
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FRESH WATER SECURITY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii Community
2 Foundation's Fresh Water Council defined water security for
3 Hawaii as a "sustainable, plentiful, and cost-effective fresh
4 water supply for all of Hawaii's agricultural, cultural,
5 domestic, economic, and ecosystem needs by 2030." Over a
6 century ago, Hawaii's plantation agricultural enterprises
7 supported and created water infrastructure. Those historic
8 investments established the water infrastructure that is used
9 today, but the industry has since left the State, along with the
10 money necessary to maintain the State's water infrastructure.

11 The legislature further finds that the State has been left
12 with dams and reservoirs that have become liabilities rather
13 than assets; insufficient watershed protection that threatens
14 Hawaii's natural fresh water sources; and outdated, inefficient,
15 and leaky water transmission systems. Climate change is rapidly
16 altering Hawaii's water supply, and the State's ongoing
17 responsibility to provide water to satisfy the increasing needs



1 of multiple beneficial uses requires increasing capital
2 investment.

3 The legislature further finds that the Fresh Water Council
4 distilled nearly two years of water security research and
5 analysis into a single goal: to create one hundred million
6 gallons per day in additional, reliable fresh water capacity for
7 the State by 2030. To achieve this goal, water experts and
8 evidence suggest that significant investments are needed in the
9 form of system upgrades, new source development, improved
10 conservation, watershed restoration and protection, relocated
11 wastewater treatment plants, decentralized and scaled water
12 recycling, storm water capture, and more efficient water
13 transmission.

14 The legislature further finds that new and innovative
15 investment partnerships and community engagement are needed to
16 mobilize large-scale investment in Hawaii's fresh water
17 security. This will require partners from multiple sectors,
18 including county, state, and federal governments, as well as
19 private philanthropic and corporate entities, to work together
20 to leverage funds and provide matching opportunities.



1 The legislature finds that the risks of doing nothing to
2 address the State's water security are enormous. The Red Hill
3 Bulk Fuel Storage Facility fuel leak and the climate
4 change-induced water crisis unfolding around the globe offer
5 important reminders of the human, economic, and environmental
6 harms associated with a dramatic reduction in fresh water
7 supply. These alarming circumstances demand innovative
8 strategies that combine streams of capital to make long-needed
9 water security projects viable.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish within
11 the commission on water resource management a water security
12 working group to study and recommend, for legislative
13 consideration and approval, priority capital improvement
14 projects, including funding and financing strategies for each
15 project, that leverage public-private investment to increase
16 Hawaii's water security.

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the commission
18 on water resource management a water security working group to
19 study and recommend, for legislative consideration and approval,
20 priority capital improvement projects, including funding and
21 financing strategies for each project, that leverage



1 public-private investment to increase Hawaii's water security.

2 The working group shall consider projects that:

3 (1) Protect and manage Hawaii's forested watersheds;

4 (2) Renovate dams and reservoirs;

5 (3) Improve the efficiency of water transmission and
6 irrigation systems;

7 (4) Reduce the use of potable water for landscape and
8 other nonfood irrigation;

9 (5) Encourage water re-use;

10 (6) Monitor the quality and quantity of the water supply;

11 (7) Increase the supply of fresh water; and

12 (8) Are considered appropriate by the working group.

13 (b) The working group shall establish criteria for
14 evaluating potential capital improvement projects and priority
15 based on but not limited to:

16 (1) The public and private benefits of the project;

17 (2) The level of community support for, or opposition to,
18 the project;

19 (3) The cost estimates and timetable for the completion of
20 the project;



1 (4) The potential for receiving financial and in-kind
2 contributions from funding partners for the project;
3 and

4 (5) The amount of water conserved, recharged, or re-used
5 by the project.

6 (c) The working group shall consist of but not be limited
7 to the following members:

8 (1) A manager and chief engineer, manager-chief engineer,
9 or director of a county water utility;

10 (2) The deputy director of the commission on water
11 resource management of the department of land and
12 natural resources, or the deputy director's designee;

13 (3) The administrator of the division of forestry and
14 wildlife of the department of land and natural
15 resources, or the administrator's designee;

16 (4) The deputy director of the department of health, or
17 the deputy director's designee;

18 (5) A member having knowledge of agricultural water
19 storage and transmission systems;



1 (6) A member from a private landowning entity that
2 actively partners with a watershed partnership, who
3 shall be invited to participate;

4 (7) A member having knowledge, experience, and expertise
5 in Native Hawaiian cultural practices; and

6 (8) A member representing a philanthropic organization,
7 who shall be invited to participate.

8 (d) The working group may request assistance and feedback
9 from the city and county of Honolulu and the counties of Maui,
10 Kauai, and Hawaii; department of land and natural resources;
11 department of agriculture; and any other department that the
12 working group deems appropriate, to provide expertise to the
13 working group in conducting the water security study. The
14 working group shall further consult with industry stakeholders,
15 private landowners, and other environmental organizations that
16 are encouraged to cooperate and provide information or input.

17 (e) The working group shall submit a report of its
18 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
19 legislation, relating to the water security study to the
20 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
21 the regular session of 2024.



1 (f) The members of the working group shall serve without
2 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
3 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

4 (g) No member of the working group shall be subject to
5 chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, solely because of the
6 member's participation in the working group.

7 (h) The working group shall be dissolved on June 30, 2024.

8 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 for
11 the water security working group's administrative support,
12 travel, meeting, and operational costs.

13 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the commission on
14 water resource management for the purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.



Report Title:

Water Security Working Group; Commission on Water Resource Management; Study; Capital Improvement Projects; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes within the Commission on Water Resource Management a water security working group to study and recommend, for legislative consideration and approval, priority capital improvement projects, including funding and financing strategies for each project, that leverage public-private investment to increase Hawaii's water security. Makes an appropriation. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

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

