

---

---

# 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 \$ or so  
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for  
18 the establishment of full-time equivalent  
19 ( FTE) permanent climate change and human health  
20 adaptation specialist position 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.

4



**Report Title:**

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

**Description:**

Establishes a climate change and human health adaptation specialist within the department of health. Appropriates funds for the position and related operating expenses. Effective 7/1/2100. (HD2)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

