

JAN 15 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SPECIAL NUMBER PLATES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that January 4, 2026,
2 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first successful landing
3 on Kahoolawe by nine courageous individuals, known as the
4 "Kahoolawe nine," in support of Native Hawaiian sovereignty and
5 self-determination, initiating an islandwide movement to "Stop
6 the Bombing" and the United States' military use of the island
7 of Kahoolawe.

8 The legislature further finds that Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana
9 (PKO), a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to the
10 island of Kahoolawe and the principles of Aloha Aina, was
11 established in 1976 to protect the natural and cultural
12 resources across Hawaii. In 1976, the PKO took legal action by
13 filing a federal lawsuit against the United States Navy, citing
14 violations of environmental laws, historic preservation, and
15 religious freedom, thus highlighting the cultural and ecological
16 significance of Kahoolawe. On October 22, 1990, President
17 George Bush ordered the cessation of bombing and target practice



1 on Kahoolawe and in November 1990, Congress established the
2 Kahoolawe Island Conveyance Commission to facilitate the return
3 of Kahoolawe to the State, leading the legislature and then
4 Governor John Waihee III to create the Kahoolawe Island Reserve
5 Commission.

6 The legislature additionally finds that PKO, alongside the
7 Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission and the department of land
8 and natural resources have undertaken the stewardship of the
9 island, restoring vital cultural practices such as the Makahiki
10 ceremony, which embodies the relationship between the Hawaiian
11 people and the land, as well as ongoing conservation efforts to
12 restore the island's natural ecosystem. Due to this diligence,
13 Kahoolawe has become a profound symbol of Aloha Aina and
14 environmental resilience, representing the collective effort to
15 heal the island through reforestation, soil conservation, and
16 cultural renewal.

17 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to authorize the
18 issuance of special number plates to recognize and honor the
19 island of Kahoolawe.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 249, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§249- Special number plates for the island of
5 Kahoolawe; authorized. (a) Notwithstanding any law to the
6 contrary, the director of finance shall issue to any registered
7 owner of a motor vehicle, who is a resident of the State, and
8 has completed the application and paid the required fees, a
9 special number plate for the registered owner's motor vehicle
10 commemorating the island of Kahoolawe.

11 (b) The director of finance of the city and county of
12 Honolulu, in consultation with the directors of finance of the
13 counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, the chiefs of police of the
14 city and county of Honolulu and the counties of Kauai, Maui, and
15 Hawaii, and the board of directors of the Kohe Malamalama o
16 Kanaloa Protect Kahoolawe Fund, shall establish a special number
17 plate design that:

18 (1) Contains words, images, or both, that indicate the
19 special number plate is issued to recognize the island
20 of Kahoolawe;



- 1 (2) Complies with all other requirements in section
2 249-9(a);
- 3 (3) Is similar in shape and size to the uniform state
4 number plate prescribed by law; and
- 5 (4) Does not obstruct the visibility of the number or
6 letters or any other information that is required by
7 law to be on a number plate and is readily
8 identifiable and distinguishable under actual traffic
9 conditions.
- 10 (c) The special number plate design shall not:
- 11 (1) Infringe upon or otherwise violate any trademark,
12 trade name, service mark, copyright, or other
13 proprietary or property right;
- 14 (2) Represent any obscene or degrading image, idea, word,
15 or phrase;
- 16 (3) Advertise or endorse a product, brand, or service that
17 is provided for sale;
- 18 (4) Promote any religious belief; or
- 19 (5) Promote any philosophy based on prejudice or that is
20 contrary to state civil rights laws.



1 (d) Each special number plate shall be securely fastened
2 to the motor vehicle in lieu of the uniform state number plate.

3 (e) The director of finance shall charge a special number
4 plate fee at least equal to the county's cost of providing the
5 special number plate and administrative costs, if any, plus a
6 fundraising fee to be determined by the director of finance in
7 consultation with the board of directors of the Kohe Malamalama
8 o Kanaloa Protect Kahoolawe Fund. The fundraising fee shall be
9 in addition to any other state or county fees collected for a
10 motor vehicle registration or license plate.

11 (f) The director of finance may charge an additional
12 fundraising fee, of the same or a different amount as the
13 fundraising fee established pursuant to subsection (e), for the
14 renewal of a special number plate. If an additional fundraising
15 fee is implemented pursuant to this subsection, the director of
16 finance shall not renew and instead shall revoke the special
17 number plate of the registered owner of a motor vehicle who
18 fails to pay the additional fundraising fee imposed by this
19 subsection.

20 (g) The revenue generated by the fundraising fees, or a
21 portion of the revenue generated by the fundraising fees as



1 determined by the director of finance, shall be deposited in the
 2 name of the Kohe Malamalama o Kanaloa Protect Kahoolawe Fund in
 3 a separate county budget account. The director of finance shall
 4 determine the most efficient means of directing the revenue
 5 generated by the fundraising fees to the Kohe Malamalama o
 6 Kanaloa Protect Kahoolawe Fund.


7 (h) The director of finance may revoke all special number
 8 plates issued pursuant to this section if the total number of
 9 registered owners of motor vehicles who obtain the special
 10 number plates is less than one hundred fifty within three years
 11 of issuance of the first special number plate.

12 (i) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to
 13 any plates issued pursuant to section 249-9.2.

14 (j) For the purposes of this section, unless a different
 15 meaning appears from the context, "special number plate" means a
 16 license plate that represents the island of Kahoolawe."

17 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

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

19 INTRODUCED BY:  _____

S.B. NO. 143

Report Title:

Special Number Plates; Kahoolawe; Kohe Malamalama o Kanaloa
Protect Kahoolawe Fund; Motor Vehicles

Description:

Authorizes the issuance of special number plates to commemorate the island of Kahoolawe.

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