RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF MAUNA KEA MANAGEMENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in 2000, the university of Hawai'i's board of regents approved the Mauna Kea science reserve master plan that called for the establishment of dedicated, focused, and community-based management of the university of Hawai'i's lands on Mauna Kea. In 2009, the board of land and natural resources approved a comprehensive management plan for Mauna Kea, making it the State's official plan for managing and protecting Mauna Kea's cultural, natural, and scientific resources. The comprehensive management plan is applicable to all lands that are leased or under easement to the university of Hawai'i, including the entire Mauna Kea science reserve, the access road above Hale Pohaku, and the mid-level area at Hale Pohaku.

The legislature also finds that Mauna Kea is public land and has substantially increased in popularity over the years, especially among tourists and recreationists. The realignment and improvement to Saddle Road, combined with significant social
media efforts, are major factors contributing to the rise in
popularity of Mauna Kea. As a result, there is increased
vehicular traffic to the mountain. This large increase in
visitors impacts the environmental and cultural landscape,
including trails, the summit region, roads, parking, and public
facilities such as the visitor information station and
sanitation facilities. Park rangers, whose duties include
resource protection and education regarding the significance of
the mountain, are increasingly taking on safety and traffic
officer roles. Mauna Kea rangers are stepping in to protect the
health and well-being of visitors unfamiliar with the hazards
associated with high altitudes and instructing visitors on how
to drive safely on the steep, unimproved road.

The legislature finds that this increase in visitors
significantly impacts the resources at Mauna Kea. The
university of Hawaii is tasked with providing increased support
for resource management programs that include research, long-
term resource monitoring, and protection and preservation
programs, as well as community outreach and education efforts.

The legislature further finds that, as reflected in the
comprehensive management plan, the protection of Mauna Kea's
cultural, natural, and scientific resources is the primary responsibility of the office of Mauna Kea management. Implementation of the comprehensive management plan includes research to identify, understand, map, and monitor Mauna Kea's resources. While research continues to further identify the biology and dynamics of the physical resources, mapping and assessing the condition and status of the resources over time requires regular and in some cases, annual, monitoring and preparation of reports. Data from this monitoring provides a comprehensive database of the resources that is also an invaluable record of Mauna Kea's unique and special resources for generations to come.

The legislature finds that the office of Mauna Kea management's resource management program is growing, and staffing needs to expand accordingly. Currently, the office of Mauna Kea management employs a natural resources program manager who is responsible for a wide variety of tasks, including oversight of research, permit compliance, and review of environmental assessment documents. The natural resources program manager also assists the director with policy development, updating the comprehensive management plan, and
outreach and communications. In the past, the office of Mauna Kea management used the assistance of limited-term interns, but this is not a sustainable long-term solution.

The legislature finds that the following positions are needed for the office of Mauna Kea management to fulfill the board of land and natural resource's approved resource management mandate contained in the comprehensive management plan:

(1) A natural resources specialist, to assist in coordinating and executing field work, field reports, and invasive species inspections, as well as updating the comprehensive management plan and participating in outreach activities;

(2) A geographic information systems database manager, to develop, oversee, maintain, and update a database of the locations and conditions of hundreds of identified Mauna Kea resources and habitat ranges obtained from annual monitoring activities;

(3) A resources technician, to assist the natural resources specialist and cultural resources program
manager to implement field data, write reports, and perform other administrative duties;

(4) A permitting and compliance officer, to ensure that Mauna Kea's compliance with regulations, including any permits;

(5) A community outreach program manager, to participate in school and community meetings, events, and lectures throughout the State;

(6) A communication program manager, to communicate the office of Mauna Kea management's stewardship activities, maintain and update the office's website, and prepare and distribute electronic newsletters;

(7) A communication specialist, to support overall communication activities; and

(8) A fiscal specialist, to manage the increased fiscal responsibilities and human resource functions resulting from an increase in lease fees, collection of commercial tour operator fees, and potential entrance fees and increase in personnel.
Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the university of Hawaii for eight full-time equivalent (8.0 FTE) positions within the office of Mauna Kea management.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for eight full-time equivalent (8.0 FTE) positions within the office of Mauna Kea management; provided that the positions include each of the following:

(1) Natural resources specialist;
(2) Geographic information systems database manager;
(3) Resources technician;
(4) Permitting and compliance officer;
(5) Community outreach program manager;
(6) Communication program manager;
(7) Communication specialist; and
(8) Fiscal specialist.

The sums 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, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY:

[Signatures]

JAN 24 2019
Report Title:
UH; Office of Mauna Kea Management; Appropriation

Description:
Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for (8.0) FTE positions within the Office of Mauna Kea Management.

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