

JAN 15 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's climate,
2 with a year-round growing season and ample rain in many areas,
3 has several potential advantages for growing plant-based
4 materials that can be processed into structural building
5 materials. For example, with sufficient water, there are types
6 of clumping bamboo that can grow very rapidly and be processed
7 into building materials that are stronger, more flexible, and
8 lighter than timber or steel and can be made more fire- and
9 termite-resistant than wood. "Hempcrete" developed from
10 industrial hemp can substitute for building blocks.
11 "Biocements" produced from cyanobacteria (blue-green algae or
12 "pond scum") can substitute for Portland cement.

13 The legislature further finds that these and other
14 plant-based building materials could bring green agriculture
15 jobs to Hawaii and help the State meet its net negative carbon
16 and greenhouse gas goals, as these plant-based building
17 materials sequester carbon, whereas production of traditional



1 building materials such as timber, steel, and cement emit very
2 large amounts of greenhouse gases.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
4 working group to study how best to grow plants, develop plant-
5 based building materials in Hawaii, and provide green jobs,
6 while sequestering carbon and other greenhouse gases to help
7 reach the State's climate target.

8 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a plant-based
9 building materials working group to study how best to grow
10 plants for development of plant-based building materials in
11 Hawaii and provide green agricultural jobs while sequestering
12 carbon and other greenhouse gases to help achieve the State's
13 climate target.

14 (b) The working group shall consist of the following:

15 (1) The dean and director of the university of Hawaii at
16 Manoa college of tropical agriculture and human
17 resources or their designee, who shall serve as
18 chairperson;

19 (2) Four individuals who have expertise in growing or
20 producing plant-based building materials, to be
21 invited by the chairperson;



- 1 (3) The director of the university of Hawaii at Hilo
- 2 college of agriculture, forestry, and natural resource
- 3 management, or their designee;
- 4 (4) The chairperson of the board of agriculture, or their
- 5 designee;
- 6 (5) The coordinator of the Hawaii climate change
- 7 mitigation and adaptation commission;
- 8 (6) An expert in building materials, who the chairperson
- 9 shall invite in consultation with the General
- 10 Contractors Association of Hawaii; and
- 11 (7) Additional members with appropriate specialized
- 12 expertise, as recommended by the members of the
- 13 working group, at the discretion of the chairperson.
- 14 (c) Members of the working group shall serve without
- 15 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses
- 16 incurred, including travel expenses. No member of the working
- 17 group shall be made subject to chapter 84, Hawaii Revised
- 18 Statutes, solely because of that member's participation as a
- 19 member of the working group.
- 20 (d) The working group shall submit a report of its
- 21 findings and recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to



1 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
2 of the regular session of 2027.

3 (e) The working group shall be dissolved on January 14,
4 2027.

5 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

6

INTRODUCED BY:





S.B. NO. 234

Report Title:

Plant-Based Building Materials Working Group; Report

Description:

Establishes a Plant-Based Building Materials Working Group to study how best to grow plants, develop plant-based building materials in Hawaii, and provide economic development and green jobs while sequestering greenhouse gases to help achieve the State's climate target. Requires a report to the legislature.

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