
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
ESTABLISH A COLLABORATIVE WORKING GROUP TO SURVEY,
IDENTIFY, AND MONITOR CULTURALLY SENSITIVE SHORELINES
IMPACTED BY EROSION.

1 WHEREAS, the State recognizes the cultural and historical
2 significance of Native Hawaiian burial sites and the need to
3 protect these sacred places; and
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5 WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian iwi kūpuna were historically
6 interred along sandy shoreline areas, which are now increasingly
7 threatened by coastal erosion; and
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9 WHEREAS, multiple culturally sensitive shoreline areas
10 across the State, including Lahilahi Beach Park in Wai'anae,
11 Kaulahao Beach in Hamakuapoko, and the Old Kona Airport Beach
12 Park in Kailua-Kona, have experienced ongoing coastal erosion,
13 resulting in the continuous exposure of iwi kūpuna; and
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15 WHEREAS, pursuant to section 13-300-2, Hawaii
16 Administrative Rules, iwi exposed due to erosion are classified
17 as inadvertent discoveries; and
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19 WHEREAS, the appropriate Island Burial Council is the
20 designated entity responsible for the disposition of
21 inadvertently discovered iwi kūpuna; and
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23 WHEREAS, iwi discovered through shoreline erosion are
24 frequently located within the high-water mark, making it
25 difficult to preserve them in place; and
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27 WHEREAS, iwi found in shoreline areas also fall within the
28 jurisdiction of the State, complicating quick reinterment
29 efforts within the immediate vicinity due to the need for
30 permission from adjacent property owners; and
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1 WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced to address the
2 discovery of iwi kūpuna exposed along Hawaii's shorelines due to
3 coastal erosion; and
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5 WHEREAS, the establishment of an inter-division program to
6 coordinate efforts among state and county agencies is necessary
7 to ensure the successful coordination of efforts in locating,
8 protecting, and restoring Native Hawaiian burial sites and iwi
9 kūpuna affected by coastal erosion; now, therefore,
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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
12 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
13 of 2025, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is
14 requested to establish a collaborative working group to survey,
15 identify, and monitor culturally sensitive shorelines impacted
16 by erosion; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the collaborative working group
19 is requested to include the following members:
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- 21 (1) Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
22 Resources, or the Chairperson's designee;
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- 24 (2) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of
25 Hawaiian Affairs, or the Chairperson's designee;
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- 27 (3) Administrator of the Department of Land and Natural
28 Resources' State Historic Preservation Division, or
29 the Administrator's designee;
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- 31 (4) A representative from the Department of Land and
32 Natural Resources' Office of Conservation and Coastal
33 Lands;
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- 35 (5) A representative of the Island Burial Councils, to be
36 selected by the Chairperson of the Board of Land and
37 Natural Resources;
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- 39 (6) A representative from the City and County of Honolulu,
40 to be selected by the Mayor;
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(7) A representative of the County of Hawaii, to be selected by the Mayor;

(8) A representative of the County of Maui, to be selected by the Mayor; and

(9) A representative of the County of Kauai, to be selected by the Mayor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the collaborative working group is requested to determine a process to address iwi kūpuna exposed along shorelines, ensuring their protection from adverse impact; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the collaborative working group is requested to assess public lands near culturally sensitive areas where iwi kūpuna were exposed along shorelines to determine locations that may be designated as suitable reinterment sites; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested to consider the appropriate methods of funding to support the collaborative working group, including for the construction of secure and culturally appropriate reinterment vaults in areas designated by the collaborative working group to ensure the respectful and permanent protection of iwi kūpuna; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the collaborative working group is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources; Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Administrator of the Department of Land and Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Division; Administrator of the Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands; and Mayors of the City and



- 1 County of Honolulu and County of Maui, County of Hawaii, and
- 2 County of Kauai.

