
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State of
2 California and numerous other states and private industries have
3 established carbon credits that polluters buy to offset their
4 carbon emissions. Billions of dollars have been raised by the
5 State of California alone, and many industries are seeking new
6 places to invest these dollars to offset their carbon emissions.

7 The legislature also finds that local farmers in Hawaii can
8 benefit from additional subsidies and support to grow local
9 agriculture, create jobs, and diversify our economy.

10 Accordingly, the legislature finds that it is in the public
11 interest to establish a basic certification for carbon-negative
12 agricultural practices to allow local farmers to qualify for
13 carbon credit subsidies.

14 The legislature further finds that agricultural land
15 management practices that sequester carbon could provide
16 greenhouse gas benefits, enhance the sustainability of Hawaii's
17 agricultural lands, decrease sedimentation of the marine



1 environment, improve the climate resistance of Hawaii's
2 agricultural sector, and create new opportunities for local
3 farmers.

4 The purpose of this Act is to create a carbon farming task
5 force to identify agricultural or aquacultural activities and
6 best practices that provide carbon sequestration benefits that
7 may be used to establish a carbon farming certification.

8 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this Act:

9 "Agricultural activities" shall have the same meaning as in
10 section 166-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

11 "Agricultural or aquacultural practices" means management
12 practices for agricultural activities or aquacultural
13 activities.

14 "Aquacultural activities" shall have the same meaning as in
15 section 166-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

16 "Greenhouse gas benefits" means greenhouse gas emissions
17 source reduction or carbon sequestration.

18 "Healthy soils" means soils that enhance their continuing
19 capacity to function as a biological system, increase soil
20 organic matter, improve soil structure and water- and nutrient-



1 holding capacity, and result in net long-term greenhouse gas
2 benefits.

3 "On-farm demonstration projects" means projects that
4 incorporate farm management practices in agricultural activities
5 or aquacultural activities that result in greenhouse gas
6 benefits.

7 SECTION 3. (a) The carbon farming task force is
8 established within the office of planning for administrative
9 purposes only. The task force shall have the following
10 objectives:

- 11 (1) Identify and study agricultural and aquacultural
12 practices, public land and marine use policies, and
13 on-farm management practices that would increase
14 climate resiliency and improve sequestration of carbon
15 content in Hawaii;
- 16 (2) Work with public and private stakeholders, establish
17 short- and long-term benchmarks for increasing
18 sequestration of carbon content in Hawaii's
19 agricultural and natural environment;
- 20 (3) Identify appropriate criteria to measure baseline
21 levels and increases in carbon sequestration,



1 improvements in soil health, and other key indicators
2 of greenhouse gas benefits from beneficial
3 agricultural and aquacultural practices that may be
4 used to create a certification program for promoting
5 agricultural and aquacultural practices that generate
6 greenhouse gas benefits;

7 (4) Identify land and marine use policies, agricultural
8 policies, and mitigation options that would encourage
9 agricultural and aquacultural practices and land use
10 practices that would promote increased carbon
11 sequestration, build healthy soils, and provide
12 greenhouse gas benefits;

13 (5) Identify ways to increase the generation and use of
14 compost in Hawaii to build healthy soils;

15 (6) Identify ways that ecosystems and agroforestry systems
16 can be used to mitigate carbon content in Hawaii; and

17 (7) Make recommendations to the legislature and governor
18 on measures that would increase climate resiliency,
19 build healthy soils, or provide greenhouse gas
20 benefits.



1 (b) In addition to the objectives listed in subsection

2 (a), the task force may consider:

3 (1) Developing incentives and funding mechanisms for these
4 incentives, including but not limited to loans, tax
5 credits, or grants; research; technical assistance; or
6 educational materials and outreach, to participating
7 agricultural activities, aquacultural activities, or
8 on-farm demonstration projects that are identified and
9 approved by the task force as those that would promote
10 greenhouse gas benefits, build healthy soils,
11 sequester carbon, increase water-holding capacity, and
12 increase crop yields; and

13 (2) Providing for research, education, and technical
14 support for agricultural activities and aquacultural
15 activities identified by the task force.

16 (c) The carbon farming task force shall consist of the
17 following:

18 (1) The director of the office of planning or the
19 director's designee, who shall serve as chairperson;

20 (2) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or the
21 chairperson's designee;



- 1 (3) The deputy director of the department of health's
2 environmental health administration or the deputy
3 director's designee;
- 4 (4) The director of the office of environmental quality
5 control or the director's designee;
- 6 (5) The director of the center for island climate
7 adaptation and policy at the University of Hawaii at
8 Manoa;
- 9 (6) The administrator of the division of forestry and
10 wildlife within the department of land and natural
11 resources or the administrator's designee;
- 12 (7) One researcher from the college of tropical
13 agriculture and human resources at the University of
14 Hawaii at Manoa;
- 15 (8) One extension agent from the college of tropical
16 agriculture and human resources at the University of
17 Hawaii at Manoa;
- 18 (9) Four members; provided that the mayors of Hawaii,
19 Honolulu, Kauai, and Maui counties shall each appoint
20 one member; and



1 (10) Three members to be jointly selected by the president
2 of the senate and the speaker of the house of
3 representatives, of which one member shall be selected
4 from an environmental nonprofit organization, and
5 another member from an agricultural or ranching
6 association.

7 Task force members may recommend additional members with
8 appropriate specialized expertise to the task force, for
9 approval by the chairperson.

10 (d) Members of the task force shall be exempt from section
11 26-34, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and shall serve without
12 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses
13 necessary for the performance of their duties, including travel
14 expenses.

15 (e) The carbon farming task force shall:

16 (1) Submit a preliminary report of its findings and
17 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,
18 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to
19 the convening of the regular session of 2023; provided
20 that the preliminary report shall discuss the



1 objectives and issues listed in subsections (a) and
2 (b), including the following:

3 (A) Types of agricultural and aquacultural practices,
4 public land and marine use policies, and on-farm
5 managing practices that would provide greenhouse
6 gas benefits;

7 (B) Short-term and long-term benchmarks on how
8 agricultural activities and aquacultural
9 activities can help the State of Hawaii reach
10 carbon neutrality;

11 (C) Appropriate criteria that may be used in a
12 certification program to measure baseline levels
13 and increases in carbon sequestration,
14 improvements in soil health, and other key
15 indicators of greenhouse gas benefits from
16 beneficial agricultural and aquacultural
17 practices; and

18 (D) Kinds of incentives, grants, research, and
19 assistance that would promote:

20 (i) Agricultural and aquacultural practices to
21 produce greenhouse gas benefits; and



1 (ii) Land and marine use policies and
2 agricultural policies that would encourage
3 agricultural and aquacultural practices and
4 land use practices to provide greenhouse gas
5 benefits; and

6 (2) Submit a final report of its findings and
7 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,
8 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to
9 the convening of the regular session of 2025.

10 (f) The office of planning shall provide administrative
11 and clerical support required by the task force.

12 (g) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2025.

13 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much
15 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
16 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
17 2018-2019 for the purposes of this Act.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of
19 planning for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 28, 2081.



Report Title:

Carbon Farming Task Force; Climate Change; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Carbon Farming Task Force within the Office of Planning to identify agricultural and aquacultural practices to improve soil health and promote carbon sequestration in the State's agricultural and aquacultural sectors. Appropriates funds. Effective 1/28/2081. (SD1)

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