

JAN 28 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF THE MONEYS
APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
PURSUANT TO ACT 279, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2022.

1 WHEREAS, Act 279, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022 ("Act 279"),
2 as amended by Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2024, appropriated
3 \$600,000,000 to eliminate the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands
4 ("DHHL" or "the Department") waitlist by providing land and
5 housing to native Hawaiians; and

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7 WHEREAS, DHHL was authorized to use the appropriated moneys
8 to develop residential lots and housing units, purchase land,
9 provide financial assistance to the waitlisted applicants, and
10 other necessary services; and

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12 WHEREAS, Act 279 mandates that DHHL establish a strategic
13 plan that aligns with the beneficiaries' preferences, as
14 identified in the 2020 Beneficiaries Study Applicant Report,
15 with seventy-six percent of beneficiaries preferring a single-
16 family home or a vacant lot for home construction, and sixteen
17 percent preferring rental or rent-to-own options for single-
18 family homes, duplexes, apartments, or townhouses; and

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20 WHEREAS, Act 279 further mandates that DHHL submit an
21 annual report on the first day of each regular session that
22 includes an accounting of the expenditures for the purposes of
23 the act in the previous fiscal year, and the number of
24 applicants on the waiting list that were assisted; and

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26 WHEREAS, as of 2022, the DHHL waitlist included over 28,700
27 native Hawaiian beneficiaries, a number that has grown despite
28 the intent of Act 279; and

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30 WHEREAS, the entire appropriation of \$600,000,000 was
31 reportedly attached to projects by early 2025, targeting over
32 7,500 homes and lots over the next five years; and

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1 WHEREAS, a news release dated April 25, 2025 reported that
2 DHHL planned to issue more than 2,600 leases by the end of 2025;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, on January 17, 2024, DHHL submitted its required
5 Annual Activity Report which stated it had encumbered and
6 expended approximately \$193.7 million, with a projected total of
7 1,489 applicants on the waiting list having been assisted in
8 fiscal year 2023; and

9 WHEREAS, on January 15, 2025, DHHL submitted its required
10 Annual Activity Report which stated that it had encumbered and
11 expended approximately \$363.4 million, with a projected total of
12 185 applicants on the waiting list having been assisted in
13 fiscal year 2024; and

14 WHEREAS, as of January 21, 2026, the first day of regular
15 session, DHHL's Annual Activity Report, as required by Act 279,
16 was not yet publicly available; now, therefore,

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
18 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
19 that the Auditor is requested to conduct an audit on the
20 Department of the Hawaiian Home Lands as related to the moneys
21 allocated to it pursuant to Act 279 and the 2020 Beneficiaries
22 Study Applicant Report; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
24 Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor and the Chairperson of
25 the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

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OFFERED BY:

