A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that since western contact, Hawaii has lost nearly half of its native forest cover and the State's forests continue to be reduced by invasive species and wildfires. In recent years, Hawaii's cities have also experienced a dramatic decline in their urban tree cover, with Honolulu seeing a five per cent decline of its urban tree cover in less than a four-year period.

The legislature further finds that Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, among other things, sets a goal for the State to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. A tree planting program will assist the State in reaching this goal. In 2016, urban trees in Hawaii were estimated to sequester 410,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents annually—equal to the annual emissions of eighty-nine thousand cars. However, state and county lands cannot accommodate all the necessary tree plantings needed to achieve carbon neutrality. Community partnerships are therefore
essential to meet the goal of carbon neutrality and improve the
quality of life in Hawaii for present and future generations.

The legislature also finds that department of land and
natural resources has implemented the Kaulunani urban and
community forestry program with support from the United States
Department of Agriculture Forest Service. The United States
Department of Agriculture grants approximately $200,000 annually
for administering the state urban and community forestry
program. The program supports statewide community-based, cost-
share programs, including community-based tree planting
projects. However, program funds are not sufficient to support
all of the projects that seek funding, including a tree planting
program.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for the
establishment of a tree planting program, to be implemented by
the Kaulunani urban and community forestry program within the
department of land and natural resources' division of forestry
and wildlife, including the establishment of a community
partnership coordinator position.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $200,000 or so much
thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
purposes of establishing a tree planting program, to be
implemented by the Kaulunani urban and community forestry
program within the department of land and natural resources'
division of forestry and wildlife, including the establishment
of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) community partnership
coordinator position; provided that no funds shall be made
available under this Act unless funds are matched or leveraged
by the Kaulunani community grant program.

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

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.
Report Title:
Climate Change; Carbon Neutrality; Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program; Tree Planting Program; Appropriation

Description:
Appropriates funds for the establishment of a tree planting program, to be implemented by the Kaulunani urban and community forestry program within the department of land and natural resources' division of forestry and wildlife, including the establishment of a community partnership coordinator position.

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