

ACT 238

H.B. NO. 400

A Bill for an Act Relating to Agriculture.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a viable agriculture industry requires a steady, reliable supply of water. However, drought conditions continue to adversely affect our farms and ranches, hampering our ability to produce quality products on a consistent basis throughout the year.

The legislature believes that to address the harmful impact of droughts, mitigation measures laid out in the Hawaii drought plan must be implemented. The goal of the Hawaii drought plan is to develop coordinated emergency response mechanisms while at the same time outlining steps toward mitigating the effects of future drought occurrences. The Hawaii drought plan provides clear policies and specifies response entities to implement immediate, short-term and long-term response measures to mitigate the impact of droughts.

The legislature also finds that in 2004, county drought committees were formed for each of the four counties in Hawaii. Each of the county drought committees developed a drought mitigation strategy for its respective county, with a focus on drought mitigation projects. These county drought mitigation strategies represent the local needs and concerns of each county and are incorporated by reference into the Hawaii drought plan.

The legislature further finds that to implement the Hawaii drought plan adequately, sufficient funding to the counties is necessary to address the many challenges that our agriculture industry faces in preparing for droughts.

The purpose of this Act is to provide funding to pursue drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the state.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$4,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 for drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the state.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.

(Approved June 30, 2007.)