

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State does not
2 own or possess complete control of all water infrastructure in
3 Hawaii. Wells, canals, and irrigation projects are often
4 located on private, county, or federal land, and limited access
5 to these locations may impede the categorization process
6 conducted by public agencies. Since managing these resources is
7 the responsibility of the associated agencies affiliated with
8 local and state governments, there is a pressing need to ensure
9 that an adequate inventory of these resources is maintained so
10 that these resources may be dedicated to the agriculture
11 industry. The legislature believes that water infrastructure is
12 critical to overall food production within the State and must be
13 accurately categorized, maintained, and effectively managed.

14 The legislature also finds that the regulation and
15 monitoring of wells, irrigation ditches, reservoirs, and pump
16 stations related to farming and agriculture in the State is
17 typically overseen by several agencies having overlapping



1 priorities and objectives. The department of land and natural
2 resources and the commission on water resource management both
3 fulfill significant roles in this complex process. However, it
4 must be noted that statistical data is also gathered by the
5 department of agriculture and the agribusiness development
6 corporation. These agencies provide several informational
7 inputs into a disjointed monitoring system that relies upon
8 cooperation between the differing but complementary agencies.
9 As a result, the State lacks a complete inventory and
10 comprehensive data system to track the condition and maintenance
11 needs of water infrastructure in Hawaii.

12 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to direct the
13 department of agriculture to conduct an agricultural water
14 infrastructure study for the State of Hawaii.

15 SECTION 2. (a) The department of agriculture, in
16 collaboration with the agribusiness development corporation and
17 the counties, shall conduct an agricultural water infrastructure
18 study for the State of Hawaii.

19 (b) As part of the study, the department of agriculture
20 shall develop an inventory of wells, irrigation ditches,
21 reservoirs, pumping stations, and agricultural infrastructure in



1 the State, including an assessment of the infrastructure's
2 current condition and maintenance needs and recommendations for
3 future investments in infrastructure.

4 The department of agriculture shall also develop a tracking
5 system to report future infrastructure needs.

6 (c) The department of agriculture shall submit a report to
7 the legislature of its findings and recommendations, including
8 any proposed legislation, by November 1, 2027.

9 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for a
12 statewide agricultural water infrastructure study.

13 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
14 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

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

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INTRODUCED BY: *Keith M. Ruckelshaus*



S.B. NO. 563

Report Title:

HDOA; ADC; Counties; Agricultural Water Infrastructure; Study; Appropriation

Description:

Directs that Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Agribusiness Development Corporation and the counties, to conduct an agricultural water infrastructure study for the State of Hawaii. Appropriates moneys.

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