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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. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately  
3 designated and to read as follows:

4           "§141-    Healthy soils program; established. (a) The  
5 department of agriculture shall establish a healthy soils  
6 program. The department of agriculture may consult with or  
7 contract a third party for any needed expertise to perform its  
8 duties pursuant to this section. The healthy soils program  
9 shall:

10           (1) Create a statewide soil health assessment with a list  
11           of practices specific to the State that are most  
12           effective in improving soil health and building soil  
13           carbon stocks;

14           (2) Provide farmers with education and technical  
15           assistance to implement farm management practices that  
16           contribute to healthy soils;



1       (3) Establish standards that apply to the healthy soils  
2       program and are based on the findings of the  
3       greenhouse gas sequestration task force established  
4       pursuant to section 225P-4 relating to minimum levels  
5       of soil carbon and water content and required soil  
6       health practices; and

7       (4) Subject to available funding, issue awards and other  
8       financial incentives to implement farm management  
9       practices that contribute to healthy soils.

10       (b) The long-term goals of the healthy soils program shall  
11 be to establish:

12       (1) Deadlines by which all awards issued by the department  
13       of agriculture shall meet the standards established  
14       pursuant to subsection (a) (3);

15       (2) Deadlines by which a plan for all state lands leased  
16       for agricultural use shall be required; and

17       (3) Programs incentivizing small farmers, ranchers, and  
18       landowners to take carbon negative actions on their  
19       respective lands.

20       (c) The department of agriculture shall submit a report  
21 detailing the status and progress of the healthy soils program



1 and its recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to  
2 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening  
3 of each regular session."

4 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the  
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
8 2026-2027 for the establishment of the healthy soils program and  
9 to issue awards and other financial incentives pursuant to the  
10 program.

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

13 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 21 2025



# H.B. NO. 968

**Report Title:**

DOA; Healthy Soils Program; Carbon Sequestration; Reports; Appropriations

**Description:**

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program. Requires an annual report to the Legislature. 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.*

