

JAN 17 2025

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, the
10 State must lower the administrative barriers that constrain
11 deployment of residential and commercial-scale distributed
12 energy resources.

13 The legislature further finds that the existing permitting
14 processes can add substantial time and cost to the adoption of
15 residential solar and energy storage projects and that online
16 permitting tools such as the United States Department of
17 Energy's SolarAPP+ have been successfully implemented by



1 hundreds of government entities that issue building permits
2 throughout the nation. The legislature finds that the State's
3 permit-issuing government entities should similarly take
4 advantage of these tools to help meet the State's clean energy,
5 reliability, and resilience needs.

6 The purpose of this Act is to reduce administrative
7 barriers to the deployment of energy generation and storage
8 technology systems by requiring:

9 (1) Government entities in the State that issue building
10 permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally
11 equivalent online automated permitting platform that
12 processes and issues permits to licensed contractors
13 for solar distributed energy resource systems in real
14 time by January 1, 2026; and

15 (2) Government entities in the State that issue building
16 permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric
17 utility to adopt a self-certification process for
18 solar distributed energy resource systems that are not
19 SolarAPP+ compatible.



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

"§196-A Building permits; issuing entities; adoption of online automated permitting platform; solar distributed energy resource systems. (a) Any government entity in the State that issues building permits shall:

(1) By January 1, 2026, implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that processes and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real-time; provided that the government entity shall adopt a self-certification process pursuant to section 196-B for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not compatible with SolarAPP+ or any functional online equivalent at the time the permit application is submitted to the government entity;

(2) Notify the Hawaii state energy office when it achieves compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1); and



1 (3) Submit annual notifications of its compliance with the
2 requirements of paragraph (1) to the Hawaii state
3 energy office.

4 (b) In issuing building permits in compliance with
5 subsection (a), the applicable government entity in the State
6 may promote the use of labor standards, including but not
7 limited to living wages, benefits, and requirements for
8 participation in state-approved apprenticeship programs.

9 (c) For the purposes of this section:

10 "Solar distributed energy resource system" means an
11 assembly of solar energy-generating or energy-storing materials,
12 or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy-
13 storing materials, and the related infrastructure necessary for
14 its operation.

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

18 **§196-B Adoption of self-certification for solar**
19 **distributed energy resource systems; permit approval; notice.**

20 (a) Any government entity in the State that issues building
21 permits in any area of the State served by an investor-owned



1 electric utility shall establish a self-certification process
2 for residential and commercial on-site solar distributed energy
3 resource systems that deems permit applications approved and
4 allows applicants to proceed to build immediately; provided that
5 the government entity receives written notice from:

6 (1) The project owner, or an agent of the project owner,
7 that the owner or agent requests issuance of the
8 permit and is prepared to pay any required fees; and

9 (2) The duly licensed architect, duly licensed engineer,
10 duly licensed electrician, or duly licensed plumber,
11 as applicable, who intends to install the solar
12 distributed energy resource system, that the
13 installation of the system complies with all
14 applicable codes and laws.

15 (b) A permit application or self-certification for a solar
16 distributed energy resource system shall not require submission
17 of an approved materials and methods number; provided that the
18 following are submitted with the license holder's written
19 notification pursuant to subsection (a):

20 (1) A manufacturer specification sheet;

21 (2) An installation and operations manual; and



1 (3) A UL or other national testing laboratory
2 certification.

3 (c) If the requirements of subsection (a) are satisfied,
4 the applicable government entity in the State that issues
5 building permits shall issue the building permit number and
6 close the permit within thirty days of submittal.

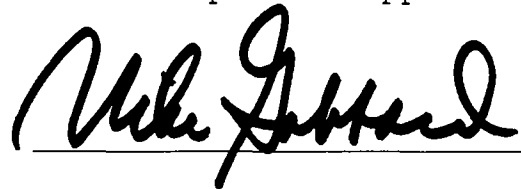
7 (d) For the purposes of this section, "solar distributed
8 energy resource system" has the same meaning as defined in
9 section 196-A."

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

14 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

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

16
INTRODUCED BY:



S.B. NO. 701

Report Title:

Solar Distributed Energy Resource Systems; Building Permits;
Online Automated Permitting Platform; Self-Certification Process

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 1/1/2026. Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

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

