



**Hawaiian
Electric**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

HCR 168 / HR 163

**Requesting That The Hawaii State Fire Code Clearly Define
Stages Of Wildfire Suppression And Related Efforts**

Friday, March 21, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

Jimmy D. Alberts
Senior Vice President & Chief Operations Officer
Hawaiian Electric

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jimmy D. Alberts and I am providing testimony on behalf of Hawaiian Electric **in support** of HCR 168 / HR 163, Requesting That The Hawaii State Fire Code Clearly Define Stages Of Wildfire Suppression And Related Efforts.

Hawaiian Electric supports this resolution, which aims to clearly define stages of wildfire suppression and related first responder efforts as well as help ensure enhanced monitoring of extinguished fires during higher wildfire risk weather conditions. Clarifying these terms would aid Hawaiian Electric in its situational awareness meetings and communications with first responders during periods of increased wildfire risk; also, setting a clear standard for monitoring extinguished fires would better protect our communities given the increasing risk of wildfires due to climate change and other factors.

Accordingly, Hawaiian Electric supports HCR 168 / HR 163. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

HCR-168

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 3:33:54 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/21/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

HCR-168

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 6:05:11 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/21/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Mckay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HCR168

Aloha Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Concurrent Resolution 168 (HCR168), which requests clear definitions of wildfire suppression stages in the Hawaii State Fire Code. This resolution is a vital step toward improving wildfire management and public safety in our state.

Clear and standardized definitions, such as "uncontrolled," "contained," "controlled," "extinguished," and "fully extinguished," will significantly enhance communication between firefighting personnel, emergency responders, and the public. This clarity can save lives, prevent property damage, and reduce confusion during wildfire emergencies.

The emphasis on constant monitoring after wildfires are deemed "fully extinguished," specifically requiring 48 to 96 hours of vigilance, is crucial in preventing the recurrence of devastating fires, such as the Lahaina Fire of 2023. Continued vigilance ensures early detection and immediate suppression of potential hotspots.

However, I acknowledge that this resolution presents challenges, including increased resource requirements, financial implications, operational complexity, and enforcement challenges. To address these concerns, I propose the following solutions:

1. Resource Allocation and Financial Support:

Secure dedicated state or federal funding specifically for wildfire monitoring and suppression.

Explore public-private partnerships or grants to alleviate financial strain on fire departments.

Operational Efficiency:

Implement advanced monitoring technology such as drones, infrared cameras, and automated sensors to efficiently detect hotspots without overly burdening personnel.

Provide comprehensive training for firefighting personnel on new technologies and updated protocols, reducing operational confusion and improving effectiveness.

Flexible Protocols:

Allow experienced fire chiefs and incident commanders discretion to adjust monitoring durations based on real-time assessments and risk evaluations.

Periodically review and revise guidelines as necessary, ensuring they remain practical, adaptable, and effective in various operational scenarios.

Enforcement and Accountability:

Establish clear accountability measures and reporting requirements to ensure transparency without excessive bureaucratic burden.

Foster inter-agency collaboration to share best practices, improving compliance and effective enforcement.

I firmly believe HCR168, coupled with these proactive measures, will significantly bolster Hawaii's resilience against devastating wildfires. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this critical matter.

Respectfully,

Tamara McKay

State Chair, Hawaii Republican Party

HCR-168

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:29:05 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/21/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louella Vidinha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of this bill.

Whatever we can do to help mitigate wildfires by helping to define the stages is another type of remedy.

Louella Vidinha

Hawaii resident

HCR-168

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 10:50:08 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/21/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HCR-168

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 2:11:01 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/21/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scarlet Kembel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my **strong support** for the proposed resolution that seeks to clearly define the stages of wildfire suppression and related efforts. As seen from the devastation in Lahaina, wildfires continue to threaten communities, ecosystems, and economies across our islands. The need for a well-structured, transparent, and actionable framework is more urgent than ever. This resolution represents a critical step forward in enhancing our ability to respond to these disasters effectively and efficiently to prevent further loss and destruction.

Thank you.