

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CONSERVATION ENFORCEMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that coral reefs are
2 extremely valuable to the people of Hawaii, including coastal
3 protection from erosion due to rising sea levels and larger
4 ocean swells as the ocean warms; sand production that
5 replenishes beaches; and fisheries, recreation, tourism, and
6 spiritual connection. The legislature further finds that many
7 reefs around the island of Oahu are widely known to be among the
8 most degraded in Hawaii, due to historically poor land use
9 practices that buried corals with silt run-off and smothered
10 corals with seaweeds fertilized by leaching sewage and
11 fertilizer run-off. The legislature also finds that warmer
12 ocean temperatures are now causing more frequent and severe
13 coral bleaching events that kill corals and are predicted to be
14 annual events by about 2040. Ocean acidification and other
15 pollutants also adversely affect corals.

16 The legislature additionally finds that one of the most
17 effective ways to help corals withstand and recover from present



1 and future threats is to ensure the existence of many
2 herbivorous fishes on Hawaii's reefs, especially parrotfishes
3 (uhu), surgeonfishes (kala and others), and chubs (nenuue).
4 These fishes are known to crop seaweeds that would otherwise
5 smother corals, providing space on the reefs for new corals to
6 grow, especially after coral bleaching events. The population
7 of herbivorous fishes around Oahu is by far the lowest in
8 Hawaii.

9 In response, the board of land and natural resources
10 adopted statewide herbivore fishing rules in December 2023.
11 However, enforcement of these rules, which is the responsibility
12 of the division of conservation and resources enforcement of the
13 department of land and natural resources, has been particularly
14 difficult around Oahu because:

- 15 (1) Fishing intensity is much greater on Oahu than on the
16 other islands;
- 17 (2) Division of conservation and resources enforcement
18 officers have been diverted to law enforcement duties
19 on land due to recent increases in violent crime; and
- 20 (3) Most poaching of herbivores occurs at night, which
21 poses an extreme challenge to the several division of



1 conservation and resources enforcement officers
2 available for marine night patrols, especially given
3 the lack of needed equipment.

4 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds
5 for equipment for the Oahu branch of the division of
6 conservation and resources enforcement of the department of land
7 and natural resources.

8 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$4,974,040 or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for
11 equipment for the Oahu branch of the division of conservation
12 and resources enforcement of the department of land and natural
13 resources, to be allocated as follows:

14 (1) \$800,000 for two maritime enforcement patrol vessels,
15 complete with audible/visual emergency equipment;

16 (2) \$50,000 for two patrol watercrafts, complete with
17 audible/visual emergency equipment;

18 (3) \$50,000 for shipment costs for the items in paragraphs
19 (1) and (2);



- 1 (4) \$3,040,000 for thirty-two police marked patrol
2 vehicles, complete with audible/visual emergency
3 equipment;
- 4 (5) \$206,000 for two towing vehicles for patrol vessels,
5 complete with audible/visual emergency equipment;
- 6 (6) \$10,000 for extended warranties for the two vehicles
7 in paragraph (5);
- 8 (7) \$14,000 for one floating drive-on dock;
- 9 (8) \$1,800 for six personal flotation devices;
- 10 (9) \$36,000 for six sets of SCUBA gear, including full
11 equipment and training and certifications;
- 12 (10) \$224,000 for thirty-two portable radios;
- 13 (11) \$5,000 for one base station/repeater;
- 14 (12) \$128,000 for thirty-two night-vision devices;
- 15 (13) \$128,000 for thirty-two drones;
- 16 (14) \$5,600 for thirty-two remote pilot certificates for
17 the drones in paragraph (13);
- 18 (15) \$215,640 per year for six mobile surveillance
19 trailers;
- 20 (16) \$48,000 for six quick-deploy license plate recognition
21 camera systems; and



1 (17) \$12,000 for installation costs for the items in
2 paragraph (16).

3 SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the
4 department of land and natural resources for the purposes of
5 this Act.

6 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 561

Report Title:

Equipment; Oahu Branch; Division of Conservation and Resources
Enforcement; Department of Land and Natural Resources;
Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for equipment for the Oahu Branch of the
Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement of the
Department of Land and Natural Resources.

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