



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. Department of Energy awards \$95 million to harden electric grids on Maui and other islands in wake of wildfires *Funds will pay half of Hawaiian Electric's 5-year climate adaptation plan*

HONOLULU, Aug. 30, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Energy has approved \$95 million in federal funds in the wake of the Maui windstorms and wildfires to harden the energy grids on the five islands served by Hawaiian Electric and enable them to better withstand severe weather-related events fueled by climate change.

President Biden, who toured fire-ravaged West Maui last week, announced Wednesday that his administration would make the federal funding available under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The federal funding would pay for half of Hawaiian Electric's proposed \$190 million Climate Adaptation Transmission and Distribution Resilience Program, which was submitted to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for approval in June 2022 (Docket 2022-0135). The federal matching funds would reduce the cost of the program to customers by 50%.

"We appreciate the support from the Department of Energy and the Biden Administration as we work with our partners on Maui to restore and rebuild areas devastated by the wildfires," said Shelee Kimura, president and CEO of Hawaiian Electric. "This funding significantly alleviates the cost burden on customers as we intensify work to strengthen our grids on Maui and across the islands we serve. We agree with the president and our local leaders about the importance of working with our communities as we rebuild and make these improvements to defend against more extreme weather events in the future."

Hawaiian Electric applied for the IIJA grid resilience funding in April 2023 and has kept regulators and the state Consumer Advocate updated on the progress of its application, which both supported. Hawaiian Electric is "grateful for the Commission's and Consumer Advocate's support for this IIJA funding request" the company wrote today in a filing with regulators to now approve the climate adaptation plan, given the federal government's willingness to underwrite half of the project.

Hawaiian Electric's proposed five-year resilience plan includes a slate of initial, foundational grid resilience investments as the first phase of long-term climate adaptation effort. Investing in a more resilient power system will reduce the severity of damage when major events happen and enable service to be restored more quickly even when there aren't storms.

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The high-level elements of the program include:

- Critical Transmission Hardening – Replacing poles and conductors on high-priority transmission lines, including two on Maui;
- Critical Circuit Hardening – circuits serving critical customers such as hospitals, public infrastructure and critical defense facilities;
- Critical Pole Hardening and Replacement – e.g., poles that support multiple circuits; replacing poles with fire-resistant materials;
- Wildfire Mitigation - System hardening and increased situational awareness and control (e.g., cameras, sensors and reclosers) targeted to areas prone to wildfire;
- Undergrounding of portions of certain distribution circuits;
- Hazard Tree Removal – The complete removal of off-right-of-way trees that are weak, dead, diseased, or structurally compromised and pose a risk to power lines (as opposed to trimming);
- Control Center Resilience – hardening of existing system control centers, relocating and elevating the Maui control center to avoid flooding and developing a backup control center on O‘ahu.

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