
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ORGANIC AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that food crops,
2 including grain and corn, have declined nearly seventy per cent
3 in the United States in the past year, causing food prices to
4 spiral out of control. It has become critical for Hawaii to
5 immediately safeguard its food resiliency. High land prices,
6 increasing utility rates, poor weather conditions, food
7 certification mandates, and pest infestations often thwart new
8 and established farmers alike in their efforts to build the
9 necessary equity to be successful. Small organic farmers in
10 particular, who have become increasingly sought after by health
11 conscious consumers, encounter a volatile pricing market when
12 they finally reach the marketplace.

13 The legislature further finds that Hawaii's food security
14 becomes unstable as residents and state entities purchase more
15 food items that must be shipped from the mainland, increasing
16 the State's dependence on fossil fuels and vulnerability to food
17 shortages.



1 The legislature also finds that many farmers would achieve
2 more efficient crop production if they had greater access to the
3 latest advances in crop science and technology. The high
4 technology development corporation is ideally suited to assist
5 these farmers in implementing technological innovations to
6 maximize their chances of success.

7 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
8 agriculture to establish a combined organic agricultural
9 mobilization program to aid small organic farmers by providing
10 affordable long-term leases, financial assistance, preferential
11 utility rates, and require the high technology development
12 corporation to assist small organic farmers in implementing
13 technological innovations.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
16 and to read as follows:

17 "§141- Combined organic agricultural mobilization
18 program; established. (a) The department of agriculture shall
19 establish a combined organic agricultural mobilization program,
20 under which the department shall provide affordable long-term
21 leases not to exceed fifty-five years to farmers to establish
22 small, organic farms.



1 (b) The department shall identify lands under its
2 jurisdiction that are suitable to be leased to farmers pursuant
3 to this section; provided that land has soil classified by the
4 land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall
5 (master) productivity rating class A or B.

6 (c) The department shall determine eligibility
7 requirements for participants in the combined organic
8 agricultural mobilization program; provided that participants
9 shall be organic farmers.

10 (d) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, participants
11 of the combined organic agricultural mobilization program may:

12 (1) Construct farm dwellings, agricultural and processing
13 facilities, renewable energy improvements, and
14 necessary infrastructure on the farm land, the value
15 of which shall be retained by the farmer unless
16 otherwise transferred by law or legal device;

17 (2) Receive preferential rates for public utility service,
18 pursuant to section 269- ;

19 (3) Contract with the State to supply state agencies with
20 produce at a set price minimum for a set term;
21 provided that the participant shall supply a minimum



1 percentage of their total marketable agricultural
2 product to the State; and

3 (4) Receive assistance from the high technology
4 development corporation in implementing technological
5 innovations for improved crop cultivation.

6 (e) The department may provide financial assistance to
7 participants of the combined organic agricultural mobilization
8 program in paying the costs of:

9 (1) Certification by a third party food auditor; and

10 (2) Modifications necessary to receive third party food
11 safety certification.

12 (f) The department shall adopt rules, pursuant to chapter
13 91, necessary to carry out the purposes of this section."

14 SECTION 3. Chapter 206M, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
16 and to read as follows:

17 "§206M- Assistance to participants of the combined
18 organic agricultural mobilization program. The development
19 corporation shall assist participants of the combined organic
20 agricultural mobilization program, pursuant to section
21 141- (d)."



1 SECTION 4. Chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§269- Preferential rates for participants of the
5 combined organic agricultural mobilization program. (a) The
6 public utilities commission may establish preferential rates for
7 public utility services that are used by participants of the
8 combined organic agricultural mobilization program established
9 under section 141- .

10 (b) Upon receipt of a bona fide request for preferential
11 rates for any public utility service pursuant to this section,
12 and proof that the customer is a participant in the combined
13 organic agricultural mobilization program, a public utility
14 shall provide proposed preferential rates for the requested
15 public utility service, including but not limited to potable
16 water and electricity, to the public utilities commission for
17 approval. All such rates approved by the public utilities
18 commission shall be subsidized by the rates charged to other
19 customers of the public utility, if necessary, as determined by
20 the public utilities commission."

21 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
22 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so



H.B. NO. 1421

1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2013-2014 and
 2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
 3 year 2014-2015 for deposit into the agricultural development and
 4 food security special fund.

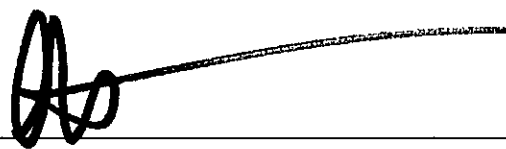
5 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the agricultural
 6 development and food security special fund the sum of
 7 \$ _____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
 8 year 2013-2014 and the same sum or so much as may be necessary
 9 for fiscal year 2014-2015 to provide financial assistance to
 10 participants in the combined organic agricultural mobilization
 11 program.

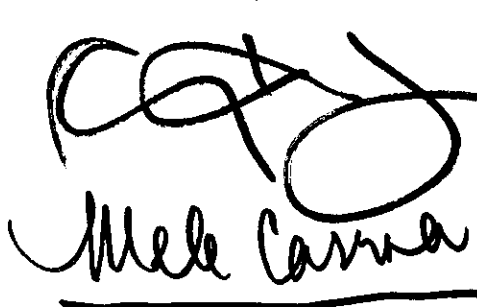
12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 13 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

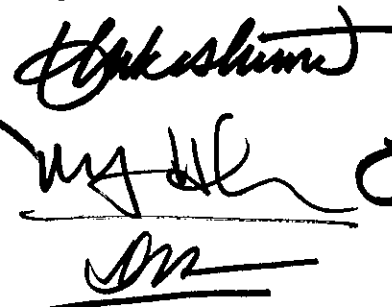
14 SECTION 7. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.

16

INTRODUCED BY: 


Mel Carnahan





JAN 24 2013



H.B. NO. 1421

Report Title:

Agriculture; Combined Organic Agricultural Mobilization Program;
Utility Rates; HTDC; Appropriation

Description:

Requires DOA to establish a combined organic agricultural mobilization program to provide affordable long-term leases to farmers to establish small, organic farms. Authorizes PUC to establish preferential utility rates for participants of the program. Requires HTDC to assist participants of the program. Makes an appropriation.

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

