
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON HUMAN HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change
2 affects human health and well-being. The major public health
3 organizations, including the United States Centers for Disease
4 Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and
5 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have reported that
6 climate change is a critical public health problem.

7 Steps can be taken to lessen climate change and reduce its
8 impacts on human health and the health of future generations.
9 Some of these steps can yield benefits for human health, the
10 environment and economy, and society at the same time.
11 Additionally, the federal government has called for efforts to
12 support adaptation and mitigation of climate change to create
13 healthier, more sustainable communities.

14 The legislature has authorized numerous mitigation
15 activities, nearly all of which are focused on infrastructure
16 changes to reduce carbon emissions or infrastructure resilience
17 to sea level rise and severe weather events. However, Hawaii



1 will still feel the impacts of global climate change even if the
2 State meets all of its Paris Agreement goals, due to the fact
3 that large political and economic entities, such as the United
4 States, China, and European Union, continue to produce
5 greenhouse gases at a scale and pace that risk run-away climate
6 change.

7 The legislature further finds that while investments in
8 mitigation relating to infrastructure are sound, there has been
9 insufficient activity focusing on adaptation, specifically for
10 human health. Climate change makes many existing diseases and
11 conditions worse and may also help introduce new pests and
12 pathogens into new regions or communities. As the planet warms,
13 oceans expand and the sea level rises, floods and droughts
14 become more frequent and intense, and heat waves and hurricanes
15 become more severe. The most vulnerable people, such as
16 children, the elderly, the poor, and those with underlying
17 health conditions, are at increased risk for health effects from
18 climate change, all of which will begin to further stress health
19 care infrastructure, financial systems, and delivery systems.



1 The purpose of this Act is to establish and appropriate
2 funds for a climate change and human health adaptation
3 specialist within the department of health.

4 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department
5 of health a full-time climate change and human health adaptation
6 specialist to:

7 (1) Determine future actions guiding the coordination and
8 implementation of adaptation goals, principles, and
9 policies relating to climate change impacts on human
10 health; and

11 (2) Define and implement state goals, objectives,
12 policies, and priority guidelines relating to climate
13 change effects on human health using sections 226-3 to
14 226-27 and 226-103 to 226-109 and chapter 225P, Hawaii
15 Revised Statutes, as guiding principles.

16 (b) The climate change and human health adaptation
17 specialist shall facilitate the establishment of plans and
18 policies to adapt to climate change-related human health issues,
19 including but not limited to:

20 (1) Temperature-related death and illness;

21 (2) Air quality impacts;



1 (3) Extreme weather events;

2 (4) Vector-borne diseases;

3 (5) Water-related illnesses;

4 (6) Food safety, nutrition, and distribution; and

5 (7) Mental health and well-being.

6 (c) The climate change and human health adaptation
7 specialist shall coordinate with the office of planning and
8 sustainable development and other relevant state, county, and
9 private entities to update the Hawaii 2050 sustainability plan
10 regarding climate change and human health adaptation.

11 (d) The climate change and human health adaptation
12 specialist shall be equivalent to a program specialist VI and
13 shall be selected by the director of health or the director's
14 designee.

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$165,000 or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the
18 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent
19 climate change and human health adaptation specialist position
20 and other operating expenses.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
2 health for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2100.

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H.B. NO. 1842 H.D. 1

Report Title:

Climate Change and Human Health Adaptation Specialist;
Department of Health; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes and appropriates funds for a climate change and human health adaptation specialist within the department of health and related operating expenses. Effective 7/1/2100.
(HD1)

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