
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRAILS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the division of
2 forestry and wildlife of the department of land and natural
3 resources has a current statewide inventory of one hundred
4 twenty-eight trail-and-road features spanning approximately
5 eight hundred fifty-five miles. Trails include parking areas,
6 comfort stations, pavilions, picnic areas, and other facilities
7 that are regularly used by the public.

8 According to the Outdoor Industry Association, fifty-nine
9 per cent of Hawaii residents participate in outdoor recreation
10 each year. Outdoor recreation, which includes hiking,
11 contributes to a high quality of life and attracts and sustains
12 employers and families. Outdoor recreation in Hawaii generates
13 \$7,800,000,000 in consumer spending annually, sixty-eight
14 thousand direct jobs, \$2,400,000,000 in wages and salaries, and
15 \$604,000,000 in state and local tax revenue. Investing in
16 outdoor infrastructure, such as hiking trails, attracts



1 employers and active workforces, thereby ensuring communities in
2 Hawaii thrive economically and socially.

3 However, keeping up with the rising demand for trail use
4 remains a constant challenge for the department of land and
5 natural resources in Hawaii. Heavy use and limited operational
6 capacity have curbed the level of maintenance on trail features.
7 For example, Manoa falls trail on Oahu requires frequent staff
8 visits to maintain dated facilities, which diverts staff and
9 maintenance resources away from other trails located statewide.
10 Furthermore, remote trail locations raise the cost of
11 maintaining facilities and stretch operation capacities, while
12 vandalism and irresponsible trail use also draw from the limited
13 pool of available resources. Thus, additional funds to manage
14 these trails should be expended to keep pace with the growing
15 demand for trail use and ensure public safety.

16 Furthermore, along with the popularity of wilderness hiking
17 has come a growing number of mountain rescues occurring each
18 year. Various internet adventure websites have promoted wrong
19 or misleading information that places hikers in danger, leading
20 to uninformed hikers getting injured while on the trails, or
21 hiking on trails that are unmaintained or prohibited. The



1 number of Honolulu fire department rescues in mountainous areas
2 on Oahu has nearly tripled between 2006 and 2016. The Honolulu
3 fire department has reported that crews have responded to fifty-
4 one mountain rescues during the first three months of 2017 after
5 making two hundred sixty rescues in 2016 and one hundred eighty-
6 seven rescues in 2015. According to the department of land and
7 natural resources, if this trend continues, the number of annual
8 mountain rescues will double by 2024. Hiker safety education
9 can promote this popular recreational activity while decreasing
10 the number of mountain rescues, which have a search and rescue
11 operational price tag of \$1,500 per hour, including helicopter
12 rescue.

13 Lastly, the popularity of hiking has also resulted in the
14 need for hiker etiquette education and outreach. For example,
15 some trails that are located in residential neighborhoods have
16 gained immense popularity and have resulted in a dramatic
17 increase in complaints regarding naive or disrespectful trail
18 users. Complaints include loud noises and talking during late
19 hours of the night or in the early morning hours, blatant
20 littering, tracking of mud on neighborhood residents' lawns, and
21 illegal parking. As a result, some frustrated neighborhood



1 residents have proposed the closure of some trail heads to
2 prevent the nuisance that disrespectful hikers have caused.
3 Thus, the exercise of appropriate hiker etiquette will help to
4 promote hiker safety and the continued use of the hiking trails.

5 Therefore, the legislature further finds that maintaining
6 trails and facilities requires reliable capital investment for
7 routine repairs and reasonable operational support for regular
8 maintenance. Furthermore, a pervasive public awareness campaign
9 to educate hikers regarding hiker safety as well as hiker
10 etiquette will assist in reducing future hiking incidents.

11 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the
12 department of land and natural resources to improve nā ala hele,
13 the Hawaii statewide trail program, by improving access to and
14 maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and
15 promoting hiker safety and hiker etiquette education and
16 outreach.

17 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,800,000 or so much
19 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to improve
20 nā ala hele, the Hawaii statewide trail and access program, by:



1 (1) Improving access to and maintaining state controlled
2 recreational trails statewide; and

3 (2) Developing and implementing a public awareness
4 campaign that promotes hiker safety and hiker
5 etiquette education and outreach;

6 provided that any funds appropriated pursuant to this section
7 shall be in addition to and shall not supplant any portion of
8 the base budget of the department of land and natural resources.

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

11 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

12



Report Title:

Nā Ala Hele; Hawaii Statewide Trail and Access System; Trail Maintenance and Improvement; Hiker Safety and Etiquette Education and Outreach; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Appropriation

Description:

Makes an appropriation to improve nā ala hele, the Hawaii statewide trail and access program, by improving access to and maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and promoting hiker safety and hiker etiquette education and outreach. (SD1)

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