

JAN 19 2022

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that vulnerable
2 communities and neighborhoods have been historically excluded,
3 and systematically under-resourced, resulting in socioeconomic
4 disparities across Hawaii. The coronavirus disease 2019
5 (COVID-19) pandemic has highlighted these preexisting
6 vulnerabilities and conditions. In furtherance of the Hawaii
7 State Planning Act, the legislature recognizes the need to
8 ensure present and future generations' physical, social, and
9 economic equity and well-being.

10 The legislature further finds that, as we prepare for a
11 post-COVID-19 era, and in conjunction with federal legislation
12 and investments, the rebuilding of our community shall not
13 exacerbate conditions for disenfranchised communities or
14 neighborhoods.

15 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to ensure that
16 agency decisionmakers assess the impact of proposed actions on



socioeconomic disparities as part of the environmental review process.

SECTION 2. Section 343-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended as follows:

1. By amending the definition of "significant effect" to read:

"Significant effect" means the sum of effects on the quality of the environment, including actions that irrevocably commit a natural resource, curtail the range of beneficial uses of the environment, are contrary to the State's environmental policies or long-term environmental goals as established by law, exacerbate socioeconomic disparities, or adversely affect the economic welfare, social welfare, or cultural practices of the community and State."

2. By adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted and to read:

"Socioeconomic disparities" means significant disparities in the relationship between race, socioeconomic status, and health. Socioeconomic status shall be measured by income, educational achievement, and occupation."



S.B. NO. 2121

1 SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
2 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
3 begun before its effective date.

4 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: _____

Jim N. Gill
By Request



S.B. NO. 2121

Report Title:

Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Package; Environmental Review;
Socioeconomic Disparities

Description:

Requires environmental impact statements to consider whether the proposed action will exacerbate socioeconomic disparities.

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