

JAN 23 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that geothermal resources
2 can provide stable power and community benefits and are a viable
3 alternative to biofuels. In 2024, the legislature appropriated
4 \$6,000,000 for an integrated geothermal development plan to be
5 administered by the Hawaii technology development corporation
6 under the department of business, economic development, and
7 tourism. The governor subsequently reduced the appropriation to
8 \$3,000,000. Through a partnership with the University of
9 Hawaii, the Hawaii technology development corporation has
10 already begun work on an integrated geothermal development
11 roadmap with the concrete goal of developing the first utility
12 scale 50- to 100-megawatt power station on Hawaii island.

13 The department of business, economic development and
14 tourism is the appropriate department to guide the continued
15 exploration and identification of geothermal resources in the
16 State. Geoscience research absent the commercial lens necessary
17 for strategic development and investment is likely to lead to



1 less effective outcomes for commercial viability and will either
2 duplicate existing research or result in a lack of investor
3 confidence. Further development that is not informed by quality
4 and focused research can create additional risk and lead to
5 decreasing future investments, including the development of a
6 fully commissioned geothermal power station in the State.

7 Hawaii island holds the most promise for the development of
8 the State's first utility-scale geothermal production facility.
9 All geothermal testing performed in the State confirms that the
10 largest and most reliable source of geothermal energy is located
11 on Hawaii island. Hawaii island is also the only island that
12 has sufficient agricultural and pastoral land to meet the
13 State's need to achieve food self-sufficiency and security in
14 the future.

15 The legislature recognizes that restoring the original
16 level of funding and additional moneys are needed to allow the
17 Hawaii technology development corporation to continue the
18 geoscience exploration currently underway, including developing
19 an overall development plan and extensive community outreach
20 program, as well as, where possible, building on previous
21 investigations by the department of Hawaiian home lands and



1 other previous publicly available reports and existing
2 exploration data for Hawaii island, either as a result of
3 geothermal resource investigations or byproducts from other
4 exploration and studies (for example, water exploration).

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
6 funds for the continued exploration and identification of
7 geothermal resources and commercial viability for utility-scale
8 geothermal production in counties with a population of less than
9 three hundred thousand.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$6,000,000 or so much
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
13 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
14 2026-2027 for the continued exploration and identification of
15 geothermal resources and commercial viability for utility-scale
16 geothermal production in counties with a population of less than
17 three hundred thousand.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
19 of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes
20 of this Act.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

2

INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 1269

Report Title:

DBEDT; Geothermal Resources; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for continued exploration and identification of geothermal resources and commercial viability for utility-scale geothermal production in counties with a population of less than 300,000.

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