
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RESTRICTIONS ON AGRICULTURAL USES AND ACTIVITIES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that subdivisions on
2 agricultural lands have significantly increased over the past
3 few decades. Homes within these subdivisions are often marketed
4 as "gentlemen estates" where wealthy individuals can purchase
5 large parcels of land on which to live and pursue farming as a
6 hobby. The rise of subdivisions has led to homeowners'
7 associations, which govern those subdivisions, imposing
8 restrictions that limit bonafide agricultural uses on
9 agricultural lands.

10 The legislature further finds that provisions restricting
11 agricultural uses on agricultural lands conflict with
12 Article XI, section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution which
13 mandates that the State "conserve and protect agricultural
14 lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural
15 self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally
16 suitable lands."



1 prohibits homeowners' associations from restricting agricultural
2 activities on agricultural lands. However, to avoid impairing
3 any existing contracts, the Act only applied to restrictions
4 made after July 8, 2003.

5 The legislature believes that some homeowners' associations
6 have been circumventing the law by renewing agricultural
7 restrictions that existed prior to July 8, 2003, claiming that
8 the renewed terms continue to be exempt from the law despite
9 those agreements, by their own terms, expiring after 2003.

10 Bonafide farmers seeking to enforce the law have been faced with
11 accepting the restriction or hiring an attorney for a costly
12 lawsuit against the well-funded homeowners' association.

13 The purpose of this Act is to clarify that renewed
14 contracts restricting agricultural uses and activities within
15 agricultural lands are considered new contracts and are
16 therefore voidable, subject to limited circumstances.

17 SECTION 2. Section 205-4.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

19 "(a) Agricultural uses and activities as defined in
20 sections 205-2(d) and 205-4.5(a) on lands classified as



1 agricultural shall not be restricted by any private agreement
2 contained in any:

3 (1) Deed, agreement of sale, or other conveyance of land
4 recorded in the bureau of conveyances after July 8,
5 2003, that subject [~~such~~] the agricultural lands to
6 any servitude, including but not limited to covenants,
7 easements, or equitable and reciprocal negative
8 servitudes; provided that any private agreement under
9 this subsection that:

10 (A) Limits or prohibits agricultural use or activity;
11 and

12 (B) Is renewed and recorded in the bureau of
13 conveyances after July 8, 2003,
14 shall be considered a new private agreement that is
15 subject to this section; and

16 (2) Condominium declaration, map, bylaws, and other
17 documents executed and submitted in accordance with
18 chapter 514B or any predecessor thereto.

19 Any [~~such~~] private restriction limiting or prohibiting
20 agricultural use or activity shall be voidable, subject to
21 special restrictions enacted by the county ordinance pursuant to



1 section 46-4; except that restrictions taken to protect
2 environmental or cultural resources, agricultural leases,
3 utility easements, and access easements shall not be subject to
4 this section."

5 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
6 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
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H.B. NO. 2471

Report Title:

Agricultural Lands; Covenants; Easements

Description:

Disallows the enforcement of a rerecorded homeowners' association restriction if the restriction prohibits bonafide agricultural uses and activities on agricultural land.

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