

ACT 127

S.B. NO. 2879

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation to the Hawaii Civil Air Patrol.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii civil air patrol provides necessary disaster relief, search and rescue, homeland security, and medical emergency transport services to local and national organizations.

Since the early 1950s, the civil air patrol has provided tsunami warning services to the State. Once a tsunami alert has been issued by the National Weather Service, the civil air patrol mobilizes its aircraft, making repeated passes over beaches and coastal communities using sirens and loud speakers to warn residents.

The legislature also finds that the civil air patrol flies more than ninety-five per cent of the nation's inland search and rescue missions. Approximately one hundred people are saved every year by civil air patrol volunteers. In July 2002, the civil air patrol was instrumental in locating a small plane that went down on Maui.

The civil air patrol also plays a vital role in disaster relief. Volunteer civil air patrol members fly disaster relief officials to remote locations and support local, state, and national disaster relief organizations with experienced pilots and personnel. The civil air patrol transports time-sensitive medical materials, blood products, and body tissue.

Today, as a peacetime auxiliary of the Air Force, the civil air patrol remains an active volunteer organization with approximately five hundred fifty members, including two hundred cadets. The Hawaii wing has three primary missions:

- (1) Search and rescue;
- (2) Aerospace education; and
- (3) The cadet program.

It is also an active participant in counter-drug operations for the Drug Enforcement Agency, flying over one hundred seventy-nine missions in 2003.

The legislature further finds that the civil air patrol depends on state funding to defray its operational expenses, but past budget restrictions have hampered its ability to carry out necessary operations. A lack of funding could result in:

- (1) Termination of weekly tsunami watch patrols;
- (2) Difficulties in notifying emergency personnel; and
- (3) Operations conducted at the expense of members.

The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation to help defray the operational expenses of the Hawaii civil air patrol.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$60,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, to complement the \$50,000 offered for support by the department of defense, for the operational expenses of the Hawaii civil air patrol.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of defense for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

(Approved May 24, 2006.)