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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change is  
2 the most pressing issue of our time. There are many  
3 contributors to climate change, and transportation-generated  
4 greenhouse gas emissions are a source. The legislature  
5 acknowledges that, within the transportation sector, the air  
6 transportation component faces particularly difficult technical  
7 challenges in reducing carbon dioxide emissions associated with  
8 air travel. Since air travel is essential to tourism, the  
9 legislature notes that air travel and its associated carbon  
10 emissions will remain key elements of Hawai'i's intertwined  
11 economy and climate for the foreseeable future.

12           In the past few years, the United Nations has established  
13 an extensive framework for the provision of carbon offsets for  
14 carbon emissions resulting from international air travel, known  
15 as the carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for international  
16 aviation (CORSA). However, the Federal Aviation



1 Administration's CORSIA program does not apply to air travel to  
2 Hawai'i from the continental United States.

3 The legislature further finds that, for essential  
4 activities including air travel, that are intractably resistant,  
5 at least in the near term, to technological solutions to carbon  
6 emission reductions, the use of carbon offsets to compensate for  
7 those emissions is a strategic necessity for achieving the zero  
8 emission clean economy target set for the State by Act 15,  
9 Session Laws of Hawaii 2018.

10 The legislature anticipates that many travelers will take  
11 advantage of a program where air travelers may voluntarily  
12 purchase carbon offsets from providers of the offsets, given the  
13 increasing awareness by air travelers of the climate change  
14 implications of their travel. The legislature additionally  
15 finds that the ease of purchasing offsets may have the effect of  
16 enhancing the desirability of travel to Hawai'i.

17 The purpose of this Act is to provide a process by which  
18 the department of transportation shall assist persons traveling  
19 by air to or from airports in Hawai'i in the purchase of  
20 verifiable carbon offsets to compensate for carbon dioxide  
21 emissions from air travel.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 261, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§261- Air travel carbon offset purchase. (a) Pursuant  
5 to its authority under section 261-4, the department shall  
6 facilitate the voluntary purchase of verified carbon offsets by  
7 persons engaging in qualified air travel to or from an airport  
8 in the State. To effectuate this purpose, the department:

- 9 (1) Shall accept requests from each person who will be  
10 engaging in, or has recently engaged in, qualified air  
11 travel to or from an airport in the State for  
12 assistance in voluntarily purchasing a verified carbon  
13 offset for the carbon dioxide emissions associated  
14 with the person's qualified air travel;  
15 (2) Shall use reasonable best efforts to facilitate the  
16 requestor's connection with a provider of verified  
17 carbon offsets for carbon dioxide emissions from air  
18 travel from whom the requestor may purchase a carbon  
19 offset for the requestor's trip;  
20 (3) Shall place information on the department's website  
21 describing the process established by the department



1 to assist air travelers with purchasing verified  
2 carbon offsets for their air travel from providers of  
3 the offsets, including interactive capability by which  
4 air travelers may arrange for the online purchase of  
5 verified carbon offsets;

6 (4) Shall encourage airlines using airports in the State  
7 to provide links on the airlines' respective websites  
8 to the department's webpage concerning carbon offsets  
9 for air travel;

10 (5) Shall maintain a list of public and private entities  
11 that provide verified carbon offsets for passenger air  
12 travel; and

13 (6) May contract with other entities to conduct one or  
14 more of the duties described in paragraphs (1) through  
15 (5).

16 (b) For the purposes of this section:

17 "Carbon offset" means a reduction in carbon dioxide or  
18 other greenhouse gases in, or emitted into, the atmosphere that  
19 is achieved by or on behalf of a person to compensate, in a  
20 carbon dioxide-equivalent amount, for the emissions of carbon  
21 dioxide resulting from air travel by the person to or from an



1 airport in the State. "Carbon offset" includes an action that  
2 removes greenhouse gases from the atmosphere or that reduces  
3 future greenhouse gas emissions.

4 "Qualified air travel" means any air travel regulated under  
5 this chapter that occurs between an airport in the State and any  
6 other airport in the State or in another state or United States  
7 territory.

8 "Verified" means, with respect to a carbon offset, a  
9 reduction in carbon dioxide, or carbon dioxide-equivalent amount  
10 of other greenhouse gases, that is determined to be real,  
11 permanent, and unlikely to occur in the absence of an offset  
12 program, through a process of validation and verification by an  
13 independent third party."

14 SECTION 3. Any revenue received by the State from carbon  
15 offsets shall be directed to the department of land and natural  
16 resources to be utilized for the following:

- 17 (1) Tree planting; or  
18 (2) Other initiatives that proportionally increase carbon  
19 sequestration.

20 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

21 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



**Report Title:**

Air Travel; Verified Carbon Offsets; Qualified Air Travel;  
Department of Transportation; Department of Land and Natural  
Resources

**Description:**

Establishes procedures for the Department of Transportation to assist and enable a person to voluntarily purchase a verified carbon offset for carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the person's air travel to or from an airport in the State. Requires revenue generated from carbon offsets to be directed to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for tree planting or other initiatives that proportionally increase carbon sequestration. (SD1)

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