
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change and
2 sea level rise pose significant, dangerous, and imminent threats
3 to the State's social and economic well-being, public safety,
4 nature and environments, cultural resources, property,
5 infrastructure, and government functions and will likely have a
6 disproportionate impact on low-income and otherwise vulnerable
7 communities. Chronic impacts of sea level rise, including
8 coastal erosion, high tide flooding, and annual high wave
9 flooding, are already impacting many low-lying coastal areas and
10 are predicted to increase in extent and severity in the coming
11 decades. Climate change and sea level rise will exacerbate the
12 impacts of disaster events, such as hurricanes, extreme
13 rainfall, high-wave events, and tsunamis.

14 The legislature further finds that a 2017 report by the
15 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration projects that
16 3.2 feet of global mean sea level rise will occur by 2100 in an



1 intermediate scenario and could occur as early as the 2060s in
2 an extreme scenario.

3 The legislature notes that the Hawaii sea level rise
4 vulnerability and adaptation report completed by the department
5 of land and natural resources and accepted by the Hawaii climate
6 change mitigation and adaptation commission, along with map data
7 available via the Hawaii sea level rise viewer online mapping
8 tool and the Hawaii statewide GIS program, provide a relevant
9 assessment, based on the best available science, of the State's
10 coastal areas' exposure to the chronic impacts of sea level
11 rise. The state hazard mitigation plan provides expanded
12 assessment of natural hazards and potential impacts of disaster
13 events in recognition of climate change and sea level rise.
14 Both documents provide current references; are consistent with
15 sea level rise projections reported in the latest and best
16 available science, including National Oceanic and Atmospheric
17 Administration reporting; and serve as key references for the
18 State in assessing vulnerabilities and developing actions to
19 improve resilience to impacts of sea level rise and extreme
20 climate events, and therefore can serve as useful tools for
21 executive departments in preparing for sea level rise.



1 The purpose of this Act is to require the executive
2 departments of the State to:

3 (1) Identify existing and planned facilities that are
4 vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and
5 natural hazards;

6 (2) Assess a range of options for mitigation impacts of
7 sea level rise to existing and planned facilities;

8 (3) Establish staff level points of contact to improve
9 interagency coordination for sea level rise
10 adaptation, flooding, and resilience; and

11 (4) Submit annual reports to the governor, legislature,
12 and Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
13 commission regarding vulnerability and adaptation
14 assessments for state facilities and progress in
15 implementing sea level rise and disaster resiliency
16 considerations.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 27, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
18 by adding a new section to part I be appropriately designated
19 and to read as follows:

20 "§27- Sea level rise; responsibilities. (a) Each state
21 department shall:



- 1 (1) Identify existing and planned facilities, including
2 critical infrastructure, that are vulnerable to sea
3 level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards,
4 utilizing the latest projections and map data endorsed
5 by the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
6 commission and State of Hawaii hazard mitigation plan;
7 (2) Assess a range of options for mitigation impacts of
8 sea level rise to existing and planned facilities,
9 including flood-proofing in-place and relocation of
10 facilities, especially in locations where conservation
11 of beaches and coastal environments is desired;
12 provided that the departments shall take sea level
13 rise, flooding, and disaster resilience into account
14 in their planning and investment decisions; identify
15 and consider risk from climate change; and employ full
16 life-cycle cost accounting to evaluate and compare
17 facilities investments and alternatives; provided
18 further that the departments shall be guided by the
19 following principles:
20 (A) Prioritize actions that build disaster resilience
21 and climate adaptation;



- 1 (B) Take actions to protect the State's most
- 2 vulnerable populations; and
- 3 (C) Prioritize nature-based adaptation and resilience
- 4 solutions.

5 In carrying out these functions, the departments shall
6 coordinate resiliency actions with county and federal
7 agencies, relevant communities, and the private
8 sector.

9 (b) Each department shall establish staff level points of
10 contact with relevant expertise to build internal capacity and
11 work with Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
12 commission staff and the office of planning to improve
13 interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation,
14 flooding, and resilience.

15 (c) Each department shall submit a report to the governor,
16 legislature, office of planning, and Hawaii climate change
17 mitigation and adaptation commission no later than twenty days
18 prior to the convening of each regular session regarding its
19 vulnerability and adaptation assessments for its facilities and
20 progress made toward implementing sea level rise and disaster



1 resiliency considerations in its plans, programs, and capital
2 improvement decisions."

3 SECTION 3. Section 27-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended to read as follows:

5 "§27-1 **Functions of statewide concern.** The purpose of the
6 chapter is to fix responsibility for certain functions, which
7 are of statewide concern, in the state government. These
8 functions which are declared to be state functions are as
9 follows:

10 (1) Planning, construction, improvement and maintenance of
11 public school facilities and grounds and the
12 transportation of school children; provided that
13 nothing in this paragraph shall preclude the several
14 counties from expending their own funds to supplement
15 state funds;

16 (2) Burial of indigents;

17 (3) Planning, construction, improvement, maintenance, and
18 operation of public hospitals and other public health
19 and medical facilities;

20 (4) Rendering of medical treatment and hospitalization
21 services to state and county pensioners;



- 1 (5) Administration and operation of district courts; [~~and~~]
- 2 (6) Providing information and services to the public
- 3 through joint cooperation with the several
- 4 counties[~~+~~]; and
- 5 (7) Planning and implementing considerations, policies,
- 6 and practices related to disaster resilience and
- 7 climate adaptation, including sea level rise."

8 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



Report Title:

State Responsibilities; Executive Departments; Climate Change;
Sea Level Rise Adaptation

Description:

Requires each executive branch department to: identify existing and planned facilities that are vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards; assess options for mitigation impacts of sea level rise to existing and planned facilities; establish staff level points of contact to improve interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation, flooding, and resilience; and submit annual reports to the governor, legislature, office of planning, and Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission. Effective 1/1/2050. (SD1)

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