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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL LANDS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State's land use  
2 law was enacted to "preserve and protect land best suited for  
3 . . . agricultural purposes and to facilitate sound and  
4 economical urban development". Since that time, lands  
5 classified by the land study bureau as class A and class B  
6 lands, the lands most suited for intensive agricultural use,  
7 have declined from 359,690 acres (class A, 125,160 acres; class  
8 B, 234,530 acres) in 1960 to 172,094 acres (class A, 56,653  
9 acres; class B, 115,441 acres) in 2007. These agricultural  
10 lands are a resource that cannot be replaced once they are lost  
11 to development.

12           The inventory of lands that are suitable for agriculture in  
13 the State is essentially fixed. Agricultural lands cannot be  
14 manufactured when the demand for land increases. The nearly  
15 three hundred sixty thousand acres of class A and B lands on the  
16 six major islands were the lands upon which the State depended  
17 for profitable and competitive agricultural production. The  
18 loss of nearly one hundred ninety thousand acres of class A and



1 B lands in forty-seven years highlights that it is more  
2 important than ever to conserve Hawai'i's most productive  
3 agricultural lands, especially in counties with a population of  
4 more than five hundred thousand residents.

5 The purpose of this Act is to carry out the mandate of  
6 article XI, section 3, of the Hawai'i constitution to conserve  
7 and protect agricultural lands and to ensure the availability of  
8 agriculturally suitable lands in counties with a population of  
9 more than five hundred thousand residents.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 205, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
11 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
12 and to read as follows:

13 "§205- Important agricultural lands; designation by  
14 legislature. (a) The legislature may designate lands with soil  
15 classified by the land study bureau's detailed land  
16 classification as overall productivity rating class A or B that  
17 are irrigated or have sufficient quantities of water to produce  
18 sustained high yields of crops as important agricultural lands;  
19 provided the legislature finds that the designation is necessary  
20 to protect agricultural lands, to promote diversified  
21 agriculture, or to control future growth, development, and land  
22 use in the State.



1        (b) The designation shall be made by law and shall  
2 contain:

3        (1) The tax map key numbers of the land to be classified;  
4        and

5        (2) Demonstrable proof that the land qualifies for  
6        designation as important agricultural lands under  
7        section 205-44."

8        SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

9        SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: *J. Mil. Keran*

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**Report Title:**

Important Agricultural Lands; Designation

**Description:**

Allows designation of important agricultural lands by the legislature by law.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

