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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Act 97, Session Laws  
2 of Hawaii 2015, requires electric utilities in the State to  
3 achieve a one hundred per cent renewable portfolio standard by  
4 December 31, 2045, in order to transition the State away from  
5 imported fossil fuels and toward locally available renewable  
6 energy sources.

7           The legislature further finds that to encourage the timely  
8 build-out of a diverse, resilient, and reliable portfolio of  
9 low-cost renewable energy generation and storage assets, Hawaii  
10 must lower the administrative barriers that constrain deployment  
11 of residential and commercial-scale distributed energy  
12 resources.

13           The legislature also finds that exemptions from permitting  
14 requirements based on estimated costs that have not been amended  
15 since 1979 and fail to account for inflation of over three  
16 hundred per cent have severely reduced the practical  
17 availability of the exemptions and created an unnecessary



1 impediment to the timely installation of residential distributed  
2 energy resources and other real property improvements.

3       The legislature further finds that the permitting process  
4 currently adds substantial time and cost to the adoption of  
5 residential solar and energy storage projects and that online  
6 permitting tools such as the United States Department of  
7 Energy's SolarAPP+ have been successfully implemented by  
8 hundreds of government entities that issue building permits  
9 throughout the nation and that Hawaii's permit-issuing  
10 government entities should similarly take advantage of these  
11 tools to help meet the State's clean energy, reliability, and  
12 resilience needs.

13       The purpose of this Act is to reduce administrative  
14 barriers to the deployment of energy generation and storage  
15 technology systems by requiring government entities in the State  
16 that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a  
17 functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform  
18 that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed  
19 contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in  
20 real time by January 1, 2024.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 196, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 "§196-A Building permit; issuing entity; adoption of  
5 online permitting tools for solar distributed energy resource  
6 systems. (a) Any government entity in the State that issues  
7 building permits shall implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally  
8 equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies  
9 code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for  
10 solar distributed energy resource systems in real time; provided  
11 that a government entity in the State that issues building  
12 permits shall adopt self-certification, pursuant to section  
13 196-B, for solar distributed energy resource systems that are  
14 not compatible with SolarAPP+ at the time the application is  
15 submitted to that entity.

16 (b) Any government entity in the State that issues  
17 building permits shall meet the requirements of subsection (a)  
18 by January 1, 2024.

19 (c) Any government entity in the State that issues  
20 building permits shall notify the Hawaii state energy office



1 when it achieves compliance with subsection (a) and shall  
2 continue to provide notification annually.

3 (d) As used in this section:

4 "Solar distributed energy resource system" means an  
5 assembly of solar energy-generating or energy-storing materials,  
6 or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy-  
7 storing materials, and the related infrastructure necessary for  
8 its operation.

9 "SolarAPP+" means the web-based portal and associated  
10 software tools developed by the National Renewable Energy  
11 Laboratory, as updated from time to time.

12 §196-B Adoption of self-certification for solar and energy  
13 storage projects. (a) Any government entity in the State that  
14 issues building permits in territories served by an investor-  
15 owned electric utility shall establish a self-certification  
16 process for solar distributed energy resource systems that deems  
17 permit applications approved and allows applicants to proceed to  
18 build immediately; provided that:

19 (1) The applicable government entity in the State that  
20 issues building permits is notified in writing by the  
21 project owner; or an agent of the project owner, that



1 the owner or agent requests issuance of the permit and  
2 is prepared to pay any required fees; and

3 (2) The applicable government entity in the State that  
4 issues building permits is notified in writing by the  
5 duly licensed electrician or duly licensed plumber, as  
6 applicable, who intends to install the solar  
7 distributed energy resource system that the  
8 installation of the system complies with all  
9 applicable codes and laws.

10 (b) A permit application or self-certification for a solar  
11 distributed energy resource system shall not require submission  
12 of an approved materials and methods number; provided that the  
13 following are provided with the license holder's notification to  
14 the applicable government entity in the State that issues  
15 building permits:

- 16 (1) A manufacturer specification sheet;
- 17 (2) An installation and operations manual; and
- 18 (3) A UL or other national testing laboratory  
19 certification.

20 (c) If the requirements of subsection (a) are satisfied,  
21 the applicable government entity in the State that issues



1 building permits shall issue the building permit number and  
2 close the permit within thirty days of submittal.

3 (d) As used in this section, "solar distributed energy  
4 resource system" means an assembly of solar energy-generating or  
5 energy-storing materials, or any combined assembly of solar  
6 energy-generating and energy-storing materials, and the related  
7 infrastructure necessary for its operation."

8 SECTION 3. In codifying the new sections added by section  
9 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
10 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
11 the new sections in this Act.

12 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 6, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Solar Distributed Energy Resource Systems; Online Building Permitting Tools

**Description:**

Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real time by 1/1/2024. Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in territories served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt self-certification for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible. Effective 1/6/2050. (SD2)

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

