THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 412 S.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the installation of on-site distributed energy resources, such as rooftop solar and battery storage, is not only one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants associated with electricity generation and consumption, but also provides affordable and resilient power for the State's energy system users. Energy used to power buildings accounts for more than fifty per cent of the electricity consumed in the State, yet the State has not undertaken efforts to maximize on-site renewable energy production at many of its own facilities, foregoing millions of dollars in potential savings.

The legislature further finds that the State has long recognized its responsibility to mitigate the effects of natural and man-made emergencies that can result in extreme peril to life, property, and the resources of the State. In 2021, the legislature made history by becoming the first state in the United States to declare a climate emergency. Senate Concurrent

Resolution No. 44, S.D. 1, H.D. 1 (2021) acknowledges that an existential climate emergency threatens humanity and the natural world, declares a climate emergency, requests statewide collaboration toward an immediate transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate, and requests entities statewide to pursue these climate mitigation and adaptation efforts and mobilize at the necessary scale and speed.

The legislature further finds that the growing climate crisis threatens the health and well-being of the State's residents through the impacts of extreme weather events. Stronger storms as a result of climate change are more likely to cause power outages, which can be costly in terms of lives lost and impacts on the economy and public health. Additionally, extreme weather events can result in severe damages to port infrastructure at the State's harbors, resulting in disruption of port activity and the delay or loss of cargo shipments, including those containing emergency supplies. The legislature acknowledges that building the State's resilience against the effects of climate change is in the best interest of the State's residents.

The legislature further finds that to ensure that preparations within the State will be adequate to deal with the emergencies caused by climate change, particularly in situations involving disruptions to the electric grid and port activity, state agencies, and in particular, first responders, must have the ability to function fully to assist with recovery efforts. Maintaining electricity at facilities, especially for first responders, is therefore paramount.

The legislature also recognizes the devastating impact of wildfires on the State's infrastructure and communities. The 2023 Maui wildfires serve as a tragic example, where downed power lines ignited dry vegetation, leading to a catastrophic destruction and significant loss of life and property. The fires caused widespread power outages, leaving residents without electricity during critical times, hindering emergency response efforts, and exacerbating the community's vulnerability.

Furthermore, the legislature acknowledges that wildfires can cause direct physical damage to utility infrastructure, such as power lines and substations, leading to prolonged power outages and significant economic impacts. The increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires, driven by climate change,

underscores the urgent need to enhance the resilience of the State's power infrastructure.

In light of these challenges, the legislature finds that investing in on-site distributed energy resources at state facilities, particularly those critical to emergency response, is essential. Such investments will not only contribute to the State's clean energy goals but also enhance the resilience of essential services during disasters, ensuring that facilities can maintain operations even when the centralized power grid is compromised.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

(1) Require the Hawaii state energy office to assess the feasibility of installing distributed energy resource systems at each state facility and issue a report of its findings to each respective state department;

(2) Require state departments to implement and install the distributed energy resource systems for each of its facilities, as detailed in the Hawaii State energy office's report, no later than five years from the issue date of the reports; and

(3) Prioritize the required energy efficiency measures to first responder facilities.

SECTION 2. Chapter 196, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"**§196- Distributed energy resource installation for state facilities; reports.** (a) The Hawaii State energy office shall assess the feasibility of installing distributed energy resource systems at each state department facility and provide a report to the respective state department detailing the findings as follows:

(1) Beginning on January 1, 2026, for each state facility that has not been retrofitted pursuant to section 36-41 since 2010; and

(2) Beginning on January 1, 2028, for every other state facility.

(b) All state departments shall implement and install the distributed energy resource systems for each facility, as detailed in the reports required by subsection (a), no later than five years from the date the applicable report is submitted; provided that no entity shall claim tax credits or

deductions, or depreciate assets under title 14 for implementing energy efficiency measures pursuant to this section; provided further that nothing in this subsection shall prohibit state facilities from implementing energy efficiency measures sooner than indicated by the reports required in subsection (a).

(c) Priority for the implementation and installation of energy efficiency measures required by this section shall be given to first responder facilities.

(d) For the purposes of this section:

"Distributed energy resource system" means an assembly of energy-generating or energy-storing materials, or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy storing materials, sited at or on a facility and the related infrastructure necessary for the facility's operation.

"Energy efficiency measure" means any energy services, projects, and equipment, including but not limited to building or facility energy conservation enhancements, demand management, or demand response retrofits, which may include energy saved offsite by water or other utility enhancing retrofits, to improve the energy efficiency or reduce energy costs of the facility.

"Facility" or "state facility" means a structure under the control of any department of the State.

"First responder facility" means a facility used by firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, or other individuals who, in the course of their professional duties, respond to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

S.B. NO. 412 S.D. 1

Report Title:
HSEO; Renewable Energy; State Facilities; Reports; First Responder Facilities; Solar Energy

Description:
Requires the Hawaii State Energy Office to assess the feasibility of installing distributed energy resource systems at each state department facility. Requires state departments to implement and install the distributed energy resource systems detailed in the reports no later than five years from the issue date of the reports. Gives priority for the required energy efficiency measures to first responder facilities. (SD1)

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