

ACT 105

H.B. NO. 850

A Bill for an Act Relating to the Agricultural Extension Service.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources is in critical need of personnel for its cooperative extension service to improve and strengthen Hawaii's sustainability in agriculture through educational programs. The college houses a cooperative extension service that partners with federal, state, and county governments, with the responsibility to provide science-based information and education programs in agriculture, natural resources, and human resources. The extension offices are located throughout the State, with roughly twenty-five extension agents statewide. The cooperative extension service provides valuable tools that the public can use to strengthen communities and sustain Hawaii's agricultural economy. Extension personnel provide various services to the communities within each county, ranging from individual consultations, educational workshops, and short courses on relevant subjects, including agriculture, home economics, family living, 4-H and other youth activities, nutrition, and health.

The legislature also finds that, over the past twenty years, the college of tropical agriculture and human resources' cooperative extension service has experienced a forty-three per cent decrease in extension agents who service the various counties, including a twenty-seven per cent decrease since 2008. Many of the community services that the extension service offers have been cut as a result of the decrease.

The purpose of this Act is to address the budgetary shortfalls experienced by the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources' cooperative extension service by appropriating moneys for critical unfunded positions.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$350,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 for four full-time equivalent (4.00 FTE) positions in the cooperative extension service administered by the University of Hawaii college

of tropical agriculture and human resources; provided that the positions shall be deemed critical to accomplishing the purpose of the cooperative extension service program; and provided further that one position shall be assigned to each county.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

(Approved June 12, 2015.)