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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRAILS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the division of  
2 forestry and wildlife of the department of land and natural  
3 resources has a current statewide inventory of one hundred  
4 twenty-eight trail and road features spanning approximately  
5 eight hundred fifty-five miles. Trails include parking areas,  
6 comfort stations, pavilions, picnic areas, and other facilities  
7 that are regularly used by the public.

8           According to the Outdoor Industry Association, fifty-nine  
9 per cent of Hawaii residents participate in outdoor recreation  
10 each year. Outdoor recreation, which includes hiking,  
11 contributes to a high quality of life and attracts and sustains  
12 employers and families. Outdoor recreation in Hawaii generates  
13 \$7,800,000,000 in consumer spending annually, sixty-eight  
14 thousand direct jobs, \$2,400,000,000 in wages and salaries, and  
15 \$604,000,000 in state and local tax revenue. Investing in  
16 outdoor infrastructure, such as hiking trails, attracts



1 employers and active workforces, thereby ensuring communities in  
2 Hawaii thrive economically and socially.

3       However, keeping up with the rising demand for trail use  
4 remains a constant challenge for the department of land and  
5 natural resources. Heavy use and limited operational capacity  
6 have curbed the level of maintenance on trail features. For  
7 example, Manoa falls trail on Oahu requires frequent staff  
8 visits to maintain dated facilities, which diverts staff and  
9 maintenance resources away from other trails located statewide.

10 Furthermore, remote trail locations raise the cost of  
11 maintaining facilities and stretch operation capacities while  
12 vandalism and irresponsible trail use also draw from the limited  
13 pool of available resources. Thus, additional funds to manage  
14 these trails should be expended to keep pace with the growing  
15 demand for trail use and ensure public safety.

16       Furthermore, along with the popularity of wilderness hiking  
17 has come a growing number of mountain rescues occurring each  
18 year. Various internet adventure websites have promoted wrong  
19 or misleading information that places hikers in danger, leading  
20 to uninformed hikers getting injured while on the trails, or  
21 hiking on trails that are unmaintained or prohibited. The



1 number of Honolulu fire department rescues in mountainous areas  
2 on Oahu nearly tripled between 2006 and 2016. The Honolulu fire  
3 department reported that crews responded to fifty-one mountain  
4 rescues during the first three months of 2017 after making two  
5 hundred sixty rescues in 2016 and one hundred eighty-seven  
6 rescues in 2015. According to the department of land and  
7 natural resources, if this trend continues, the number of annual  
8 mountain rescues will double by 2024. Hiker safety education  
9 can promote this popular recreational activity while decreasing  
10 the number of mountain rescues, which have a search and rescue  
11 operational price tag of \$1,500 per hour, including helicopter  
12 rescue.

13 Lastly, the popularity of hiking has also resulted in the  
14 need for hiker etiquette education and outreach. For example,  
15 some trails that are located in residential neighborhoods have  
16 gained immense popularity and have resulted in a dramatic  
17 increase in complaints regarding naive or disrespectful trail  
18 users. Complaints include loud noises and talking during late  
19 hours of the night or in the early morning hours, blatant  
20 littering, tracking of mud on neighborhood residents' lawns, and  
21 illegal parking. As a result, some frustrated neighborhood



1 residents have proposed the closure of some trail heads to  
2 prevent the nuisance that disrespectful hikers have caused.  
3 Thus, the exercise of appropriate hiker etiquette will help to  
4 promote hiker safety and the continued use of the hiking trails.

5 Therefore, the legislature further finds that maintaining  
6 trails and facilities requires reliable capital investment for  
7 routine repairs and reasonable operational support for regular  
8 maintenance. Furthermore, a pervasive public awareness campaign  
9 to educate hikers regarding hiker safety, hiker etiquette, and  
10 Native Hawaiian culture, history, and traditional and customary  
11 practices connected to Hawaii's trails will assist in reducing  
12 future hiking incidents.

13 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the  
14 department of land and natural resources to improve nā ala hele,  
15 the Hawaii statewide trail program, by improving access to and  
16 maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and  
17 promoting hiker safety and education and outreach regarding  
18 hiker etiquette, including Native Hawaiian culture, history, and  
19 traditional and customary practices connected to Hawaii's  
20 trails.



1 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,800,000 or so much  
 3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the  
 4 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
 5 2020-2021 to improve nā ala hele, the Hawaii statewide trail and  
 6 access program, by:

- 7 (1) Improving access to and maintaining state controlled  
 8 recreational trails statewide; and
- 9 (2) Developing and implementing a public awareness  
 10 campaign that promotes hiker safety and education and  
 11 outreach regarding hiker etiquette, including accurate  
 12 Native Hawaiian culture, history, and traditional and  
 13 customary practices connected to Hawaii's trails;

14 provided that the sums appropriated pursuant to this section  
 15 shall be added to, and shall not supplant any portion of, the  
 16 annual executive base budget of the department of land and  
 17 natural resources, and at least the amount appropriated in this  
 18 section shall be used each year to support the purposes of this  
 19 Act.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
 21 of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.

2



**Report Title:**

Nā Ala Hele; Hawaii Statewide Trail and Access System; Trail Maintenance and Improvement; Hiker Safety and Etiquette Education and Outreach; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Appropriation

**Description:**

Makes an appropriation to improve nā ala hele, the Hawaii statewide trail and access program, by improving access to and maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and promoting hiker safety and education and outreach regarding hiker etiquette, including Native Hawaiian culture, history, and traditional and customary practices connected to Hawaii's trails. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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