
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that despite Hawaii's
2 increasing risk of experiencing extreme weather events,
3 information consolidation and sharing is lacking as it relates
4 to locations where the public can shelter at a moment's notice.
5 In addition, few public buildings meet minimum requirements for
6 hurricane sheltering while demand for public evacuation shelter
7 space is likely to exceed available inventory.

8 The legislature finds it is critical to take a more focused
9 approach towards shelter retrofitting and strengthen
10 communication of available shelters amongst government entities
11 and the general public.

12 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

13 (1) Require the Hawaii emergency management agency to
14 inventory all designated emergency shelters statewide
15 and their ability to withstand a category one
16 hurricane or higher;



1 (2) Collaborate with the counties to publish a publicly
2 available list of shelters and their respective
3 hurricane rating; and

4 (3) Provide funding for the hurricane shelter retrofit
5 program and establish a director position to manage
6 its activities.

7 SECTION 2. Section 127A-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended to read as follows:

9 "**§127A-3 Hawaii emergency management agency.** (a) There
10 is established within the department of defense the Hawaii
11 emergency management agency. The adjutant general shall serve
12 as the director of Hawaii emergency management and, subject to
13 the direction and control of the governor, shall oversee the
14 agency.

15 (b) There shall be an administrator of emergency
16 management who shall be appointed, and may be removed, by the
17 director, and who shall have at least three years of experience
18 leading emergency management efforts at the local, state, or
19 federal level. The administrator of emergency management shall
20 be the civilian head of and responsible for the day-to-day
21 operations of the agency. The administrator of emergency



1 management shall report to the director. The administrator of
2 emergency management shall, in the absence of the director, have
3 all the duties and responsibilities of the director, and shall
4 report directly to the governor. The administrator of emergency
5 management shall not be subject to chapter 76.

6 (c) The administrator may, from funds allotted therefor,
7 employ technical, clerical, administrative, and other personnel
8 and make such expenditures as may be necessary.

9 (d) The administrator shall coordinate the activities of
10 the agency with all county emergency management agencies, other
11 state agencies, other states, or federal agencies involved in
12 emergency management activities, and all organizations for
13 emergency management within the State, whether public or
14 private, and shall maintain liaison and cooperate with all
15 county emergency management agencies, other state agencies,
16 other states, or federal agencies involved in emergency
17 management activities as provided in this chapter.

18 (e) The agency shall perform emergency management
19 functions within the territorial limits of the State. In
20 performing its duties, the agency shall:



- 1 (1) Prepare a state comprehensive emergency management
2 plan, which shall be integrated into and coordinated
3 with the emergency management plans of the federal
4 government. The plan shall be integrated by a
5 continuous, integrated comprehensive emergency
6 management program. The plan shall contain provisions
7 to ensure that the State prepares for, mitigates
8 against, responds to, and recovers from emergencies
9 and minor, major, and catastrophic disasters. In
10 preparing and maintaining the plan, the agency shall
11 work closely with agencies and organizations with
12 emergency management responsibilities;
- 13 (2) Assign lead and support responsibilities to state
14 agencies and personnel for emergency management
15 functions and other support activities;
- 16 (3) Adopt standards and requirements for county emergency
17 management plans. The standards and requirements
18 shall ensure that county plans are coordinated and
19 consistent with the state comprehensive emergency
20 management plan;



- 1 (4) Make recommendations to the legislature, building code
2 organizations, and counties for zoning, building, and
3 other land use controls; and other preparedness,
4 prevention, and mitigation measures designed to
5 eliminate emergencies or reduce their impact;
- 6 (5) Anticipate trends and promote innovations that will
7 enhance the emergency management system;
- 8 (6) Institute statewide public awareness programs. This
9 shall include intensive public educational campaigns
10 on emergency preparedness issues, including but not
11 limited to the personal responsibility of individual
12 citizens to be self-sufficient for up to fourteen days
13 following a natural or human-caused disaster;
- 14 (7) Coordinate federal, state, and local emergency
15 management activities and take all other steps,
16 including the partial or full mobilization of
17 emergency management forces and organizations in
18 advance of an actual emergency, to ensure the
19 availability of adequately trained and equipped forces
20 of emergency management personnel before, during, and
21 after emergencies and disasters;



- 1 (8) Implement training programs to improve the ability of
2 state and local emergency management personnel to
3 prepare and implement emergency management plans and
4 programs. This shall include a continuous training
5 program for agencies and individuals that will be
6 called on to perform key roles in state and local
7 post-disaster response and recovery efforts and for
8 local government personnel on federal and state post-
9 disaster response and recovery strategies and
10 procedures;
- 11 (9) Adopt standards and requirements for state agency
12 emergency operating procedures and periodically review
13 emergency operating procedures of state agencies and
14 recommend revisions as needed to ensure consistency
15 with the state comprehensive emergency management plan
16 and program; and
- 17 (10) Coordinate, in advance whenever possible, such
18 executive orders, proclamations, and rules for
19 issuance by the governor as are necessary or
20 appropriate for coping with emergencies and disasters.



1 (f) The agency shall inventory all designated emergency
2 shelters statewide and their ability to withstand a category one
3 hurricane or higher."

4 SECTION 4. Section 127A-19, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

6 "(f) For purposes of this section, "shelter" includes any
7 structure, excavation, or other facility or item used or useful
8 for the protection of persons[~~-~~] and any public building
9 constructed after January 2026 that meets the requirements of
10 section 107-27(e)."

11 SECTION 3. The Hawaii emergency management agency shall
12 collaborate with the respective counties to publish a publicly
13 available list of shelters and their respective hurricane rating
14 by category no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
15 the regular session of 2026.

16 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
19 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
20 2026-2027 for a hurricane shelter retrofit program; provided
21 that \$ of the appropriation may be used to fund one



1 full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position in the Hawaii emergency
2 management agency for a hurricane shelter retrofit program
3 director.

4 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
5 emergency management agency for the purposes of this Act.

6 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
7 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

9

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 21 2025



H.B. NO. 883

Report Title:

HIEMA; Emergency Management; Preparedness; Inventory;
Appropriation; Retrofitting

Description:

Requires the Hawaii emergency management agency to inventory all designated emergency shelters and their ability to withstand a category one hurricane or higher. Requires Hawaii emergency management agency to publish a publicly available list of shelters and their respective hurricane ratings. Appropriates funds for a hurricane shelter retrofit program and director.

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

