

JAN 25 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds there are many funding
2 opportunities from federal sources offering support for
3 agricultural purposes that remain untapped or overlooked due to
4 the lack of adequate grant writing and grant administration
5 capacity and expertise in the department of agriculture.
6 Establishing a program specialist position to seek and write
7 grants, provide technical assistance, provide grant program
8 administration, perform needs assessments, and make
9 recommendations to the chairperson of the board of agriculture,
10 is critical for building and providing that capability within
11 the department of agriculture. Additionally, many of Hawaii's
12 farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators struggle to
13 secure the financial support necessary to establish a thriving,
14 vibrant business. Many smaller farmers, ranchers, and other
15 agricultural operators lack the necessary business and
16 management expertise to seek out and apply for the various
17 sources of funding available to them, including funding provided
18 by the United States Department of Agriculture and other

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1 sources. To obtain grants from such sources, applicants must
2 complete an application process that is sometimes arduous and
3 complex. Without specific technical expertise in grant writing,
4 it is difficult for many small farmers, ranchers, and other
5 agricultural operators to obtain those grants. In addition,
6 certain requirements of the grants may be difficult to
7 understand and may lead to compliance issues without appropriate
8 grant administration and guidance.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish and fund a full-
10 time program specialist position within the department of
11 agriculture to seek and write grants, provide technical
12 assistance, provide grant program administration, perform needs
13 assessments, make recommendations to the chairperson of the
14 board of agriculture, and assist farmers, ranchers, and other
15 agricultural operators in applying for and obtaining grants
16 offered by the United States Department of Agriculture and other
17 sources, and to assist them with fulfilling and complying with
18 the requirements of the grants.

19 SECTION 2. There is established within the department of
20 agriculture a grant specialist position, which shall be a full-
21 time program specialist position to seek and write grants,
22 provide technical assistance, provide grant program

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1 administration, perform needs assessments, make recommendations
 2 to the chairperson of the board of agriculture, and assist
 3 farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators in applying
 4 for and obtaining grants offered by the United States Department
 5 of Agriculture and other sources, and to assist them with
 6 fulfilling and complying with the requirements of the grants;
 7 provided that priority shall be given to farmers and ranchers
 8 who produce local food that is at least partially consumed
 9 within the State.

10 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
 11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ _____ or so
 12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
 13 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
 14 year 2024-2025 to carry out the purposes of this Act.

15 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 16 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

17 SECTION 4. This Act, upon its approval, shall take effect
 18 on July 1, 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY: 

21

BY REQUEST

S .B. NO. 1272

Report Title:

Department of Agriculture; Program Specialist Position;
Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a program specialist position within the Department of Agriculture and appropriates moneys to fund the position. Prioritizes assistance for farmers and ranchers who produce local food that is at least partially consumed within the State.

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

JUSTIFICATION SHEET

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DEPARTMENT: Agriculture

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING AGRICULTURE.

PURPOSE: To establish a full-time program specialist position within the Department of Agriculture (Department) to seek and write grants; provide technical assistance and grant program administration; perform needs assessments; make recommendations to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture (Chairperson); assist farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators in applying for and obtaining grants offered by the United States Department of Agriculture and other sources; and to assist farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators with fulfilling and complying with the requirements of the grants. Priority shall be given to farmers and ranchers who produce local food that is at least partially consumed within the State.

MEANS: Establishes a new position; appropriates funds.

JUSTIFICATION: There are many funding opportunities from federal sources offering support for agricultural purposes that remain untapped or overlooked due to the Department's lack of adequate grant writing and administrative staff with expertise to maximize and utilize such funding. Establishing a program specialist position to seek and write grants, provide technical assistance, provide grant program administration, perform needs assessments, make recommendations to the Chairperson, and assist farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators, is critical for building and providing that capability within the Department. Moreover, many of Hawaii's farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators struggle to secure the financial support necessary to establish

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a thriving, vibrant business. Many smaller farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators lack the necessary business and management expertise to seek out and apply for the various sources of funding available to them, including funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture and other sources. To obtain grants from such sources, applicants must complete an application process that is sometimes arduous and complex. Without specific technical expertise in grant writing, it is difficult for many small farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators to obtain those grants. In addition, certain requirements of the grants may be difficult to understand and may lead to compliance issues without appropriate grant administration and guidance. It will also benefit the State by supporting agriculture in the State.

Impact on the public: The Department's enhanced capacity to pursue and maximize the availability of federal funds to support agriculture in Hawaii will bolster the State's efforts toward food security and sustainability. Staff support and guidance to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural operators for pursuing federal and other funding directly on their own will ease the burden of complex application procedures and compliance challenges.

Impact on the department and other agencies: The Department will significantly increase its capacity to support, regulate, and provide services to Hawaii's agricultural industry by optimizing its limited resources through direct grants and matching federal funds. There are no anticipated impacts to other agencies.

GENERAL FUND: \$ _____

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: AGR 192

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OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: None.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023