

ACT 72

S.B. NO. 982

A Bill for an Act Making an Emergency Appropriation for the State Irrigation Program.

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

SECTION 1. This Act is recommended by the governor for immediate passage in accordance with section 9 of article VII of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

SECTION 2. Act 91, Session Laws of Hawaii 1999, as amended by Act 281, Session Laws of Hawaii 2000, appropriated a certain designated sum to the department of agriculture to provide funds for the expenditures of the state irrigation program as set forth in chapters 167 and 168, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2000 and ending June 30, 2001.

A critical funding emergency exists. For the past three years, the State's irrigation systems have been experiencing severe drought conditions, which have caused fund balances to decline over this period. Moreover, new irrigation systems have not been able to generate adequate water toll revenues due to unforeseeable delays, including new farmer startups and the installation of meters for water users. For example, the Lower Hamakua ditch will require a detailed inventory of water users before meters can be installed and water tolls can be charged. Due to the size of the ditch, 25 miles long, the inventory will take considerable time to complete and, until then, only sporadic water toll revenues will be generated.

Due to the foregoing problems and delays, any carryover balance from previous years has been depleted and the appropriated funding for fiscal year 2000-2001 will be insufficient until water toll revenues can recover.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate additional general funds in fiscal year 2000-2001 to ensure the uninterrupted operation and maintenance of the State's irrigation systems.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$200,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2000-2001 to be deposited into the irrigation system revolving fund for the operation and maintenance of the State's irrigation systems.

ACT 72

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

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

(Approved April 27, 2001.)