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A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.

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

1	The legislature recognizes that vulnerable communities and
2	neighborhoods have been historically excluded, and systemically
3	underresourced, resulting in socioeconomic disparities across
4	Hawai'i. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted these preexisting
5	vulnerabilities and conditions. In furtherance of the Hawai'i
6	State Planning Act, section 226, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, this
7	legislature recognizes the need to ensure for present and future
8	generations' physical, social, and economic equity and well-
9	being. As we prepare for a post-COVID-19 era and in conjunction
10	with federal legislation and investments, the legislature
11	further finds that the rebuilding of our community shall not
12	exacerbate disenfranchised communities or neighborhoods.
13	Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to ensure that
14	agency decisionmakers assess socioeconomic disparities of
15	proposed actions as part of the environmental review process.
16	SECTION 1. Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is
17	amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
18	designated and to read as follows:

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1	"§343-2- Definitions.
2	'Significant effect' means the sum of effects on the
3	quality of the environment, including actions that irrevocably
4	commit a natural resource, curtail the range of beneficial uses
5	of the environment, are contrary to the State's environmental
6	policies or long-term environmental goals as established by law,
7	exacerbate socioeconomic disparities, or adversely affect the
8	economic welfare, social welfare, or cultural practices of the
9	community and State."
10	"Socioeconomic disparities" are significant disparities in
11	the relationship between race, socioeconomic status, and health.
12	Socioeconomic status is measured by income, educational
13	achievement, and occupation.
14	SECTION 2. New statutory material is underscored.
15	SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
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17	INTRODUCED BY:
	By Request

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