

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the average farmer
2 in Hawaii is sixty years old and that the State lacks a farming
3 workforce large enough to expand cultivated agricultural lands
4 and food production. The primary cause of the shortage of new
5 farmers in Hawaii over the past several decades is the lack of
6 access to agriculture education, including reduced training for
7 agriculture educators, resulting in disinterest among youth to
8 pursue careers in agriculture or natural resource management.
9 The legislature further finds that to meet the State's
10 aspirations for increased food security and self-sufficiency,
11 the number of local farms and farmers, and the amount of food
12 produced for local markets, needs to increase significantly.

13 The legislature recognizes that agriculture education is
14 key to developing future farmers and a society that values and
15 understands the vital role of agriculture, food, fiber, and
16 natural resource systems in advancing personal, local, and
17 global well-being. Over the past decade, a vibrant grassroots



1 movement in support of agriculture education has emerged in
2 Hawaii, along with a marked increase in new farmer training
3 programs and student involvement in FFA, formerly known as
4 Future Farmers of America.

5 The legislature also finds that, to encourage continued
6 momentum for agriculture education, the senate passed Senate
7 Resolution No. 80 (2015), requesting the university of Hawaii
8 college of tropical agriculture and human resources to convene a
9 working group to develop a coordinated framework of support for
10 preschool through post-secondary agriculture education and a
11 plan for implementation, including any proposed legislation, and
12 report to the legislature before the regular sessions of 2017,
13 2018, and 2019. The working group's final report outlines a
14 coordinated framework of support for agriculture education in
15 Hawaii and recommends the establishment of an agriculture
16 education coordinator position within the university of Hawaii
17 college of tropical agriculture and human resources to lead the
18 implementation of the recommended framework. The legislature
19 finds that the implementation of the coordinated framework would
20 increase the number of:



- 1 (1) Students exposed to agriculture education at all grade
2 levels in public, charter, and independent schools;
- 3 (2) Public school students entering and completing the
4 career and technical education pathway in agriculture,
5 food innovation, and natural resources;
- 6 (3) Students entering and completing higher education
7 programs, apprenticeships, internships, and work-based
8 learning programs in agriculture and food systems;
- 9 (4) Teachers trained in agriculture and food systems
10 education; and
- 11 (5) Local food producers and other food systems
12 professionals.

13 The implementation of the coordinated framework is also intended
14 to help decrease the average age of farmers in the State and
15 grow the educated agricultural workforce, thereby increasing
16 food security and self-sufficiency, sustainability, and
17 resiliency in Hawaii.

18 The legislature also recognizes that the university of
19 Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources
20 cooperative extension is a valuable resource for connecting
21 research and innovation to food sovereignty, food security, food



1 production, and environmental and human resilience. The
2 legislature further notes that increasing state investment in
3 agriculture educators, including extension agents of cooperative
4 extension programs, aligns with the working group's coordinated
5 framework of support for agriculture education in the State.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to support a
7 coordinated framework for agriculture education by converting
8 certain temporary agriculture educator positions into permanent
9 positions and establishing a full-time agriculture education
10 coordinator position within the university of Hawaii at Manoa
11 college of tropical agriculture and human resources.

12 SECTION 2. (a) The university of Hawaii at Manoa college
13 of tropical agriculture and human resources shall convert one
14 temporary farm to school extension agent position on the island
15 of Kauai into a full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent farm to
16 school extension agent position on the island of Kauai to
17 support agriculture education in the State pursuant to this Act.

18 (b) The university of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical
19 agriculture and human resources shall convert one temporary farm
20 to school extension agent position on the island of Oahu into a
21 full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent farm to school



1 extension agent position on the island of Oahu to support
2 agriculture education in the State pursuant to this Act.

3 (c) There is appropriated out of the general revenues of
4 the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as
5 may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or
6 so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to
7 establish and fund the positions authorized by subsections (a)
8 and (b).

9 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the university
10 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$300,000 or so much
13 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
14 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
15 2026-2027 for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0
16 FTE) agriculture education coordinator position within the
17 university of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical agriculture
18 and human resources.

19 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the university
20 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.



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

2

INTRODUCED BY: *Mike Gilbert*



S.B. NO. 666

Report Title:

UH; CTAHR; Positions; Appropriations

Description:

Converts two temporary farm-to-school extension agent positions within the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources into permanent positions. Establishes an agriculture education coordinator position. Appropriates funds.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

