

**ACT 135**

H.B. NO. 2862

A Bill for an Act Relating to Counties.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. Section 46-1.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

**“§46-1.5 General powers and limitation of the counties.** Subject to general law, each county shall have the following powers and shall be subject to the following liabilities and limitations:

- (1) Each county shall have the power to frame and adopt a charter for its own self-government, which shall establish the county executive, administrative, and legislative structure and organization, including, but not limited to, the method of appointment or election of officials, their duties, responsibilities, and compensation, and the terms of their office.
- (2) Each county shall have the power to provide for and regulate the marking and lighting of all buildings and other structures which may be obstructions or hazards to aerial navigation, so far as may be necessary or proper for the protection and safeguarding of life, health, and property.
- (3) Each county shall have the power to enforce all claims on behalf of the county and approve all lawful claims against the county, but shall be prohibited from entering into, granting, or making in any manner any contract, authorization, allowance payment, or liability contrary to the provisions of any county charter or general law.
- (4) Each county shall have the power to make contracts and to do all things necessary and proper to carry into execution all powers vested in the county or any county officer.
- (5) Each county shall have the power to maintain channels, whether natural or artificial, including their exits to the ocean, in suitable condition to carry off storm waters; and to remove from the channels, and from the shores and beaches, any debris which is likely to create an unsanitary condition or to otherwise become a public nuisance; provided that to the extent any of the foregoing work is a private responsibility the responsibility may be enforced by the county in lieu of the work being done at public expense. Counties shall also have the power to construct, acquire by gift, purchase, or by the exercise of eminent domain, reconstruct, improve, better, extend, and maintain projects or undertakings for the control of and protection against floods and flood waters, including the power to drain and rehabilitate lands already flooded, and to enact zoning ordinances providing that lands deemed subject to seasonable or periodic, or occasional flooding shall not be used for residence or other purposes in such a manner as to endanger the health or safety of the occupants thereof, as required by the Federal Flood Insurance Act of 1956 (chapter 1025, Public Law 1016).
- (6) Each county shall have the power to exercise the power of condemnation by eminent domain when it is in the public interest to do so.
- (7) Each county shall have the power to exercise such regulatory powers over business activity as are assigned to them by chapter 445, or other general law.
- (8) Each county shall have the power to fix the fees and charges for all official services not otherwise provided for.
- (9) Each county shall have the power to provide by ordinance for the improvement or maintenance assessments of districts within the county.
- (10) Except as otherwise provided, each county shall have the power to, in any manner, give or loan credit to, or in aid of, any person or

- corporation, and any indebtedness or liability incurred contrary to this paragraph shall be void.
- (11) Where not within the jurisdiction of the public utilities commission, each county shall have the power to regulate by ordinance the operation of motor vehicle common carriers transporting passengers within the county and adopt and amend such rules as the county deems necessary for the public convenience and necessity.
  - (12) Each county shall have the power to enact and enforce ordinances necessary to prevent or summarily remove nuisances, and compel the clearing of refuse and uncultivated undergrowth from unoccupied lots, and in these connections impose and enforce liens upon the property for the cost to the county of completing the necessary work where the owners fail after reasonable notice to comply with the ordinances.
  - (13) Each county shall have the power to enact ordinances deemed necessary to protect health, life, and property, and preserve the order and security of the county and its inhabitants on any subject or matter not inconsistent with, or tending to defeat, the intent of any state statute, provided also that the statute does not disclose or express an implied intent that the statute shall be exclusive or uniform throughout the State.
  - (14) Each county shall have the power to make and enforce within the limits of the county all necessary ordinances covering all local police matters and all matters of sanitation, inspection of buildings, condemnation of unsafe structures, plumbing, sewers, dairies, milk, fish, and morgues, and the collection and disposition of rubbish and garbage, to appoint county physicians and such sanitary and other inspectors as may be necessary to carry into effect ordinances made under this paragraph, who shall have the same power as given by law to agents of the department of health, subject only to such limitations as may be placed on them by the terms and conditions of their appointments, and to fix a penalty for the violations of any ordinance, which penalty may be a misdemeanor, petty misdemeanor, or violation as defined by general law.
  - (15) Each county shall have the power to provide public pounds, to regulate the impounding of stray animals and fowl, and their disposition, and to provide for the appointment, powers, duties, and fees of animal control officers.
  - (16) Each county shall have the power to purchase and otherwise acquire, lease, and hold real and personal property within the defined boundaries of the county and to dispose of the real and personal property as the interests of the inhabitants of the county may require, except that any property held for school purposes may not be disposed of without the consent of the superintendent of education, that no property bordering the ocean shall be sold or otherwise disposed of, and that all proceeds from the sale of park lands shall be expended only for the acquisition of property for park or recreational purposes.
  - (17) Each county shall have the power to provide by charter for the prosecution of all offenses and to prosecute for offenses against the laws of the State under the authority of the attorney general of the State.
  - (18) Each county shall have the power to make appropriations in amounts deemed appropriate from any moneys in the treasury, for

the purpose of community promotion and public celebrations, the entertainment of such distinguished persons as may from time to time visit the county, for the entertainment of other distinguished persons as well as public officials when deemed to be in the best interest of the community, and the rendering of civic tribute to individuals who, by virtue of their accomplishments and community service, merit civic commendations, recognition, or remembrance.

- (19) Each county shall have the power to:
  - (A) Construct, purchase, take on lease, lease, sublease, or in any other manner acquire, manage, maintain, or dispose of buildings for county purposes, sewers, sewer systems, pumping stations, water works, including reservoirs, wells, pipelines, and other conduits for distributing water to the public, lighting plants, and apparatus and appliances for lighting streets and public buildings and manage, regulate, and control the same;
  - (B) Regulate and control the location and quality of all appliances necessary to the furnishing of water, heat, light, power, telephonic, and telegraphic service to the county; and
  - (C) Acquire, regulate, and control any and all appliances for the sprinkling and cleaning of the streets and the public ways and for flushing the sewers; and
  - (D) Open, close, construct, or maintain county highways or charge toll on county highways; provided that all revenues received from a toll charge shall be used for the construction or maintenance of county highways.
- (20) Each county shall have the power to regulate the renting, subletting, and rental conditions of property for places of abode by ordinance.
- (21) Unless otherwise provided by law, each county shall have the power to establish by ordinance the order of succession of county officials in the event of a military civil disaster.
- (22) Each county shall have the power to sue and be sued in its corporate name.
- (23) Each county shall have the power to establish and maintain water works and sewer works; to collect rates for water supplied to consumers and for the use of sewers; to install water meters whenever deemed expedient; provided that owners of premises having vested water rights under existing laws appurtenant to the premises shall not be charged for the installation or use of the water meters on the premises; to take over from the State existing water works systems, including water rights, pipelines, and other appurtenances belonging thereto, and sewer systems, and to enlarge, develop, and improve the same.
- (24) Each county may impose civil fines, in addition to criminal penalties, for any [building or zoning code] violation of county ordinances or rules after reasonable notice and requests to correct or cease the violation have been made upon the violator. Any civil fine may be administratively imposed after an opportunity for a hearing under chapter 91. Such a preceding<sup>1</sup> shall not be a prerequisite for any civil fine or injunctive relief ordered by the circuit court."

SECTION 2. This Act shall be liberally construed in order to accomplish the purposes set forth in this Act. Any portion of this Act judicially declared to be invalid shall not affect the remaining portions.

**SECTION 3.** Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

**SECTION 4.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 15, 1990.)

**Note**

1. So in original.