THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 3332 S.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE-FUNDED TRAVEL.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State is entering a period of fiscal uncertainty marked by slowing revenue growth, reductions in federal support, rising costs of government operations, and increasing demands on limited public resources. Given these circumstances, prudent stewardship of taxpayer funds requires discipline, restraint, and careful prioritization of expenditures.

The legislature further finds that state-funded travel for conferences, forums, and professional development, while often beneficial, must be closely scrutinized to ensure that it is essential, cost-effective, and aligned with the State's highest priorities.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to emphasize efficiency, accountability, and resourcefulness in the use of public funds during austere fiscal times by imposing a two-year moratorium on discretionary state-funded travel, with certain narrowly tailored exceptions.

SECTION 2. State-funded travel moratorium established. (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, no state agency shall expend state funds for out-of-state or inter-island travel for conferences, conventions, forums, workshops, or similar discretionary activities, except as provided in subsection (b).

(b) The state-funded travel moratorium shall not apply to:

(1) Mandatory work-related travel, including but not limited to travel for:

(A) Court-ordered appearances;

(B) Federal compliance, regulatory requirements, or certification;

(C) Collective bargaining obligations;

(D) Emergency response, public safety, or disaster-related activities; and

(E) Regularly scheduled administrative meetings; or

(2) Travel required for professional development, training, conferences, forums, or employee recruitment; provided that:

(A) Not more than three trips pursuant to this paragraph shall be approved per employee per fiscal year;

(B) Each trip approved pursuant to this paragraph shall be directly related to a high-priority state function, including but not limited to:

(i) Public safety;

(ii) Education and workforce development;

(iii) Health care and medicaid administration;

(iv) Critical infrastructure; and

(v) Fiscal management, auditing, or compliance; and

(C) The appropriate state agency demonstrates that the training, conference, forum, or employee recruitment:

(i) Cannot be effectively conducted remotely; and

(ii) Provides a clear and measurable benefit to the State.

(c) All travel permitted pursuant to this section shall require written approval from the appropriate head of the state agency or the head's designee and shall certify that:

(1) The travel is essential to the state agency's mission;

(2) Costs have been minimized, including through the purchase of economy airfare and reasonable lodging; and

(3) Remote participation alternatives were evaluated and found to be insufficient.

(d) Each state agency shall maintain records of all travel approved pursuant to this Act and make the records available upon request to the legislature or auditor.

(e) The department of accounting and general services may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or issue guidance to implement this Act, including rules establishing standardized reporting formats and approval documentation.

(f) Each state agency shall submit an annual report of its state-funded travel to the senate standing committee on ways and means and house standing committee on finance no later than thirty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2027 and 2028. Each report submitted shall include:

(1) The number of trips approved pursuant to this Act;

(2) The purpose and location of each trip;

(3) The total cost of each trip, including airfare, lodging, registration, and per diem;

(4) Identification of whether the travel was approved pursuant to subsection (b)(1) or (2);

(5) A brief explanation of how each trip advanced a high-priority state function;

(6) Certification that remote participation alternatives were evaluated and determined to be insufficient; and

(7) Identification of all travelers by position number.

(g) As used in this Act, "state agency" means all executive departments, boards, commissions, bureaus, offices, agencies, and all independent commissions and other establishments of the state government, including the university of Hawaii, and all quasi-public institutions which are supported in whole or in part by, or which handle, state or public funds; provided that "state agency" does not include:

(1) The judiciary and its staff;

(2) The legislature, its committees, and its staff;

(3) The governor and the governor's staff; or

(4) The lieutenant governor and the lieutenant governor's staff.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2525, and shall be repealed on June 30, 2028.

S.B. NO. 3332 S.D. 1

Report Title:
DAGS; State Agencies; State-Funded Travel Moratorium; Exceptions; Rules; Reports

Description:
Establishes a two-year state-funded travel moratorium for certain state agencies, with certain exceptions. Permits the Department of Accounting and General Services to adopt rules. Requires reports to the Legislature. Effective 1/1/2525. Sunsets 6/30/2028. (SD1)

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