

JAN 23 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that protection of the
2 environment and underground sources of drinking water is in the
3 best interest of public health and safety and a requirement
4 defined under section 7 of Article XI of the state Constitution.

5 The Red Hill bulk fuel storage facility is a
6 field-constructed underground storage tank system on Oahu that
7 is owned and operated by the United States Department of the
8 Navy. The facility consists of twenty systems that sit
9 approximately one hundred feet above Oahu's sole-source
10 groundwater aquifer, with the southern Oahu basal aquifer as the
11 principal source of drinking water for the island.

12 Twenty systems, as well as pipelines and other
13 infrastructure, were constructed during the early 1940s and,
14 since then, multiple contaminant releases have occurred,
15 negatively impacting the environment and threatening public
16 health. The nature and extent of the reported release in
17 January 2014 of approximately twenty-seven thousand gallons of



1 fuel from one of the tanks into the rocks and groundwater
2 beneath the facility is still unknown. The May 2021 department
3 of health hearings officer's decision found that approximately
4 one thousand six hundred gallons of jet fuel from the supply
5 piping was released into the environment. According to the
6 department of health's Emergency Order Docket No. 22-UST-EA-01,
7 a release and recovery of approximately fourteen thousand
8 gallons of a fuel mixture occurred on November 20, 2021. The
9 fuel release flowed from the Red Hill facility to occupied
10 structures, including the homes of residents through the water
11 pipelines. The release resulted in "a humanitarian and
12 environmental emergency and disaster."

13 It is estimated that up to 1,500,000 gallons of fuel has
14 been released from the facility during its eighty years of
15 operation. The underground storage tanks have been gravity
16 defueled and are planned for closure, but remnant fuel and
17 sludge remain. Contaminants from the facility can migrate to
18 the west and northwest direction, reaching various well sources
19 managed by the board of water supply and landmarks.

20 Furthermore, the department of health's analysis on the
21 amount of fuel contaminants at different points in time and



1 different locations showed movement of the fuel through a total
2 petroleum hydrocarbon. The total petroleum hydrocarbon in the
3 Red Hill monitoring wells exceed existing environmental action
4 limits set by the department for gross contamination and
5 drinking water toxicity.

6 According to the November 8, 2024 Management Advisory:
7 Concerns with the Navy's Handling of Incidents Involving Aqueous
8 Film-Forming Foam at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Office
9 Report No. DODIG-2025-013, one thousand three hundred gallons of
10 aqueous film-forming foam concentrate that contains per- and
11 polyfluoroalkyl substances spilled from the facility on
12 November 29, 2022. The persistence of the substances in the
13 environment poses serious risks to the groundwater resources in
14 Oahu and undesirable health effects.

15 The legislature finds that more information is needed to
16 inform and protect the people of Hawaii. Additional wells that
17 monitor the condition of the aquifer and alert in the presence
18 of an underground fuel plume and other contaminants from the Red
19 Hill facility must be installed. Also, the furtherance of a
20 monitoring grid between the facility and water production wells,
21 consisting of up to one hundred twenty-two monitoring wells over



1 sixty-one sites, is critical to assess immediate and future
2 risks and to inform trend and directional analyses necessary for
3 remediation planning. Past fuel releases from the facility
4 could migrate to and impact critical drinking water receptors.
5 Without the data derived from the monitoring grid, there can be
6 no reliable predictions of where contamination may migrate in
7 the subsurface.

8 The purpose of this Act is to authorize the issuance of
9 general obligation bonds for the board of water supply to
10 install two monitoring wells for the purpose of collecting
11 important data to understand the condition of the groundwater
12 aquifer underneath and surrounding the Red Hill facility and its
13 implications to the drinking water supply in Oahu.

14 SECTION 2. The director of finance is authorized to issue
15 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$20,000,000 or so much
16 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof
17 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2025-2026
18 for the purpose of a capital improvement project to plan,
19 design, and construct two groundwater aquifer monitoring wells.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the board of
2 water supply of the city and county of Honolulu for the purposes
3 of this Act.

4 SECTION 3. The appropriation made for the capital
5 improvement project authorized by this Act shall not lapse at
6 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is
7 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation
8 unencumbered as of June 30, 2028, shall lapse as of that date.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 1634

Report Title:

Water Resources; Monitoring Wells; BWS; GO Bonds; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates general obligation bonds to the Board of Water Supply for the planning, design, and construction of two monitoring wells.

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