

## ACT 213

S.B. NO. 2484

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation for Vog Monitoring Stations.

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

SECTION 1. Kilauea volcano on the island of Hawaii is one of the most active volcanoes in the world. It has erupted continuously since 1983, and it emits thousands of tons of gases containing water vapor, sulfur dioxide, and carbon dioxide daily. Kilauea volcano is the nation's largest single source of sulfur dioxide. It has an output several times greater than any power plant. Once airborne, the gases react with other chemicals in the air and are converted to a particulate form of sulfuric acid mists and sulfate particles. This reaction produces a visible haze called "vog."

Volcanic emission is a serious health issue. Various studies have shown that exposure to vog may result in elevated risks of adverse health conditions. Vog often irritates the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. It has been shown to increase the occurrence of adolescent allergies, asthma, and respiratory disease. The particles affect lung defenses and the ability to clear material out of the lungs and can cause bronchitis. Prolonged exposure may be associated with cardiac problems.

The department of health's clean air branch currently has three vog-monitoring stations that measure sulfur dioxide in Hilo, Puna, and Kona. The Hawaii Volcanoes National Park has two monitoring stations. Unfortunately, these monitoring stations do not measure vog levels in other parts of the Puna district where thousands of residents are affected.

The legislature recognized the potential health hazards of vog when it adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 135 in 2005, which requested the clean air branch to report the status and findings of its vog-monitoring plan, together with legislative recommendations. The report was submitted to the legislature on December 15, 2005, and acknowledges volcanic emission as an important public health issue. The report proposes locating one additional monitoring station in Mountain View and one in Pahala. It is intended that the stations will be equipped with continuous sulfur dioxide monitors and meteorological equipment. Quality assurance of the data will be performed according to United States Environmental Protection Agency guidelines. It is further intended that near real-time data will be accessible to the public through an Internet website and a telephone hotline, similar to the system employed at the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.

The cost of establishing the two vog-monitoring stations is \$160,000. The clean air branch is actively pursuing a federal grant for the two stations, but funding is uncertain because of federal budget cuts.

The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation for two vog-monitoring stations, one at Mountain View and one at Pahala, or at any alternate location as determined by the Department of Health.

**SECTION 2.** There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007 for the installation of vog-monitoring stations, one at Mountain View and one at Pahala, or at any alternate location as determined by the Department of Health on the island of Hawaii.

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

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

(Approved June 20, 2006.)