

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**GOV. MSG. NO. 1402**

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

July 3, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate,  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine Nakamura  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

I am transmitting herewith H.B. 1296 without my approval and with the statement of objections relating to the measure.

H.B. 1296 RELATING TO THE MAJOR DISASTER FUND.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Green".

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

HONOLULU

July 3, 2025

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIONS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1296

Honorable Members  
Thirty-Third Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

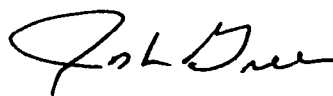
Pursuant to Section 16 of Article III of the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i, I am returning herewith, without my approval, House Bill No. 1296, entitled "A Bill for an Act Relating to the Major Disaster Fund."

The purposes of this bill are (1) to add to the existing requirement that the Administrator of Emergency Management (Administrator) file a report following an allotment from the Major Disaster Fund (Fund) by also requiring a report following a "transfer" from the Fund; (2) to shorten from sixty days to thirty days the time that the Administrator has to file a report following an allotment or transfer; (3) to add a requirement that the report must include a description of the allotment and use of funds; (4) to require that the report include an accounting of Federal Emergency Management Agency eligible and ineligible expenses; and (5) to require the Governor and the Administrator to submit a report no later than October 1, 2025, for the prior fiscal year.

This bill is objectionable because it will interfere with the ability of the Administration to quickly deploy resources in the Fund in response to emergencies. During emergencies, it is critical that the Administration have flexibility to address rapidly changing situations. The Administration is committed to using state funds in a transparent and efficient manner. However, the new administrative burdens this bill places on utilizing the Fund may jeopardize public safety.

For the foregoing reasons, I am returning House Bill No. 1296 without my approval.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Green".

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
Governor of Hawai'i

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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE MAJOR DISASTER FUND.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the devastating  
2 wildfires brought on by winds from hurricane Dora on August 8,  
3 2023, resulted in one of the worst natural disasters in the  
4 State's history. The wildfires caused loss of life and the  
5 displacement of thousands on the island of Maui. The disaster  
6 also destroyed nearly all of Lahaina.

7       The legislature further finds that to support response and  
8 recovery efforts and address immediate 2023 Maui wildfire  
9 funding needs, the governor, through several emergency  
10 proclamations relating to wildfires and other executive powers,  
11 has redirected appropriations from selected general fund  
12 operating appropriations originally intended for specific  
13 purposes and capital improvement projects, to the department of  
14 budget and finance. The department of budget and finance  
15 subsequently transferred funds to the major disaster fund. With  
16 the veto of S.B. No. 3068, C.D. 2 (2024), and in light of the  
17 provisions of S.B. No. 582, C.D. 1 (2024), provisions regarding



1 transparency and accountability for the use of appropriations  
2 redirected no longer exist in statute.

3       The legislature believes that full transparency and  
4 accountability requires a full accounting of all appropriations  
5 transferred and deposited into the major disaster fund, and all  
6 reimbursements of Federal Emergency Management Agency funds  
7 received by the major disaster fund. In addition, assessing the  
8 impacts to departments of the transfers made from various  
9 appropriations is vital to ensuring that programs from which  
10 funding was transferred remain effective.

11       Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish timely  
12 notice and reporting requirements to the legislature regarding  
13 the transfer of appropriations to the major disaster fund.

14       SECTION 2. Section 127A-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

16       "(b) No later than [~~sixty~~] thirty days after any allotment  
17 or transfer by the governor or the expenditure of any fund  
18 moneys, the administrator shall report to the legislature on the  
19 purpose of the allotment, transfer, or expenditure. The report  
20 shall:



- 1        (1) Describe the allotment, subsequent use of the  
2        transferred funds, or the expenditure; and
- 3        (2) Include an accounting for Federal Emergency Management  
4        Agency eligible and ineligible expenses that specify:
- 5        (A) The date of allotment, transfer, or expenditure;  
6        (B) The amount of allotment, transfer, or  
7        expenditure;
- 8        (C) The program identification number from which  
9        funds were transferred or expended;
- 10       (D) The program identification number to which funds  
11       were transferred;
- 12       (E) The impact on the program identification number  
13       from which funds are transferred or expended; and
- 14       (F) A detailed explanation of:
- 15       (i) The uses of the resources transferred or  
16       expended; and
- 17       (ii) The public purposes served by the transfer  
18       of the resources."

19       SECTION 3. No later than October 1, 2025, the governor and  
20 administrator of the Hawaii emergency management agency shall  
21 submit to the legislature a summary report containing the



1 information specified in section 2 of this Act for the previous  
2 fiscal year.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, and  
4 shall be repealed on July 1, 2026; provided that section 127A-  
5 16(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be repealed and reenacted  
6 in the form in which it read prior to the effective date of this  
7 Act.



H.B. NO. 1296  
H.D. 1  
S.D. 1  
C.D. 1

APPROVED this            day of            , 2025

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

HB No. 1296, HD 1, SD 1, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: April 30, 2025  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025.



Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker  
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives




**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I**

Date: April 30, 2025  
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate  
of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2025.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate