

## ACT 189

S.B. NO. 2056

A Bill for an Act Relating to Soil Classifications.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State has not completed a comprehensive soil study or completed sufficient agricultural soil mapping in over fifty years. The first and only statewide soil mapping, classification, and characterization study was conducted by the land study bureau of the university of Hawaii from 1965 through 1972. This classification system remains the master reference for the regulation of lands in the state agricultural land use district by the State and counties. The land study bureau classification system reflects the agricultural activities of plantation sugar cane and pineapple production that dominated Hawaii agriculture at the time of the study.

The legislature further finds that the United States Department of Agriculture maintains detailed information on Hawaii soils in its national soil classification system, which is regularly updated by the federal government. The United States Department of Agriculture's soils inventory and classification system is also the reference dataset for many of the United States Department of Agriculture's programs.

To meet the State's food sustainability goals and enhance local agricultural productivity, it is important to utilize effective standards for identifying productive agricultural lands and protect long-term agricultural use under state and county land use regulatory systems. Accurate soil data reflecting soil characteristics, soil properties, and identification of limits, risks, and soil suitability for various uses helps optimize public and private investments in agriculture to meet Hawaii's food and agricultural sustainability goals.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Require the office of planning and sustainable development to conduct a study of the suitability of the land study bureau soil overall (master) productivity rating system and other soil classification systems in the regulation of agricultural lands in the State and make recommendations for the use of soil classification systems for agricultural land use regulation; and
- (2) Appropriate funds to conduct the study.

SECTION 2. The office of planning and sustainable development shall conduct a study of the suitability of soil classification systems, including the soil overall (master) productivity rating system and detailed land classification of

the land study bureau, for the regulation of agricultural lands by the State and counties.

SECTION 3. In conducting the study required by this Act, the office of planning and sustainable development shall request, as appropriate, the assistance of the department of agriculture, college of tropical agriculture and human resources of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the land use commission, which shall cooperate with and provide any necessary resources to the office of planning and sustainable development. The office of planning and sustainable development may further consult with the United States Department of Agriculture, if necessary.

SECTION 4. The office of planning and sustainable development shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2024.

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$325,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the office of planning and sustainable development to conduct the study as required by this Act.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

(Approved June 27, 2022.)