

A Bill for an Act Relating to a Job Corps Program.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that, prior to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, Hawaii had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation. The COVID-19 pandemic has placed tens of thousands of Hawaii residents out of work, and the current state unemployment rate is among the nation's highest. The department of labor and industrial relations reported that the State's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which was 2.7 per cent in September 2019, compared to the national rate of 3.5 per cent, surged to 15.1 per cent in September 2020, compared to the national rate of 7.9 per cent. In addition, tourism, the State's largest industry, has dropped considerably because of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing a unique opportunity for the State to build a more resilient, equitable, and diversified economy. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have also highlighted the need for increased and diverse workforce development initiatives in the State.

The legislature further finds that models exist for the creation of such initiatives to support the State's ailing workforce. The Civilian Conservation Corps program that was implemented as a major part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal after the Great Depression was a federal work relief program that helped employ Americans on conservation projects, alleviated economic distress, and supported the protection and responsible development of natural resources and agricultural land use. The federal Job Corps program is a no-cost education and career technical training program administered by the United States Department of Labor that helps young people ages sixteen to twenty-four improve the quality of their lives through career technical and academic training. The Hawaii job corps center supports the federal Job Corps program's mission to teach eligible young people the skills they need to become employable and independent, place them in meaningful jobs, or further their education.

The legislature recognizes that the State has committed to meeting the energy needs of its people in a safe, reliable, economical, and environmentally sound manner, as evidenced by Act 97, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, which established a renewable portfolio standards target of one hundred per cent renewable electric energy by 2045; Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, which requires replacement of all cesspools by 2050; and Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which established a statewide zero emissions clean economy target to sequester more atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gases than emitted by 2045. The legislature finds that, to support a comprehensive economic recovery, the State must invest in its community and emerging economic sectors and provide its residents with the educational and training opportunities to succeed. The creation of a state-administered green job corps program would provide Hawaii residents who were economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with opportunities to learn new skills and increase their prospects of employment within the resiliency and green sectors, including local agriculture, conservation, climate adaptation, renewable energy, cesspool conversion, and technology industries.

The legislature also finds that the Aloha Connects Innovation program of the Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii and Kupu 'Aina Corps, two workforce development initiatives launched by the State with federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act funds are potential programs that could be integrated and built upon in establishing a state-administered green job corps program. The State can also capitalize on the report titled "From Today to

Tomorrow: A Talent Roadmap to Support Economic Recovery in Hawai‘i” produced by the Hawaii Executive Collaborative, which provides a framework to establish a state-administered green job corps program by outlining a talent development strategy through expansion of work-based learning, retraining, credentialing programs, industry-driven solutions, and partnerships.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Allow the governor to designate the department of land and natural resources to administer or enter into agreements to administer a green job youth corps program to help address the unemployment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and support work and training opportunities for young adults and economic diversification; and
- (2) Appropriate American Rescue Plan Act funds for this purpose.

SECTION 2. Section 193-32, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

**“~~§~~193-32 Administration.** To carry out the program authorized by this part, the governor may:

- (1) Enter into an agreement or agreements, or designate the department of land and natural resources, or any other state department or departments as the state agency or agencies to enter into an agreement or agreements, with the proper authorities of the United States;
- (2) Designate the department of land and natural resources, or any state department or departments to design programs to provide healthful outdoor training and employment for young persons and to advance the conservation, development, and management of natural resources and recreational areas, in accordance with the applicable federal law; provided that the designated department or departments may also adopt appropriate rules under chapter 91 to carry out the programs so designed; ~~and~~
- (3) Designate the department of land and natural resources to administer or enter into an agreement or agreements for the administration of a green job youth corps program that provides temporary work and training opportunities in one or more of the following fields: natural resource management, agriculture, conservation, renewable energy, or other sustainability professions. The program shall prioritize work and training opportunities for young adults who are between twenty years of age and forty years of age and economic diversification; provided that the department of land and natural resources shall partner with organizations that have experience providing similar programming in the state; and
- (4) Defray one-half of all costs incurred with respect to the programs or any other proportion of the costs of the programs, which may be required by the applicable laws of the United States, out of any moneys appropriated to the department or departments designated to participate in the programs, without regard to the original purpose of the appropriations.”

SECTION 3. The department of land and natural resources shall submit a report to the legislature on its progress in implementing this Act no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2022.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the funds received by the State from the American Rescue Plan Act, Public Law 117-2, section 9901, the sum of \$5,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-

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2022 for salaries only for up to one thousand program participant positions; provided that all unexpended and unencumbered balances of the appropriation made by this section as of the close of business on November 1, 2021, shall lapse.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

(Approved July 2, 2021.)