
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF PLANNING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that not only is climate
2 change real, but it is the overriding challenge of the twenty-
3 first century and one of the priority issues of the State.
4 Climate change poses immediate and long-term threats to Hawaii's
5 economy, sustainability, security, and way of life.

6 The legislature recognized in Act 8, Special Session Laws
7 of Hawaii 2005, that "many quality-of-life issues, including
8 water quality, air quality, land use, energy, and ocean
9 resources, are important to the people of Hawaii and should be
10 the focus for planning Hawaii's future" and created the Hawaii
11 2050 sustainability plan to "coordinate the actions needed to
12 sustain a growing and vibrant economy, while maintaining a high
13 quality of life for all residents and visitors."

14 The legislature recognized in Act 181, Session Laws of
15 Hawaii 2011, that "[t]he creation of the Hawaii 2050
16 sustainability plan comes as the State faces a growing number of
17 pressing issues, including the steady deterioration of public



1 infrastructure, the lack of affordable housing, a continued
2 reliance on a service-based economy, the vulnerability of Hawaii
3 in a volatile global energy market, possible interruptions in
4 travel and to critical food supplies, threats to fragile island
5 ecosystems, ever-increasing numbers of residents, and an
6 increasing number of visitors over the long-term." These issues
7 all raise questions about the long-term limits of growth in the
8 State and highlight the need to begin planning and coordinating
9 state agencies to act to assure Hawaii's sustainable future.

10 The legislature further finds that the recent novel
11 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and state of emergency
12 has created unprecedented demands in Hawaii's local communities.
13 The immediate impacts of the pandemic resulted in a sharp drop
14 in Hawaii's employment and economic activity. Other sudden
15 economic factors that were caused by reducing COVID-19
16 transmission throughout the State of Hawaii include: significant
17 job loss, cost of living challenges, increased affordable
18 housing demands, shocks to the supply chain, locally produced
19 food insecurity, scarcity of locally produced goods, increased
20 technological demand, strains on technological infrastructure,
21 workforce constraints, and increased demands on healthcare and



1 social services. These socioeconomic shocks and Hawaii's
2 economic stresses have inspired discussions for long-term and
3 comprehensive planning for a sustainable and resilient economic
4 recovery for the State of Hawaii.

5 The purpose of this Act is to:

6 (1) Establish a statewide sustainability branch within the
7 office of planning to ensure stronger, long-term
8 planning, coordination, and implementation of Hawaii's
9 sustainability goals; and

10 (2) Update and reaffirm the role of the office of planning
11 to coordinate among state agencies regarding climate
12 change adaptation and sustainability.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 225M, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
15 and to read as follows:

16 **"§225M- Statewide sustainability branch; established.**

17 The statewide sustainability branch is established within the
18 office of planning. The branch shall have the following duties:

19 (1) Develop, organize, and promote policies and programs
20 that assist in the meeting of Hawaii's numerous
21 sustainability and climate policies and goals, and the



1 priority guidelines and principles to promote ,
2 sustainability set forth in section 226-108;

3 (2) Identify, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding
4 proposed legislation, regulatory changes, or policy
5 modifications to the governor, the legislature,
6 government agencies, private entities, and other
7 bodies for the purpose of encouraging activities that
8 best sustain, protect, and enhance the quality of the
9 environment, economy, and community for the present
10 and future benefit of the people of Hawaii; and
11 (3) Develop and promote proposals that jointly and
12 mutually enhance local economies, the environment, and
13 community well-being for the present and future
14 benefit of the people of Hawaii."

15 SECTION 3. Section 225M-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

17 "(b) The office of planning shall gather, analyze, and
18 provide information to the governor to assist in the overall
19 analysis and formulation of state policies and strategies to
20 provide central direction and cohesion in the allocation of
21 resources and effectuation of state activities and programs and



1 effectively address current or emerging issues and
2 opportunities. More specifically, the office shall engage in
3 the following activities:

4 (1) State comprehensive planning and program coordination.

5 Formulating and articulating comprehensive statewide
6 goals, objectives, policies, and priorities, and
7 coordinating their implementation through the
8 statewide planning system established in part II of
9 chapter 226;

10 (2) Strategic planning. Identifying and analyzing
11 significant issues, problems, and opportunities
12 confronting the State, and formulating strategies and
13 alternative courses of action in response to
14 identified problems and opportunities by:

15 (A) Providing in-depth policy research, analysis, and
16 recommendations on existing or potential areas of
17 critical state concern;

18 (B) Examining and evaluating the effectiveness of
19 state programs in implementing state policies and
20 priorities;



1 (C) Monitoring through surveys, environmental
2 scanning, and other techniques--current social,
3 economic, and physical conditions and trends; and
4 (D) Developing, in collaboration with affected public
5 or private agencies and organizations,
6 implementation plans and schedules and, where
7 appropriate, assisting in the mobilization of
8 resources to meet identified needs;

9 (3) Planning coordination and cooperation. Facilitating
10 coordinated and cooperative planning and policy
11 development and implementation activities among state
12 agencies and between the state, county, and federal
13 governments, by:

14 (A) Reviewing, assessing, and coordinating, as
15 necessary, major plans, programs, projects, and
16 regulatory activities existing or proposed by
17 state and county agencies;

18 (B) Formulating mechanisms to simplify, streamline,
19 or coordinate interagency development and
20 regulatory processes; and



1 (C) Recognizing the presence of federal defense and
2 security forces and agencies in the State as
3 important state concerns;

4 (4) Statewide planning and geographic information system.
5 Collecting, integrating, analyzing, maintaining, and
6 disseminating various forms of data and information,
7 including geospatial data and information, to further
8 effective state planning, policy analysis and
9 development, and delivery of government services by:

10 (A) Collecting, assembling, organizing, evaluating,
11 and classifying existing geospatial and non-
12 geospatial data and performing necessary basic
13 research, conversions, and integration to provide
14 a common database for governmental planning and
15 geospatial analyses by state agencies;

16 (B) Planning, coordinating, and maintaining a
17 comprehensive, shared statewide planning and
18 geographic information system and associated
19 geospatial database. The office shall be the
20 lead agency responsible for coordinating the
21 maintenance of the multi-agency, statewide



1 planning and geographic information system and
2 coordinating, collecting, integrating, and
3 disseminating geospatial data sets that are used
4 to support a variety of state agency applications
5 and other spatial data analyses to enhance
6 decision-making. The office shall promote and
7 encourage free and open data sharing among and
8 between all government agencies. To ensure the
9 maintenance of a comprehensive, accurate, up-to-
10 date geospatial data resource that can be drawn
11 upon for decision-making related to essential
12 public policy issues such as land use planning,
13 resource management, homeland security, and the
14 overall health, safety, and well-being of
15 Hawaii's citizens, and to avoid redundant data
16 development efforts, state agencies shall provide
17 to the shared system either their respective
18 geospatial databases or, at a minimum, especially
19 in cases of secure or confidential data sets that
20 cannot be shared or must be restricted, metadata
21 describing existing geospatial data. In cases



1 where agencies provide restricted data, the
2 office of planning shall ensure the security of
3 that data; and

4 (C) Maintaining a centralized depository of state and
5 national planning references;

6 (5) Land use planning. Developing and presenting the
7 position of the State in all boundary change petitions
8 and proceedings before the land use commission,
9 assisting state agencies in the development and
10 submittal of petitions for land use district boundary
11 amendments, and conducting periodic reviews of the
12 classification and districting of all lands in the
13 State, as specified in chapter 205;

14 (6) Coastal and ocean policy management[-], and sea level
15 rise adaptation coordination. Carrying out the lead
16 agency responsibilities for the Hawaii coastal zone
17 management program, as specified in chapter 205A.

18 Also:

19 (A) Developing and maintaining an ocean and coastal
20 resources information, planning, and management
21 system;



(B) Further developing and coordinating
implementation of the ocean resources management
plan; and

(C) Formulating ocean policies with respect to the
exclusive economic zone, coral reefs, and
national marine sanctuaries;

(7) Regional planning and studies. Conducting plans and
studies to determine:

(A) The capability of various regions within the
State to support projected increases in both
resident populations and visitors;

(B) The potential physical, social, economic, and
environmental impact on these regions resulting
from increases in both resident populations and
visitors;

(C) The maximum annual visitor carrying capacity for
the State by region, county, and island; and

(D) The appropriate guidance and management of
selected regions and areas of statewide critical
concern.



1 The studies in subparagraphs (A) to (C) shall be
2 conducted at appropriate intervals, but not less than
3 once every five years;

4 (8) Regional, national, and international planning.

5 Participating in and ensuring that state plans,
6 policies, and objectives are consistent, to the extent
7 practicable, with regional, national, and
8 international planning efforts;

9 (9) Climate adaptation and sustainability planning[-] and
10 coordination. Conducting plans and studies and
11 preparing reports as follows:

12 (A) Develop, monitor, and evaluate strategic climate
13 adaptation plans and actionable policy
14 recommendations for the State and counties
15 addressing expected statewide climate change
16 impacts identified under [~~Act 286, Session Laws~~
17 ~~of Hawaii 2012, through the year 2050,~~] chapter
18 225P and sections 226-108 and 226-109; and

19 (B) Provide planning and policy guidance and
20 assistance to state and county agencies regarding
21 climate change[+] and sustainability; and



1 ~~[(C) Publish its findings, recommendations, and~~
2 ~~progress reports on actions taken no later than~~
3 ~~December 31, 2017, and its annual report to the~~
4 ~~governor and the legislature thereafter; and]~~

5 (10) Smart growth and transit-oriented development. Acting
6 as the lead agency to coordinate and advance smart
7 growth and transit-oriented development planning
8 within the State as follows:

9 (A) Identify transit-oriented development
10 opportunities shared between state and county
11 agencies, including relevant initiatives such as
12 the department of health's healthy Hawaii
13 initiative and the Hawaii clean energy
14 initiative;

15 (B) Refine the definition of "transit-oriented
16 development" in the context of Hawaii, while
17 recognizing the potential for smart growth
18 development patterns in all locations;

19 (C) Clarify state goals for transit-oriented
20 development and smart growth that support the
21 principles of the Hawaii State Planning Act by



1 preserving non-urbanized land, improving worker
2 access to jobs, and reducing fuel consumption;

3 (D) Target transit-oriented development areas for
4 significant increase in affordable housing and
5 rental units;

6 (E) Conduct outreach to state agencies to help
7 educate state employees about the ways they can
8 support and benefit from transit-oriented
9 development and the State's smart growth goals;

10 (F) Publicize coordinated state efforts that support
11 smart growth, walkable neighborhoods, and
12 transit-oriented development;

13 (G) Review state land use decision-making processes
14 to identify ways to make transit-oriented
15 development a higher priority and facilitate
16 better and more proactive leadership in creating
17 walkable communities and employment districts,
18 even if transit will only be provided at a later
19 date; and

20 (H) Approve all state agencies' development plans for
21 parcels along the rail transit corridor. For the



1 purposes of this subparagraph, "development
2 plans" means conceptual land use plans that
3 identify the location and planned uses within a
4 defined area."

5 SECTION 4. The State of Hawaii's sustainability
6 coordinator shall serve as the administrator of the statewide
7 sustainability branch. This position is previously established
8 and funded through the base budget of the office of planning.

9 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
10 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Report Title:

Office of Planning; Statewide Planning; COVID-19 Economic Resilience; Climate Change; Sustainability; Statewide Sustainability Branch

Description:

Updates and reaffirms the role of the office of planning (OP) to coordinate among state agencies regarding climate change adaptation and sustainability. Establishes a statewide sustainability branch within OP. (SD1)

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