

JAN 21 2026

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BEEKEEPING.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that bees are beneficial  
2 to local pollination processes and native ecosystems and play a  
3 critically important role in agriculture as they pollinate food  
4 crops and provide other useful products, including honey and  
5 wax. The State's tropical weather, climate, and plant diversity  
6 present ideal conditions for the year-round breeding of queen  
7 bees, which may be exported to ensure a more genetically  
8 diverse, adaptive, and resilient global bee stock. Although the  
9 honeybee is not a species native to the State, it has played a  
10 significant role in the pollination of plants that support  
11 agriculture in the State.

12       The legislature further finds that the department of  
13 agriculture and biosecurity currently manages and monitors the  
14 beekeeping industry in the State. However, its ability to  
15 monitor, respond to, and prevent disease or pest outbreaks, as  
16 well as pursue and distribute financial resources available to



1 beekeepers, could be more efficiently achieved with more  
2 up-to-date data.

3 The legislature also finds that new beekeepers who do not  
4 have proper training or information on how to safely manage bees  
5 may cause harm to both the beekeeping industry or nearby  
6 properties, increasing the risk of personal liability.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

8 (1) Clarify the registration process for beekeepers with  
9 the department of agriculture and biosecurity;

10 (2) Require the department of agriculture and biosecurity  
11 to provide guidance and support to registered  
12 beekeepers to help beekeepers adhere to certain  
13 industry standards and best management practices in  
14 beekeeping; and

15 (3) Establish a limitation on liability for any registered  
16 beekeeper who follows industry standards and best  
17 practices.

18 SECTION 2. Section 142-100, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
19 amended to read as follows:

20 "[+]§142-100 **Beekeepers, registration; apiary program.**[+]"

21 (a) Beekeepers may register with the department of agriculture



1 and biosecurity, on forms prescribed and prepared by the  
2 department, which shall include the following information:

3 (1) The name, address, and contact information for the  
4 beekeeper; and

5 (2) Other information that may assist the department in  
6 compiling accurate information on Hawaii's beekeeping  
7 industry.

8 (b) The department of agriculture and biosecurity shall  
9 keep registration information confidential subject to the  
10 limitations on confidentiality imposed under chapter 92F;  
11 provided that the name and business address of each registrant  
12 shall be made publicly available by the department; ~~and~~  
13 provided further that the department may compile statistics  
14 based on the information~~[7]~~ pursuant to section 141-1.

15 (c) The registration shall be effective for a period of  
16 ~~[one-year]~~ five years, and shall be renewed at the end of the  
17 ~~[one-year]~~ five-year period.

18 (d) The department of agriculture and biosecurity shall  
19 advise and support the efforts of registered beekeepers to  
20 adhere to the following industry standards and best management  
21 practices:



1        (1) Keep colonies at least twenty-five feet from property  
2        lines; provided that a distance between ten and  
3        twenty-five feet shall be adequate if:

4        (A) Beekeepers ensure that colonies face the  
5        direction opposite the property line; or

6        (B) Beekeepers situate colonies behind a flyover  
7        barrier that directs bee flight paths away from  
8        the property line;

9        (2) Keep colonies in hives with removable frames that  
10       shall be kept in sound and usable condition;

11       (3) Maintain an adequate and accessible supply of fresh  
12       water on-site, including landing sites for the bees to  
13       drink from;

14       (4) Ensure that hives are protected from bright lights at  
15       night;

16       (5) Manage colonies in a controlled manner to prevent  
17       swarming;

18       (6) Adhere to storage and sanitation practices that  
19       prevent disease and theft; mitigate pests, including  
20       small hive beetles, wax moths, and varroa mites; and  
21       support the overall health of the hives;



1        (7) Thoroughly clean reused hive and beekeeping equipment  
2        of hive products, including old comb and honey;

3        (8) Grow flowers and plant species where practicable for  
4        all seasons that are suitable for regional climates to  
5        support bee activity year-round; and

6        (9) Requeen hives and colonies if the apiary begins to  
7        demonstrate more aggressive behavior.

8        [~~(d)~~] (e) The department of agriculture and biosecurity  
9 shall establish an apiary program, which may include the  
10 following positions, to carry out the purposes of this  
11 [+]section[+]:

- 12        (1) One apiary specialist;  
13        (2) One apiary planner; and  
14        (3) Two apiary technicians.

15        (f) A beekeeper that is actively registered with the  
16 department of agriculture and biosecurity pursuant to subsection  
17 (a), and in good faith adheres to the industry standards and  
18 best management practices established in subsection (d), shall  
19 not be liable for any injury resulting to any person arising  
20 from the beekeeper's apiary, except for damages that result from  
21 the beekeeper's gross negligence or wanton acts or omissions.



1        (g) For the purposes of this section:

2        "Apiary" means the assembly of one or more managed bee  
3 colonies and their hives kept at a single location.

4        "Bee" means all life stages of the common domesticated  
5 European honeybee. "Bee" does not include wasps, hornets,  
6 African subspecies, or Africanized hybrids.

7        "Colony" means an aggregate of bees consisting principally  
8 of workers, but ideally also consists of one queen, and includes  
9 drones, brood, combs, and honey.

10       "Disease" means any condition adversely affecting bees or  
11 their brood, including bacteria, viruses, invertebrate pests,  
12 and the presence of undesirable genetic characteristics.

13       "Flyover barrier" means a solid wall, fence, dense  
14 vegetation, or combination thereof that encourages bees to fly  
15 over rather than fly through.

16       "Hive" means a structure of housing for a colony."

17       SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                      or so  
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for  
20 the department of agriculture and biosecurity to register and  
21 provide support to beekeepers pursuant to this Act, including



1 the establishment of positions for the department's apiary  
2 program.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
4 agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
6 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
7 begun before its effective date.

8 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

11  
INTRODUCED BY: *Keith M. Rutherford*



# S.B. NO. 2160

**Report Title:**

DAB; Beekeepers; Registration; Industry Standards; Best Management Practices; Apiary Program; Limitation on Liability; Appropriation

**Description:**

Clarifies the registration process for beekeepers with the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. Requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to provide guidance and support to registered beekeepers to help beekeepers adhere to certain industry standards and best management practices. Establishes a limitation on liability for any registered beekeeper who follows industry standards and best practices. Appropriates funds.

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