A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change affects human health and well-being. The major public health organizations, including the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have reported that climate change is a critical public health problem. Steps can be taken to lessen climate change and reduce its impacts on human health and the health of future generations. Some of these steps can yield benefits for human health, environment, economy, and society at the same time. Additionally, the federal government has called for efforts to support adaptation and mitigation of climate change to create healthier, more sustainable communities. The legislature has authorized numerous mitigation activities, nearly all of which are focused on infrastructure changes to reduce carbon emissions or infrastructure resilience to sea level rise and severe weather events. However, Hawaii
will still feel the impacts of global climate change even if the State meets all of its United Nations Paris Agreement goals, due to the fact that large political economic entities, such as the United States, China, and European Union, continue to produce greenhouse gases at a scale and pace that runs the risk of run-away climate change.

The legislature further finds that while investments in mitigation relating to infrastructure are sound, there has been insufficient activity focusing on adaptation, specifically for human health. Climate change makes many existing diseases and conditions worse and may also help introduce new pests and pathogens into new regions or communities. As the planet warms, oceans expand and the sea level rises, floods and droughts become more frequent and intense, and heat waves and hurricanes become more severe. The most vulnerable people, such as children, the elderly, the poor, and those with underlying health conditions, are at increased risk for health effects from climate change, all of which will begin to further stress the health care infrastructure, financial systems, and delivery systems.
The purpose of this Act is to establish and appropriate funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the department of health.

SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department of health a full-time climate change and human health adaptation coordinator to:

(1) Determine future actions guiding the coordination and implementation of adaptation goals, principles, and policies relating to climate change impacts on human health; and

(2) Define and implement state goals, objectives, policies, and priority guidelines relating to climate change effects on human health using sections 226-3 to 226-27 and 226-103 to 226-109 and chapter 225P, Hawaii Revised Statutes, as guiding principles.

(b) The climate change and human health adaptation coordinator shall facilitate the establishment of plans and policies to adapt to climate change-related human health adaptation issues, including but not limited to:

(1) Temperature-related death and illness;

(2) Air quality impacts;
1. (3) Extreme weather events;
2. (4) Vector-borne diseases;
3. (5) Water-related illness;
4. (6) Food safety, nutrition, and distribution; and
5. (7) Mental health and well-being.
6. (c) The climate change and human health adaptation
7. coordinator shall coordinate with the office of planning and
8. other relevant state, county, and private entities to update the
9. Hawaii 2050 sustainability plan regarding climate change and
10. human health adaptation.
11. (d) The climate change and human health adaptation
12. coordinator shall be equivalent to a program specialist VI and
13. shall be selected by the director of health or the director's
14. designee.
15. SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
16. revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $165,000 or so much
17. thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the
18. establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent
19. climate change and human health adaptation coordinator position
20. and other operating expenses.
The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of health for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.
Report Title:
Climate Change and Human Health Adaptation Coordinator;
Department of Health; Appropriation

Description:
Establishes and appropriates funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the department of health.

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