

JAN 19 2024

---

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HYDROLOGIC DATA COLLECTION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that while climate change  
2 and its impacts on water resources underscore the need for  
3 increased hydrologic monitoring and research investigations, the  
4 commission on water resource management, whose primary function  
5 is to carry out surveys, research, and investigations into all  
6 aspects of water use and water quality, has faced considerable  
7 challenges due to a decline of hydrologic data collection  
8 monitoring stations and programs. Hydrologic data, particularly  
9 for low-flow conditions, is fundamental to developing reasonable  
10 and scientifically-defensible instream flow standards, along  
11 with addressing stream-related disputes and complaints. There  
12 are an estimated three hundred seventy-six perennial streams  
13 statewide, most of which have little to no comprehensive  
14 hydrologic data readily available.

15           The legislature further finds that the Hawai'i mesonet is a  
16 statewide advanced weather and climate monitoring network of  
17 approximately one hundred telemetered stations, now under



1 construction. While climate information has been gathered for  
2 over one hundred years by various entities in the islands, the  
3 climate-observing network in Hawaii is fragmented, unmanaged,  
4 declining in spatial coverage, and inadequate to meet the needs  
5 of researchers and the many stakeholders dependent on the data  
6 and the research the data supports, including weather  
7 forecasting, flood warning, fire warning, emergency management,  
8 water resource management, agriculture, ranching, cultural  
9 resource protection, ecosystem protection, recreation, research  
10 on weather, climate, hydrological processes, ecosystem  
11 processes, and many other topics.

12 The cost of operating and maintaining the Hawai'i mesonet  
13 and managing and making the data available is estimated to be  
14 \$500,000 per year, with approximately fifty per cent of that  
15 amount derived from federal funds like the National Oceanic and  
16 Atmospheric Administration Mesonet Program.

17 The legislature also finds that the commission on water  
18 resource management's goal of using a solid and up-to-date  
19 foundation of data on water resources, water use, and water  
20 dynamics in making water resource management decisions includes  
21 collaborating with the University of Hawaii water resource



1 research center in its Hawai'i mesonet network of telemetered  
2 stations to assist in determining water availability in Hawaii  
3 in light of climate change and future changes in precipitation  
4 patterns.

5 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to improve  
6 the State's understanding of the complex hydrologic systems in  
7 Hawaii and provide additional resources for the Hawai'i mesonet.

8 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$475,000 or so much  
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to improve  
11 the State's understanding of the complex hydrologic systems in  
12 Hawaii; provided that the funds shall be appropriated as  
13 follows:

- 14 (1) \$125,000 for stream gauges;
- 15 (2) \$250,000 for operating and maintaining the Hawai'i  
16 mesonet; and
- 17 (3) \$100,000 for monitoring wells.

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

20 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
21 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,



1 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the  
2 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state  
3 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be  
4 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the  
5 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund  
6 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further  
7 exceeded by \$475,000 or per cent. The combined total  
8 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these  
9 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling  
10 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by  
11 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the  
12 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- 13 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to  
14 serve the public interest; and
- 15 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs  
16 addressed by this Act.



1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

2

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. A.', is written over a horizontal line.

# S.B. NO. 2914

**Report Title:**

Commission on Water Resource Management; Hawaii Mesonet;  
Hydrologic Data; Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to improve the State's water resource management and hydrologic data collection.

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

