

## ACT 179

H.B. NO. 1994

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation for Agriculture.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that agriculture is one of the State's growth industries and a vital component of the State's economic base. Agriculture provides an economically viable use of land, providing the open space cherished by Hawaii's citizenry and sought by visitors.

The legislature also finds that Hawaii's agriculture industry has become increasingly diverse with new economic opportunities as prime agricultural land has become available and quarantine restrictions have eased. In addition, sectors of agriculture—sugar, pineapple, macadamia, coffee, papaya, flowers, and exotic tropical fruits—are working together to accelerate the expansion of the agriculture industry. To maximize opportunities for maintaining and expanding the agriculture industry and to take best advantage of the thousands of acres of prime farmland, production-driven research is paramount.

The legislature recognizes that the commitment of the private sector is critical to the success of Hawaii's agriculture industry. The Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC), formerly known as the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, exemplifies such commitment. HARC serves as a model of private-public partnerships for agricultural research, and effectively partners with public institutions, such as the United States Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service and the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources, in facilitating agricultural technology transfer and maximizing the use of limited community resources. Most of HARC's funding comes from the private sector, which provides the accountability demanded by its stakeholders and increases returns on the State's funding, benefiting farm production and the local economy.

The legislature also finds that HARC has been directing its research primarily to crops that have received direct financial support, such as coffee, papaya, macadamia, sugarcane, and forestry. HARC seeks to help increase commercial production through crop improvement programs by focusing on improving cultural practices and producing superior planting material through plant breeding and selection. Agricultural research at HARC will continue to be a key resource in the State's efforts to strengthen and improve the agriculture industry, revitalize the economy,

and maintain and create employment opportunities for residents, especially in rural areas.

The purpose of this Act is to provide necessary funds to assist in maintaining current minimum levels of agricultural research and development at HARC.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$750,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2000-2001 for agricultural research and development to be performed by the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center; provided that no funds shall be released unless matched dollar-for-dollar by the private sector.

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

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2000.

(Approved June 7, 2000.)