
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INFRASTRUCTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that dams and reservoirs
2 form a critical part of Hawaii's infrastructure, providing
3 numerous benefits upon which the State's communities depend. In
4 addition to storing and delivering a reliable source of water
5 for agriculture, assisting with flood control during large
6 storms, mitigating erosion, reducing sediment runoff to
7 nearshore ocean reefs, and storing drinking water, dams and
8 reservoirs play a crucial and often overlooked role--providing
9 water for fire suppression.

10 The legislature further finds that the continued
11 availability and operation of dams and reservoirs are extremely
12 important for food and water sustainability and public health
13 and safety. By capturing storm water that would otherwise rush
14 to the ocean, reservoirs help recharge the State's groundwater
15 aquifers, which are a primary source for much of Hawaii's
16 drinking water. Providing renewable energy through the use of



1 hydropower is also another significant community benefit derived
2 from dams and reservoirs.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a dam and reservoir
4 working group to ensure and enhance the continued availability
5 and safe operation of dams and reservoirs in the State.

6 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a dam and reservoir
7 working group, to be placed within the office of planning and
8 sustainable development for administrative purposes only.

9 (b) The dam and reservoir working group shall consist of
10 the following members:

11 (1) The director of the office of planning and sustainable
12 development or the director's designee, who shall
13 serve as co-chairperson of the working group;

14 (2) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
15 resources or the chairperson's designee, who shall
16 serve as co-chairperson of the working group;

17 (3) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or the
18 chairperson's designee;

19 (4) The chairperson of the board of directors of the
20 agribusiness development corporation or the
21 chairperson's designee;



- 1 (5) The deputy for water resource management of the
- 2 commission on water resource management or the
- 3 deputy's designee;
- 4 (6) One representative of the Hawaii emergency management
- 5 agency, who shall be appointed by the governor;
- 6 (7) One representative of the emergency management agency
- 7 of each county, who shall be appointed by the
- 8 respective mayor;
- 9 (8) One representative of the state fire council;
- 10 (9) One representative of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council,
- 11 who shall be invited by the president of the senate;
- 12 (10) One representative of the Hawaii Farm Bureau, who
- 13 shall be invited by the speaker of the house of
- 14 representatives; and
- 15 (11) One representative of the Land Use Research Foundation
- 16 of Hawaii, who shall be invited by the president of
- 17 the senate.

18 Any vacancy in the working group shall be filled in the

19 manner provided for the initial appointment or invitation.

1 (c) Building upon the department of agriculture's 2003
2 "Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan", the dam and
3 reservoir working group shall:

4 (1) Review applicable state laws, administrative rules,
5 and operational policies as well as studies relating
6 to dams and reservoirs;

7 (2) Determine the current and potential uses of each of
8 the one hundred twenty-seven dams and reservoirs
9 throughout the State that are regulated by the
10 department of land and natural resources;

11 (3) Determine the appropriate state or county entity to
12 own, operate, and maintain the government-owned and
13 department of land and natural resources-regulated
14 dams and reservoirs, based on current and potential
15 uses;

16 (4) Develop criteria for prioritizing public investments
17 in dams and reservoirs;

18 (5) Prioritize dams and reservoirs by county, based on
19 agreed-upon criteria;

20 (6) Develop a policy framework for expending public funds
21 to remediate or decommission dams and reservoirs;



1 (7) Develop a ten-year dam and reservoir financial and
2 management plan to address priority dams and
3 reservoirs by county; and

4 (8) Prepare and propose appropriate legislation to
5 implement the dam and reservoir financial and
6 management plan.

7 (d) The dam and reservoir working group shall submit a
8 report of its findings and recommendations, including any
9 proposed legislation, amendments to rules, policy modifications,
10 or other actions, to the legislature no later than sixty days
11 prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026.

12 (e) The members of the working group shall serve without
13 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
14 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

15 (f) The dam and reservoir working group shall cease to
16 exist on June 30, 2026.

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to
20 support the work of the dam and reservoir working group;
21 provided that the appropriation shall not lapse at the end of



1 the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is made;
2 provided further that all moneys from the appropriation that are
3 unencumbered as of June 30, 2026, shall lapse as of that date.

4 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of
5 planning and sustainable development for the purposes of this
6 Act.

7 SECTION 4. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
8 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
9 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
10 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
11 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
12 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
13 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund
14 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further
15 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
16 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
17 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
18 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
19 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
20 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:



1 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
2 serve the public interest; and

3 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
4 addressed by this Act.

5 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Dam and Reservoir Working Group; Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

Description:

Establishes a dam and reservoir working group to ensure and enhance the continued availability and safe operation of dams and reservoirs in the State and consider their role in drought mitigation and the maintenance of a dependable water supply. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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