

**ACT 156**

S.B. NO. 2045

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation to the Hawaii Civil Air Patrol.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii civil air patrol needs state funding to allow it to continue the vital operations of search and rescue and medical emergency transport. The civil air patrol depends on state funding to defray its

operational expenses. Recent budget restrictions have adversely affected the civil air patrol in Hawaii.

The civil air patrol is an official auxiliary of the United States Air Force that provides, among other things, volunteer emergency services. The funding cuts have caused:

- (1) Termination of weekly tsunami watch patrols;
- (2) Impairment of notification to essential personnel of emergencies; and
- (3) Scaling back of the cadet program.

Since the early 1950s, the civil air patrol has provided tsunami warning services to the State. Once a tsunami alert has been issued by the National Weather Service, the civil air patrol mobilizes and gets its aircraft in the air, making repeated passes over beaches and coastal communities using sirens and loudspeakers to warn residents.

The civil air patrol flies more than eighty-five per cent of all federal inland search and rescue missions. Approximately one hundred people are saved every year by civil air patrol volunteers. For example, the civil air patrol was instrumental in locating a small plane that went down on Maui in July, 2002.

Even more vital is the role the civil air patrol plays in disaster relief. Volunteer civil air patrol members fly disaster relief officials to remote locations and support local, state, and national disaster relief organizations with experienced pilots and personnel. The civil air patrol transports time-sensitive medical materials, blood products, and body tissue.

Today, as a peacetime auxiliary of the United States Air Force, the Hawaii civil air patrol remains an active volunteer organization with about six hundred members, including two hundred cadets. The Hawaii wing has three primary missions: search and rescue, aerospace education, and the cadet program. It is also an active participant in counter-drug operations for the Drug Enforcement Administration, flying over one hundred seventy-nine missions last year.

The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation to the Hawaii civil air patrol to assist in defraying operational expenses.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2004-2005 to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Hawaii department of defense, for operational expenses of the Hawaii civil air patrol.

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

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2004.

(Approved June 30, 2004.)