

---

---

# 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 operational capacities, while  
12 addressing instances of vandalism and irresponsible trail use  
13 also draw from the limited pool of available resources. Thus,  
14 additional moneys to manage these trails should be expended to  
15 keep pace with the growing demand for trail use and ensure  
16 public safety.

17       Furthermore, the increased popularity of wilderness hiking  
18 has caused a growing number of mountain rescues to occur each  
19 year. Various internet adventure websites have promoted  
20 incorrect or misleading information that places hikers in  
21 danger, leading to hiker injury and hiking on trails that are



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

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



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

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

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

18 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to improve  
21 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 moneys 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, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Nā Ala Hele; Hawaii Statewide Trail and Access System; Trail Maintenance and Improvement; Hiker Safety and Etiquette Education and Outreach; DLNR; Appropriation

**Description:**

Makes an appropriation to the Department of Land and Natural Resources 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. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

