
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by
3 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read
4 as follows:

5 "CHAPTER

6 STATE ARCHITECT

7 § -1 Definitions. As used in this chapter:

8 "State agency" means any office, department, board,
9 commission, bureau, division, public corporation, agency, or
10 instrumentality of the State.

11 "State lands" means all land owned by the State through any
12 state agency.

13 § -2 State architect; office established; appointment,
14 tenure, removal; requirements; salary. (a) There is
15 established within the department of accounting and general
16 services the office of the state architect, which shall be
17 headed by a full-time state architect to organize, manage, and



1 oversee the design review of all state construction projects and
2 issue design approvals before any state construction project
3 commences. The state architect shall be appointed by the
4 governor as provided in section 26-34. The state architect
5 shall report to the comptroller.

6 (b) No person shall be eligible for the position of state
7 architect who has not held, for at least five years immediately
8 preceding the date of appointment, a valid license under chapter
9 464.

10 (c) The state architect shall not engage in the private
11 practice of professional architecture or act in a managing
12 capacity in any private business or enterprise.

13 (d) The salary of the state architect shall be established
14 by the governor.

15 § -3 **Duties and responsibilities.** The state architect
16 shall have general charge and oversight of the design review of
17 all state construction projects. The state architect shall:

- 18 (1) Review all plans, drawings, specifications, and any
19 other documents necessary for state construction
20 projects;



(2) Ensure conformance with all building codes or county, national, or international prescriptive construction standards, including construction, electrical, energy conservation, plumbing, and sidewalk standards, as applicable;

(3) Issue design approvals for all state construction projects before construction commences; and

(4) Assign an inspector to each state construction project for the purpose of observing the work of construction.

§ -4 Assistance and staff. The state architect may employ or contract with qualified architects and engineers as necessary, without regard to chapter 76, to carry out the duties and responsibilities established by this chapter.

§ -5 Costs for services; fees. The cost of all design review services performed by the office of the state architect for a state agency shall be determined by the state architect. In addition, the state architect may set, charge, and collect reasonable fees, without regard to chapter 91, in an amount sufficient to defray the cost of processing design approvals.

All payments shall be deposited with the state architect to the



1 credit of the design review special fund established under
2 section -6.

3 **§ -6 Design review special fund.** (a) There is
4 established in the treasury of the State the design review
5 special fund to be administered and expended by the state
6 architect for the purposes of this chapter.

7 (b) The following shall be deposited into the design
8 review special fund:

9 (1) Payments for services provided to state agencies
10 pursuant to this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to
11 this chapter;

12 (2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the special
13 fund; and

14 (3) Interest earned or accrued on moneys in the special
15 fund.

16 (c) Moneys on balance in the design review special fund at
17 the close of each fiscal year shall remain in the special fund
18 and shall not lapse to the credit of the general fund.

19 **§ -7 Administrative rules.** No later than December 31,
20 2026, the comptroller, in consultation with the state architect,



1 shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 to effectuate the
2 purposes of this chapter.

3 **§ -8 Annual report.** The state architect shall prepare
4 and submit an annual report to the governor and legislature no
5 later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular
6 session. The report shall include:

7 (1) A summary describing the activities of the office of
8 the state architect, including but not limited to a
9 list and description of each state construction
10 project that received a design approval during the
11 preceding fiscal year; and

12 (2) A financial report on the status of the design review
13 special fund."

14 SECTION 2. Section 26-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

16 "(b) The department shall:

17 (1) Preaudit and conduct after-the-fact audits of the
18 financial accounts of all state departments to
19 determine the legality of expenditures and the
20 accuracy of accounts;



- 1 (2) Report to the governor and to each regular session of
- 2 the legislature as to the finances of each department
- 3 of the State;
- 4 (3) Administer the state risk management program;
- 5 (4) Establish and manage motor pools;
- 6 (5) Manage the preservation and disposal of all records of
- 7 the State;
- 8 (6) Undertake the program of centralized engineering and
- 9 office leasing services, including operation and
- 10 maintenance and lease buyback processing pursuant to
- 11 subsection (d) of public buildings, for departments of
- 12 the State;
- 13 (7) Undertake the functions of the state surveyor;
- 14 (8) Establish accounting and internal control systems;
- 15 (9) Have the discretion to employ persons within the
- 16 comptroller's office who shall be exempt from chapters
- 17 76 and 89 in support of communications, change
- 18 management, and business process improvement programs
- 19 as part of the State's information technology
- 20 modernization efforts; provided that the persons shall
- 21 be members of the state employees' retirement system



1 and shall be eligible to receive the benefits of any
2 state employee benefit program generally applicable to
3 officers and employees of the State;

4 (10) Provide centralized computer information management
5 and processing services through the chief information
6 officer;

7 (11) Establish a program to provide a means for public
8 access to public information and develop an
9 information network for state government;

10 (12) Assume administrative responsibility for the office of
11 information practices; ~~and~~

12 (13) Approve state fleet acquisitions; provided that:

13 (A) Beginning January 1, 2022, all new light-duty
14 motor vehicles that are passenger cars purchased
15 for the State's fleet shall be zero-emission
16 vehicles;

17 (B) Beginning as soon as practicable but no later
18 than January 1, 2030, all new light-duty motor
19 vehicles that are multipurpose passenger vehicles
20 and trucks for the State's fleet shall be zero-
21 emission vehicles; and



(C) The comptroller may authorize an exemption for new fleet vehicle purchases if zero-emission vehicles are demonstrated to be cost-prohibitive on a lifecycle basis or unsuitable for the vehicles' planned purpose, or if funds are unavailable[-]; and

(14) Provide exclusive centralized design review services for state construction projects and issue design approvals through the state architect.

For the purposes of this subsection:

"Light-duty motor vehicle" has the same meaning as defined in title 10 Code of Federal Regulations part 490.

"Multipurpose passenger vehicle" has the same meaning as defined in title 49 Code of Federal Regulations section 571.3.

"Passenger car" has the same meaning as defined in title 49 Code of Federal Regulations section 571.3.

"Truck" has the same meaning as defined in title 49 Code of Federal Regulations section 571.3.

"Zero-emission vehicle" has the same meaning as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations section 88.1."

PART II



SECTION 3. Chapter 46, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§46- County building permit, inspection, and certificate of occupancy requirements; exemption; state construction projects. (a) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, state construction projects shall be exempt from county building permit, inspection, and certificate of occupancy requirements when compliant with applicable building codes or county, national, or international prescriptive construction standards, including construction, electrical, energy conservation, plumbing, and sidewalk standards, as applicable, as determined by the State architect pursuant to chapter .

(b) Nothing in this section shall relieve any state construction project from the laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations of the State and county or any departments or boards thereof with respect to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the state construction project, compliance with master plans or zoning laws or regulations, compliance with building and health codes and other laws, ordinances, or rules



1 and regulations of similar nature applicable to the state
2 construction project.

3 (c) As used in this section:

4 "State agency" means any office, department, board,
5 commission, bureau, division, public corporation, agency, or
6 instrumentality of the State.

7 "State construction project" means any undertaking of work
8 or improvement of state lands or any interest therein,
9 developed, acquired, constructed, reconstructed, rehabilitated,
10 improved, altered, or repaired by a state agency.

11 "State lands" means all land owned by the State through any
12 state agency."

13 PART III

14 SECTION 4. 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 2025-2026 and
17 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
18 year 2026-2027 to be deposited into the design review special
19 fund.

20 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the design review
21 special fund the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be



1 necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much
2 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
3 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) state
4 architect position pursuant to this Act and full-time
5 equivalent (FTE) positions within the office of the state
6 architect, for the administration and implementation of this
7 Act, and other associated administrative costs.

8 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
9 of accounting and general services for the purposes of this Act.

10 SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
11 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

13 INTRODUCED BY: 

JAN 21 2025



H.B. NO. 971

Report Title:

Governor; DAGS; Office of the State Architect; State Architect; State Construction Projects; Design Approvals; Design Review Special Fund; County Building Permit, Inspection, and Certificate of Occupancy Requirements; Exemptions; Report; Appropriations

Description:

Establishes the Office of the State Architect within the Department of Accounting and General Services to be headed by the State Architect. Authorizes the State Architect to organize, manage, and oversee the design review of all state construction projects and issue design approvals. Establishes the Design Review Special Fund. Requires the State Architect to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature. Authorizes DAGS to provide centralized design review services for state construction projects and issue design approvals through the State Architect. Exempts state construction projects from county building permit, inspection, and certificate of occupancy requirements, subject to certain conditions. Makes appropriations.

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