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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CULTURE AND ARTS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the state foundation  
2 on culture and the arts was established to promote, perpetuate,  
3 and preserve culture and the arts in Hawaii.

4           The legislature further finds that numerous other  
5 jurisdictions have expanded efforts to improve and enhance  
6 communities by deepening the integration of culture, arts, and  
7 history into communities through innovative infrastructure  
8 projects, programming, and engagement, far beyond what has been  
9 done in Hawaii.

10          The legislature also finds that communities in Hawaii can  
11 similarly benefit by adopting innovative approaches to integrate  
12 culture, arts, and history into the planning, redevelopment,  
13 infrastructure, and fabric of communities, and that local  
14 residents are equally deserving of resulting improved public  
15 spaces, neighborhoods, and a better quality of life.

16          Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the  
17 office of community culture and innovation to seek out the best



1 examples of successful projects, programs, and ideas from other  
2 states and countries; assist state agencies with creative and  
3 innovative strategies to improve their projects and programs;  
4 and focus on prioritizing and implementing community  
5 improvements and innovative programs related to culture, arts,  
6 and history that build affordable, healthy, and vibrant  
7 communities.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and  
10 to read as follows:

11 **"PART . OFFICE OF COMMUNITY CULTURE AND INNOVATION**

12 **§201-A Definitions.** As used in this part:

13 "Executive director" means the executive director of the  
14 office of community culture and innovation, appointed pursuant  
15 to section 201-B(b).

16 "Office" means the office of community culture and  
17 innovation established pursuant to section 201-B.

18 **§201-B Office of community culture and innovation;**  
19 **established; executive director.** (a) There is established an  
20 office of community culture and innovation within the department



1 of business, economic development, and tourism for  
2 administrative purposes only.

3 (b) The office shall be headed by an executive director  
4 who shall be appointed by the governor without regard to  
5 chapter 76. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), the exemption  
6 from chapter 76 under this subsection shall not expire.

7 (c) The executive director may employ staff for the office  
8 without regard to chapters 76 and 89; provided that the staff  
9 shall be members of the employees' retirement system and shall  
10 be eligible to receive the benefits of any employee benefit  
11 program generally applicable to officers and employees of the  
12 State. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), the exemption from  
13 chapter 76 under this subsection shall not expire.

14 (d) Department heads may temporarily assign additional  
15 employees from existing positions within their departments to  
16 the office; provided that the employees shall represent their  
17 respective department's needs, assist other departments, or  
18 otherwise support the needs of the office during the course of  
19 their assignment with the office.



1 (e) The office may contract for the provision of programs  
2 and services to perform its functions and duties pursuant to  
3 section 201-C.

4 **§201-C Office of community culture and innovation;**  
5 **functions and duties.** The office shall:

6 (1) Execute projects and programs related to community  
7 improvement as directed by the governor and  
8 legislature;

9 (2) Support and assist other state departments and  
10 agencies with creative and innovative improvements to  
11 their projects, programs, and endeavors to add value  
12 to communities;

13 (3) Develop creative and innovative projects, programs,  
14 and endeavors and pilot new approaches to add value to  
15 communities, their culture, and quality of life;

16 (4) Identify creative and innovative best practices used  
17 by other jurisdictions, assess their value to the  
18 State, and innovate accordingly;

19 (5) Ensure communication with the foundation regarding the  
20 office's functions and duties for consistency and  
21 better planning for the State; and



1 (6) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 91 for the  
2 purposes of this part.

3 **§201-D Annual report.** The office shall submit an annual  
4 report summarizing its activities during the preceding year to  
5 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening  
6 of each regular session. The report shall include:

7 (1) Creative and innovative strategies proposed or  
8 employed by other jurisdictions that the office has  
9 identified that may have potential benefit for  
10 communities in the State;

11 (2) Funds received and expended for the activities of the  
12 office from federal, state, private, and philanthropic  
13 sources;

14 (3) The office's programs and activities throughout the  
15 year;

16 (4) Plans and direction for the coming year; and

17 (5) Any other findings and recommendations, including any  
18 proposed legislation.

19 **§201-E Community and cultural partnership program;**  
20 **established.** (a) The office shall establish a community and  
21 cultural partnership program focused on improving communities.



1 The program shall serve as a community resource to enhance  
2 historical culture, stimulate social and economic activity,  
3 create positive change in the community, and serve as a template  
4 for improvements in other communities, as may be appropriate.

5 (b) The office may contract with one or more entities to  
6 administer the community and cultural partnership program and  
7 complete the actions required by subsection (c).

8 (c) The program shall endeavor to:

- 9 (1) Identify and organize community stakeholders and other  
10 community-based organizations that may contribute to  
11 the community and cultural partnership program;
- 12 (2) Engage the community to develop improvements that  
13 exhibit the area's history from its origins to the  
14 present day;
- 15 (3) Assess the physical, social, and economic conditions  
16 of properties and infrastructure in the area;
- 17 (4) Coordinate with stakeholders to provide for  
18 preservation, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use diversity  
19 and assist with design and permitting information to  
20 help property owners, business owners, and developers  
21 who are considering property improvements to best



- 1 reflect the cultural narrative and historical context  
2 of the area;
- 3 (5) Organize culture and arts and improvement projects to  
4 improve and expand public spaces and enhance streets,  
5 infrastructure, facades, and vacant storefronts;
- 6 (6) Organize community culture and arts events, including  
7 the closures of streets for events and multi-use  
8 purposes that can enhance community life by providing  
9 safe and inclusive opportunities for recreation,  
10 active transportation, and cultural engagement;
- 11 (7) Help facilitate the establishment of a business  
12 improvement district, or similar organization, and  
13 related community services;
- 14 (8) Seek additional funding to improve the community and  
15 help enhance the area into a living cultural tourism  
16 zone; provided that for the purposes of this  
17 paragraph, the term "living cultural tourism zone"  
18 means a geographically defined area that actively  
19 preserves, showcases, and evolves the cultural,  
20 historical, and artistic identity of a community  
21 through ongoing cultural practices, local businesses,



1 public spaces, and programming, in a manner that is  
2 community-driven, supports economic vitality, and  
3 provides authentic, place-based experiences for  
4 residents and visitors;

5 (9) Draft a statewide strategic economic and physical  
6 revitalization design implementation plan with  
7 proposed projects, starting with the Honolulu  
8 Chinatown area;

9 (10) Work with appropriate agencies and stakeholders to  
10 better design and integrate active, safe, and  
11 protected multi-modal pedestrian, bicycle, and public  
12 transit through the area, including to any nearby  
13 transit hubs or rail stations; and

14 (11) Identify and develop other innovative projects,  
15 programming, or improvements to enhance the  
16 community."

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 establishment of the office of community culture and  
21 innovation, including for the following purposes:



- 1 (1) The establishment of one full-time equivalent
- 2 (1.0 FTE) executive director position;
- 3 (2) The establishment of one full-time equivalent
- 4 (1.0 FTE) specialist position; and
- 5 (3) Other expenses for the purposes of this Act.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
7 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of  
8 this Act.

9 SECTION 4. In codifying the new sections added by  
10 section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
11 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
12 the new sections in this Act.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Office of Community Culture and Innovation; DBEDT;  
Establishment; Positions; Reports; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Office of Community Culture and Innovation within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for administrative purposes only. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds for an Executive Director position and Specialist position within the Office of Community Culture and Innovation. Establishes the Community and Cultural Partnerships Program. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

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