
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 since January 2021,
2 only one passenger airline, Mokulele Airlines, has provided
3 service to the general public out of Molokai airport. Molokai
4 is a small, rural island, and its residents rely on air service
5 for essential travel, including work, medical appointments, and
6 family visits. Any disruption of service by Mokulele Airlines
7 leaves residents stranded without any other air service for
8 essential travel.

9 The legislature further finds that there has been urgent
10 and growing concern regarding ongoing issues with Mokulele
11 Airlines, including frequent delays and cancellations, which are
12 forcing residents to resort to unsafe, makeshift transportation
13 options. In one recent example, Mokulele Airlines grounded its
14 fleet and operations on Molokai on January 15, 2025. As a
15 result, one resident shared how she and others resorted to
16 renting a boat at 4:00 a.m. to return home and transport
17 medications to Molokai. The same boat later transported another



1 resident with a punctured lung on a grueling three-hour trip to
2 Honolulu for emergency care. Other residents resorted to
3 renting boats to reach Maui, driving from Lahaina to Kahului,
4 and paying additional money for Hawaiian Airlines flights to
5 Honolulu, and repeated the process in reverse to return. School
6 sports teams also endured three-hour boat rides to participate
7 in tournaments on Oahu. These examples highlight the severity
8 and unacceptability of the situation.

9 The legislature believes that Mokulele Airlines'
10 unreliability and the lack of alternative air carrier options
11 put lives and livelihoods at risk. Accordingly, the purpose of
12 this Act is to require the department of transportation to plan
13 and design an expansion of the runway at Molokai airport to
14 accommodate larger aircraft.

15 SECTION 2. The department of transportation shall develop
16 a plan and design to expand the runway at Molokai airport to
17 accommodate the landing of larger aircraft. As part of the
18 plan, the department shall identify and analyze the most
19 efficient construction technologies available for expedient
20 runway expansion.



1 The department of transportation shall submit the plan and
2 a report of its findings and recommendations, including any
3 proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty
4 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026.

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for
8 the planning and design of the expansion of the Molokai airport
9 runway, pursuant to this Act.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
11 transportation for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2077.



Report Title:

DOT; Molokai Airport Runway Expansion; Report to Legislature;
Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Department of Transportation to plan and design an expansion of the runway at Molokai Airport to accommodate larger aircraft. Requires the Department of Transportation to submit a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2077. (SD1)

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