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## 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 that establishing a  
2 permanent educational support associate position placed within  
3 the university of Hawai'i college of tropical agriculture and  
4 human resources (CTAHR) is needed to successfully implement the  
5 following goals of the college's cooperative extension program:

- 6           (1) Providing non-formal science-based education;  
7           (2) Acting as the outreach component of CTAHR; and  
8           (3) Extending practical applications of science to support  
9           local food systems, healthy living, youth development,  
10           and the stewardship of natural resources for future  
11           generations.

12           The legislature further finds that CTAHR's Kona cooperative  
13 extension, which houses the Kona research station, provides  
14 crucial support for local coffee farmers statewide, who  
15 currently face dire threats to their crops from the recently  
16 discovered coffee berry borer and from coffee leaf rust. With a  
17 utilized production value of approximately \$48.2 million in the



1 2023 to 2024 season, the coffee industry represents the State's  
2 most valuable agricultural commodity according to the United  
3 States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Despite this, the  
4 coffee industry is currently served statewide by just one CTAHR  
5 extension agent.

6 The legislature further finds that CTAHR's sole extension  
7 agent is currently supported by just one educational support  
8 associate position, which has historically been one hundred per  
9 cent grant funded. Due to varying grant provisions, the  
10 position is limited to work only within the scope of funded  
11 projects and is unable to address the needs and challenges of  
12 other industries supported by CTAHR's cooperative extension  
13 program. Additionally, upwards of thirty to forty-seven per  
14 cent of current grant funding is dedicated to salary and fringe  
15 benefits for project support staff, which reduces funding for  
16 educational events, applied research, travel for statewide  
17 outreach, equipment, and materials and supplies that could  
18 directly benefit local farmers and producers.

19 The legislature further finds that establishing a permanent  
20 educational support associate position will provide much needed  
21 support to extension faculty; enable the prioritization of



1 research and community outreach projects throughout the State;  
2 and support the Kona research station, which, among other  
3 projects, encompasses eighteen acres of projects related to  
4 coffee, including coffee leaf rust and coffee berry borer  
5 mitigation.

6       Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish and  
7 fund a permanent educational support associate position, within  
8 the university of Hawai'i college of tropical agriculture and  
9 human resources' Kona cooperative extension and applied research  
10 program, to provide administrative, professional, and technical  
11 support to the college's cooperative extension program and Kona  
12 research station.

13       SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$76,570 or so much  
15 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the  
16 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
17 2026-2027 for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0  
18 FTE) permanent educational support associate position within the  
19 university of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human  
20 resources' Kona cooperative extension to support the coffee and



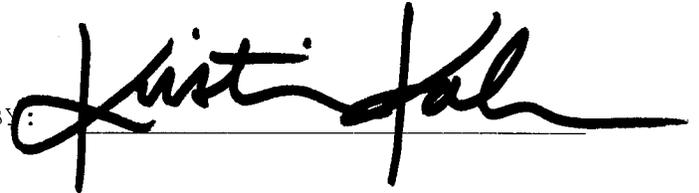
1 orchard crops extension and applied research program and the  
2 Kona research station in the county of Hawaii.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the university  
4 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 17 2025



# H.B. NO. 500

**Report Title:**

UH; CTAHR; Position; Establishment; Kona Cooperative Extension;  
Appropriations

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to establish a permanent Educational Support Associate position within the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' Kona Cooperative Extension.

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

