
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INFRASTRUCTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that dams and reservoirs
2 are a critical part of Hawaii's infrastructure, providing
3 numerous benefits that the State's communities depend upon. In
4 addition to storing and delivering a reliable source of water
5 for agriculture during dry periods, assisting with flood control
6 during large storms, and helping mitigate erosion and reduce
7 sediment runoff to near shore ocean reefs, dams and reservoirs
8 also play an important role in providing drinking water for
9 Hawaii residents.

10 The legislature further finds that the continued
11 availability and operation of dams and reservoirs is extremely
12 important in sustaining the State's water resources and
13 enhancing public safety. By capturing storm water that would
14 otherwise rush to the ocean, reservoirs help recharge the
15 State's groundwater aquifers, which are a primary source for
16 much of Hawaii's drinking water. Providing renewable energy



1 through the use of hydropower is also another significant
2 community benefit derived from dams and reservoirs.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a dam and reservoir
4 working group to ensure and enhance the continued availability
5 and operation of dams and reservoirs in the State.

6 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a dam and reservoir
7 working group, to be placed within the department of land and
8 natural resources for administrative purposes only.

9 (b) Without regard to section 26-34, Hawaii Revised
10 Statutes, the dam and reservoir working group shall consist of
11 the following members:

12 (1) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
13 resources or the chairperson's designee, who shall
14 serve as the co-chairperson of the working group;

15 (2) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or the
16 chairperson's designee, who shall serve as the co-
17 chairperson of the working group;

18 (3) The deputy director for water resource management of
19 the department of land and natural resources or the
20 deputy director's designee;



- 1 (4) Two persons appointed by the governor, one of whom
- 2 shall represent the counties;
- 3 (5) One representative from the Hawaii Cattlemen's
- 4 Council, who shall be invited by the co-chairpersons;
- 5 (6) One representative from the Land Use Research
- 6 Foundation, who shall be invited by the co-
- 7 chairpersons;
- 8 (7) One representative from the Hawaii Farm Bureau, who
- 9 shall be invited by the co-chairpersons; and
- 10 (8) Three owners of dams and reservoirs regulated by the
- 11 department of land and natural resources, to be
- 12 selected and invited by the co-chairpersons.

13 Any vacancies in the working group shall be filled in the
14 manner provided for in the initial appointments.

- 15 (c) The dam and reservoir working group shall:
- 16 (1) Review applicable state laws, administrative rules,
- 17 and operational policies and recommend amendments,
- 18 modifications, or actions to be taken to ensure and
- 19 enhance the continued availability and operation of
- 20 dams and reservoirs in the State; and



1 (2) Examine the role dams and reservoirs can play in
2 drought mitigation and the maintenance of a dependable
3 water supply.

4 (d) The dam and reservoir working group shall submit a
5 report of its findings and recommendations, including any
6 proposed legislation, amendments to rules, policy modifications,
7 or other actions, to the legislature no later than twenty days
8 prior to the convening of the regular session of 2024.

9 (e) The members of the working group shall serve without
10 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
11 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

12 (f) The dam and reservoir working group shall cease to
13 exist on June 30, 2024.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 to
17 support the work of the dam and reservoir working group.

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

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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H.B. NO. 605

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 20 2023



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Report Title:

Dam and Reservoir Working Group; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a dam and reservoir working group to ensure and enhance the continued availability and operation of dams and reservoirs in the State and consider their role in drought mitigation and the maintenance of a dependable water supply. Appropriates funds.

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

