

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State's
2 environmental review process is designed to scrutinize new
3 projects with potential environmental impacts. However, recent
4 court decisions have broadened the definition of "action", which
5 includes long-permitted commercial activities which the State
6 did not originally intend to be subject to environmental review.
7 As a result, long-standing commercial operations may be forced
8 to cease operation despite their decades-long compliance with
9 regulatory requirements.

10 The legislature further finds that it is necessary to
11 clarify that the environmental review process is intended to
12 evaluate the environmental impact of new projects, not to
13 disrupt ongoing, well-regulated activities.

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to allow:

- 15 (1) A previously authorized or permitted activity or
16 operation to continue operation while the appropriate
17 agency determines whether the activity or operation is



subject to or exempt from the environmental review process; and

(2) An operator of a previously authorized or permitted activity or operation to renew the appropriate permits while under the environmental review process.

SECTION 2. Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§343- Temporary continuation of authorized or permitted activities; challenge; exemption. (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, when an activity or operation previously permitted, authorized, or undertaken by a state or county agency is challenged as being subject to the requirements of this chapter, the activity or operation may continue pending the:

(1) Determination of the appropriate agency that the activity or operation is subject to or exempt from the requirements of this chapter; and

(2) Preparation and submission of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement to the appropriate accepting agency if it is determined that



1 the activity or operation is subject to the
2 requirements of this chapter;
3 provided that the activity or operation shall continue to comply
4 with regulatory requirements; provided further that the activity
5 or operation shall not include construction, grading, dredging,
6 or other structural modifications to land, waterways, or marine
7 environments.

8 (b) If an agency determines that an activity or operation
9 previously authorized, permitted, or undertaken by a state or
10 county agency is subject to the requirements of this chapter, a
11 person with oversight of the activity or operation may renew the
12 appropriate permits while under the environmental review
13 process; provided that the activity or operation continues to
14 comply with regulatory requirements."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Shirley A. Young



S.B. NO. 1074

Report Title:

Environmental Assessment; Temporary Exemption; Challenge;
Permits

Description:

Allows a previously authorized or permitted activity or operations to continue operation while the appropriate agency determines whether the activity or operation is subject to or exempt from the environmental review process when challenged. Allows a person with oversight of a previously authorized or permitted activity to renew the appropriate permits while under the environmental review process.

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