 WHEREAS, the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
9 has a duty to investigate such incidents and ensure compliance
10 with relevant regulations; now, therefore,

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12 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
13 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024,
14 that the Department of Commerce and Consumer and Affairs and
15 Maui County are urged to investigate and enforce applicable laws
16 against landlords who are ending rental agreements to house
17 FEMA-eligible households through the Direct Lease Program or the
18 Department of Human Services Rental Assistance Program; and

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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
21 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Commerce and
22 Consumer Affairs and the Mayor of the County of Maui.

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OFFERED BY: 

