

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'Ī
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

March 24, 2025

To: The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair,
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Date: Monday, March 24, 2025
Time: 3:05 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 225, State Capitol

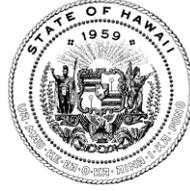
From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: S.C.R. 149, REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONVENE A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TO STUDY, EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS THAT DEFINE PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATIONS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK.

The **DLIR appreciates the intent** of this measure, which requests the convening of a Vegetation Management Working Group to study, evaluate, and make recommendations to mitigate wildfire risk. While Act 209 (SLH 2024) established the Office of the State Fire Marshal within the DLIR, the Legislature is currently deliberating its permanent, executive placement.

The Governor's Package includes HB1064, which proposes transferring the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Council to the Department of Defense (DOD). Given the DOD's mission in disaster readiness, response coordination, and public safety, it is a more appropriate agency for overseeing fire protection and emergency management functions. The current version of HB1064 places the Office of the State Fire Marshal under the DOD.

The DLIR lacks the expertise in vegetation management, hazard mitigation, and utilities regulation necessary to effectively support the objectives of this measure. Therefore, the department respectfully requests the removal of the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations as Chairperson of the Vegetation Management Working Group, as well as the removal of DLIR from its role in providing administrative support to the Group.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
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JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
Monday, March 24, 2025
3:05 p.m.
Conference Room 225

On the following measure:

S.C.R. 149 / S.R. 120, REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONVENE A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TO STUDY, EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS THAT DEFINE PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATIONS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK

Chair Elefante and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michael Angelo, and I am the Executive Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (Department) Division of Consumer Advocacy. The Department supports this resolution.

The purpose of this resolution is to request that the Office of the State Fire Marshal to convene a Vegetation Management Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk. In its review of vegetation management, the Working Group is to consider the (1) wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and Resilience Program and Wildfire

Safety Strategy filed with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) as Docket No. 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and (2) the hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities, including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed with the Commission as part of a non-docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in response to the Order No. 40396. Further, the resolution requests that: (1) the State Fire Marshal, or the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations' designee, serve as the chairperson of the Working Group; (2) a representative of the Division of Consumer Advocacy of the Department, with experience in matters related to regulated public utilities, be appointed by the Director of the Department to serve as a member of the Working Group (while also naming a number of other agencies and stakeholders for inclusion in the Working Group), (3) the Working Group submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2026, and (4) the Working Group be dissolved on June 30, 2026.

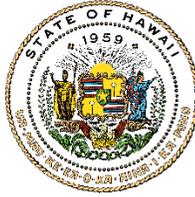
The tragedy and devastation of the wildfires that arose on Maui during the August 8, 2023, windstorm must be prevented from reoccurring. Vegetation management (including the creation of firebreaks and the removal of buildup of flammable vegetation), is viewed as essential for the mitigation of wildfire risks and the promotion of safer conditions for our communities and the environment. Thus, the Department supports the convening of a Working Group to make recommendations for regulations that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk, as advanced by this resolution.

The Department appreciates that the resolution specifically requests that the Working Group consider the Commission's on-going proceedings regarding wildfire safety and climate adaptation and resilience, as applicable, for the electric utilities. As we noted with respect to similar measures, the Department believes that it is important to incorporate the results of these reviews into best practices for vegetation management to mitigate wildfire risk.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Monday, March 24, 2025
3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225, and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 149
HOUSE RESOLUTION 120
RELATING TO WILDFIRES; VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING
GROUP

Senate Concurrent Resolution 149 urges the Office of the State Fire Marshal to convene a vegetation management working group to study, evaluate, and recommend regulations that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure and provides comments and proposed amendments.**

The Department supports this resolution to coordinate fire-prone vegetation management. The tragic wildfires of August 2023 underscored the urgent need for comprehensive vegetation management strategies across the state. With increasing drought conditions, the proliferation of invasive grasses, and the proximity of flammable vegetation to critical infrastructure, Hawai'i must act decisively to reduce fuel loads and mitigate wildfire risk through clearly defined responsibilities and coordination.

The Department recommends the following amendments. The Department recommends that the Senate strike the language on Page 3, Line 7, regarding the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations as legislation proposes to move the Office of the State Fire Marshal out of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The Department also recommends adding the Department of Land and Natural Resources Chairperson or the Chairperson's designee to the working group. Finally, the Department recommends amending the paragraph on page 2, lines 19-26, to read as follows:

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY
CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER
AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Office of the State Fire Marshal is requested to convene a Vegetation Management Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that define [~~property owner~~] the respective obligations of property owners, lessees, licensees, permittees, and holders of easements for access, utility or other purposes, for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk; and

The latter amendment is necessary because others may have interests in real property with associated obligations to mitigate wildfire risk, in addition to the property owner.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
465 S. KING STREET, #103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.
CHAIR

NAOMI U. KUWAYE
COMMISSIONER

COLIN A. YOST
COMMISSIONER

Telephone: (808) 586-2020
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Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
Senate Committee on
Public Safety and Military Affairs

March 24, 2025
3:05 p.m.

Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

Measure: S.C.R. 149 / S.R. 120

Title: REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONVENE A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TO STUDY, EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS THAT DEFINE PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATIONS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK.

Position:

The Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) supports this resolution and offers the following comments for consideration.

Comments:

The Commission appreciates the intent of these resolutions to develop regulations defining property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk.

The combination of an electric utility’s numerous easement and right-of-way agreements, along with the fragmented ownership of public and private lands in a state with limited land availability, poses significant challenges to developing clear and consistent vegetation management regulations. The Commission is committed to participating in the working group and working with the other members to find viable solutions.

The Commission would also suggest looking into how other states have addressed electric utility liability for removing vegetation, such as in Washington¹ and Oregon.²

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

¹ Revised Code of Washington (RCW) §64.12.035 Cutting or removing vegetation—Electric utility—Liability—Definitions.
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=64.12.035>

² Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) §758.282 Immunity of electric utility for pruning or removing vegetation in certain cases and §758.282 Immunity of electric utility for pruning or removing vegetation in other cases.
https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_chapter_758

Written Statement of

Jeannine Souki,
Senior Manager – Government & Regulatory Affairs

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

March 24, 2025, 3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 415 & Videoconference

COMMENT WITH REQUESTED AMENDMENT FOR:
S.C.R. 149/ S.R. 120 – REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONVENE A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TO STUDY, EVALUATE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS THAT DEFINE PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATIONS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISK

To: Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee

Re: **Testimony providing comment with a requested amendment for SCR 149/ SR 120**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and propose an amendment to SCR 149/SR 120. This resolution calls upon the Fire Marshal to convene a vegetation management working group to develop recommendations clarifying property owner obligations for mitigating wildfire risks through vegetation management on public and private lands. In crafting this resolution, it is worth noting that regulations in other states appropriately limit vegetation management requirements to electric utilities due to the unique wildfire hazards posed by high-voltage power lines. These precedents underscore the importance of tailoring policies to specific risk factors while avoiding unnecessary obligations for telecommunication service providers.

Hawai'i's current state laws and regulations form a complex patchwork of policies addressing wildfire prevention and control, including managing trees and vegetation. While electric utilities submit vegetation management programs to the Public Utilities Commission, outlining how they address overgrown vegetation and trees encroaching on high-voltage power lines, telecommunication facilities do not pose the same fire hazards as electric utility infrastructure.

Hawaiian Telcom’s communication equipment, by nature, does not independently create wildfire risks, making our role in vegetation management appropriately limited. When notified of necessary vegetation maintenance or identifying it ourselves, our local managers proactively engage property owners or right-of-way holders to address vegetation concerns. In instances where tree trimming is required to access electric utility poles, we collaborate by requesting the electric utility to prune the affected area, ensuring safe access for our teams.

We respectfully request that SCR 149/SR 120 be amended with the precedent set by similar changes to wildfire fund legislation, which appropriately excludes telecommunication service providers by striking the language on Page 4, line 2, as illustrated below:

Page 4

S.C.R. NO. 149

- 1
- 2 ~~(3) A representative of a telecommunications carrier;~~
- 3
- 4 (4) A representative of the International Brotherhood of
- 5 Electrical Workers, Local 1260; and
- 6
- 7 (5) A landowner that owns more than one thousand acres of
- 8 land in the State; and

Mahalo nui for considering this testimony and proposed amendment to SCR 149/SR 120.



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS**

SCR 149 / SR 120

**Requesting the Office of the State Fire Marshal to convene a
Vegetation Management Working Group to study, evaluate, and make
recommendations for regulations that define property owner
obligations to perform vegetation management on public and
private property to mitigate wildfire risk**

Monday, March 24, 2025
3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

Wendy Oda
Manager, Land & Rights of Way
Hawaiian Electric

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Wendy Oda and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric in **strong support** of SCR 149 / SR 120, which requests the Office of the State Fire Marshal to convene a Vegetation Management Working Group (“Working Group”) to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that define property owner obligations to perform vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk.

Hawaiian Electric believes that the formation of a Working Group, consisting of representatives of the State, the Counties, public and private utilities, large private landowners and other stakeholders, is a critical step in addressing the risk of future wildfires in the State. The Working Group will consider needed wildfire mitigation measures such as regulations identifying the vegetation management obligations of public and private landowners as well as a practical vegetation management program for landowners and public utilities.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SCR 149 / SR 120.



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

HEARING DATE: Monday, March 24, 2025

TIME: 3:05 p.m.

PLACE: Senate Committee Room 225

LATE

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 149/ Senate Resolution 120 - **IN STRONG SUPPORT with Proposed Amendments**

Aloha Honorable Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Committee Members;

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 (IBEW 1260) would like to offer the following testimony in **SUPPORT of SCR149 and SR120 with proposed amendments.**

IBEW Local 1260, is comprised of approximately 3,000 members throughout Hawaii and Guam and consists of a diverse and highly-skilled workforce that supports the electric utility infrastructure across our state as well as government service contracts and broadcasting. We are committed to protecting the well-being of the members we serve and the community at large.

The two resolutions offered request the Office of the State Fire Marshall to convene a vegetation management working group to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk.

IBEW Local 1260 strongly supports the intent of the resolutions, however, we would respectfully request that you insert language to include discussion regarding the training and qualifications required to perform line clearance tree trimming around and/or near electric utility facilities.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that the Tree Industry average annual fatal-incident rate is thirty (30) times greater than the All-Industry average annual fatal-incident rate¹. Senate Bill 11 which was introduced to address wildfire vegetation management included language that required minimum standards of training and qualifications based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration and American National Standards Institute Safety Standards. California has already adopted state law² where it states in part that *“All electrical line clearance tree trimmers performing work to comply with the trim list vegetation management requirements in an electrical corporation’s wildfire mitigation plan shall be qualified line clearance tree trimmers or trainees under the direct supervision and instruction of qualified line clearance tree trimmers.”*

Requiring minimum safety standards for those performing work at or near electric utility facilities not only ensures the safety of the public, but of those performing this extremely hazardous work.

¹ See “Tree-Work Safety By The Numbers” By John Ball, Ph.D., BCMA, CTSP, TCI Magazine, April 1, 2023; <https://tcimag.tcia.org/safety/tree-work-safety-by-the-numbers/>

² See CA SB247 (Regular Session 2019-2020) Wildland fire prevention: vegetation management, section 4742(b).
700 Bishop Street, Suite 1600, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

Respectfully, we request that SCR149 and SR120 be amended to include the following:

SCR149/ SR120 Propose Amendments:

Requesting the office of the state fire marshal to convene a vegetation management working group to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for REGULATIONS that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property TO MITIGATE wildfire RISK, and make recommendations that define a line clearance tree trimmer and establish minimum safety standards, training, and qualifications for individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities.

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2023, catastrophic wildfires swept through various communities on the island of Maui; and

WHEREAS, the wildfires significantly impacted human life and the health, community housing, education, economy, and environment of Maui residents; and

WHEREAS, the presence of grass, trees, and other vegetation adjacent to or under electric utility lines is a significant fire risk; and

WHEREAS, in response to the wildfires, in 2023 the House of Representatives established six interim working groups, including the Wildfire Prevention Working Group, which were charged with evaluating specific topics related to the Lahaina wildfire and making recommendations for specific legislative action; and

WHEREAS, the Wildfire Prevention Working Group found that people are the primary drivers of wildfires in Hawaii, as ninety-nine percent of wildfires are caused by human ignitions; and

WHEREAS, the Wildfire Prevention Working Group also found that guinea grass, fountain grass, molasses grass, and buffelgrass can form continuous fuel beds, ignite easily, attain extremely high fine fuel loads, and grow back more vigorously in the post-fire environment than the majority of native vegetation; and

WHEREAS, utility companies have miles of utility lines installed throughout the State on public and private lands, including within the public rights of way and mountainous areas of the State; and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of these public lands is covered with unmanaged grasses, trees, and other vegetation that may pose a significant wildfire risk; and



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that the Tree Industry average annual fatal-incident rate is thirty (30) times greater than the All-Industry average annual fatal-incident rate; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that other state jurisdictions have recognized the additional hazard presented to individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities and have adopted state law requiring minimum safety standards, training and qualifications for individuals performing such work; and

WHEREAS, additional study into appropriate vegetation management will enable the State to develop appropriate policies, regulations, and guidance for the parties responsible for the management of vegetation on public and private lands to mitigate wildfire risk and establish minimum safety standards, training, and qualifications for individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, that the Office of the State Fire Marshal is requested to convene a Vegetation Management Working Group (Working Group) to study, evaluate, and make recommendations for regulations that define property owner obligations for vegetation management on public and private property to mitigate wildfire risk, as well as minimum safety standards, training, and qualifications for individuals performing line clearance tree trimming at or near electric utility facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in its review of vegetation management, the Working Group is requested to consider the following:

(1) Wildfire risk mitigation actions being proposed as part of the Hawaiian Electric Company's Climate Adaptation Transmission and Distribution and Resilience Program and Wildfire Safety Strategy filed with the Public Utilities Commission as Docket No. 2022-0135 and Docket No. 2025-0156, respectively; and

(2) The hazard mitigation plans of electric utilities, including the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative, filed with the Public Utilities Commission as part of a non-docketed proceeding under Case No. 2023-04661 in response to Public Utilities Commission Order No. 40396; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to include the following members:

(1) The State Fire Marshal, or the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations' designee, who is requested to serve as the chairperson of the Working Group;



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

(2) The Director of Transportation, or the Director's designee;

(3) The Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, or the Chairperson's designee;

(4) A representative of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' Division of Consumer Advocacy with experience in matters related to regulated public utilities, to be appointed by the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs;

(5) A representative of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council;

(6) A member of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(7) A member of the Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and

(8) The mayor of each county, or the mayor's designee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to invite the following individuals to be members of the Working Group:

(1) A representative of a cooperative electric utility;

(2) A representative of an investor-owned electric utility;

(3) A representative of a telecommunications carrier;

(4) A representative of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1260; and

(5) A landowner that owns more than one thousand acres of land in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 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 the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations is requested to provide administrative support to the Working Group, including drafting of the report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested to dissolve on June 30, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations; Director of Transportation; Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, who is requested to transmit copies of this Resolution to all regulated telecommunications carriers; Mayors of the Counties of Maui, Kauai,



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

and Hawaii and Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu; President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.; Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative; and President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 1260.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



LATE

Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Time: 3:05 PM
Date: March 24, 2025
Where: Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY
By Kā'eo Duarte
Vice President, 'Āina Pauahi

RE: SCR149, Requesting the Office of the State Fire Marshal to Convene a Vegetation Management Working Group to Study, Evaluate, and Make Recommendations for Regulations that Define Property Owner Obligations for Vegetation Management on Public and Private Property to Mitigate Wildfire Risk.

Aloha e nā Luna Ho'omalū Elefante, nā Hope Luna Ho'omalū Wakai a me nā Lālā o nā Kōmike.

Kamehameha Schools appreciates the opportunity to **SUPPORT** SCR149, which requests the State Fire Marshal to convene a vegetation management working group to make recommendations for vegetation management regulations on public and private property.

Kamehameha Schools supports the convening of a working group to address a deeply complex issue. We appreciate this approach as it will allow appropriate time to take a comprehensive look at vegetation management to protect communities using expert guidance, taking into account community insights, and being responsive to traditional Hawaiian land management approaches. We also appreciate the thoughtful approach to the working group's membership as it is wide and varied.

Founded in 1887 by the legacy of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, Kamehameha Schools (KS) is a private, educational, charitable trust committed to improving the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian people through education. KS envisions a thriving lāhui where learners, grounded in Christian and Hawaiian values, grow into 'ōiwi leaders who inspire and contribute to their communities, both locally and globally.



P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, Hawai`i 96837-0158
Phone: 927-0709 henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, March 24, 2025

TIME: 3:05 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 225

SCR 149 / SR 120 Wilfires & Vegetative Fuel

OPPOSE

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai and Members of the Committee

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for 55 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

Most fires are caused by people. A few devastating fires are caused by utilities. We know the problem. Fires require ignition, oxygen, and fuel. There are 1,000,000 acres of invasive grass that die during non rainy seasons. The dead grass makes excellent fuel.

Rather than requiring landowners to address dangerous conditions on their property, this resolution proposes that a group be formed at taxpayer expense to discuss the problem and to make recommendations that are already known.

Mahalo

Henry Curtis

Executive Director