

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change is
2 occurring due to human activity, particularly the burning of
3 fossil fuels and the concomitant release of carbon dioxide.
4 Thirty-four per cent of Hawai'i's coastlines are vulnerable to
5 intensifying coastal hazards resulting from accelerating sea
6 level rise, according to a study performed by researchers at the
7 university of Hawai'i.

8 The legislature further finds that, according to a report
9 produced by the Hawai'i climate change mitigation and adaptation
10 commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by
11 2100, with more recent projections showing this rise occurring
12 as early as 2060. The report also found that over the next
13 thirty to seventy years, approximately six thousand five hundred
14 structures, thirty-eight miles of coastal roads, five hundred
15 fifty cultural sites, and at least nineteen thousand eight
16 hundred residents statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding,
17 resulting in an estimated \$19,000,000,000 in economic loss.



1 The legislature additionally finds that in response to the
2 growing threat of climate change, the State has set standards
3 and launched initiatives to expand reliance on sustainable and
4 efficient energy, including setting a statewide benchmark of
5 generating one hundred per cent of the State's electricity
6 through renewable resources by 2045 and establishing a goal for
7 the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit to be at least
8 fifty per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

9 The legislature also finds that the G7 Climate, Energy, and
10 Environment Ministers' Communique issued on April 16, 2023,
11 affirmed the importance of nature-based solutions, including
12 marine ecosystem restoration, in halting and reversing
13 biodiversity loss, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and
14 preserving and enhancing carbon sinks. Moreover, climate
15 researchers have asserted that establishing transparent methods
16 for accounting for both direct and indirect greenhouse gas
17 emissions is crucial to ensuring consistency, accuracy, and
18 comparability of greenhouse gas emissions data across the public
19 and private sectors. Increasing attention to the carbon
20 sequestration potential of marine ecosystem restoration in the
21 islands and enhancing carbon accounting methodologies for direct



1 and indirect greenhouse gas emissions would help the State meet
2 its clean energy and climate change mitigation goals.

3 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to strengthen the
4 State's efforts to combat climate change by authorizing the
5 Hawai'i clean energy initiative program to identify:

6 (1) Pathways for supporting renewable energy and
7 conservation projects that align carbon sequestration
8 with marine ecosystem restoration; and

9 (2) Opportunities for strengthening carbon accounting
10 methodologies to assist in the quantification and
11 reduction of direct and indirect greenhouse gas
12 emissions.

13 SECTION 2. Section 196-10.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

15 "(a) There is established within the department of
16 business, economic development, and tourism, a Hawaii clean
17 energy initiative program to manage the State's transition to a
18 clean energy economy. The clean energy program shall design,
19 implement, and administer activities that include:



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- 1 (1) Strategic partnerships for the research, development,
2 testing, deployment, and permitting of clean and
3 renewable technologies;
- 4 (2) Engineering and economic evaluations of Hawaii's
5 potential for near-term project opportunities for the
6 State's renewable energy resources;
- 7 (3) Electric grid reliability and security projects that
8 will enable the integration of a substantial increase
9 of electricity from renewable-energy resources;
- 10 (4) A statewide clean energy public education and outreach
11 plan to be developed in coordination with Hawaii's
12 institutions of public education;
- 13 (5) Promotion of Hawaii's clean and renewable resources to
14 potential partners and investors;
- 15 (6) A plan, to be implemented from 2011 to 2030, to
16 transition the State to a clean energy economy; ~~[and]~~
- 17 (7) A plan, to be implemented from 2011 to 2030, to assist
18 each county in transitioning to a clean energy
19 economy[-];
- 20 (8) To the greatest extent possible, pathways for
21 supporting clean energy and conservation projects that



1 align carbon sequestration with marine ecosystem
2 restoration; and
3 (9) To the greatest extent possible, opportunities for
4 strengthening carbon accounting methodologies to
5 assist in the quantification and reduction of direct
6 and indirect greenhouse gas emissions."

7 SECTION 3. The chief energy officer shall include with its
8 report pursuant to section 196-10.5(c) a report of its findings
9 and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
10 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
11 the regular session of 2027 on its efforts to fulfill the
12 requirements of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
14 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

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

16

INTRODUCED BY:

Karl Rhoads



S.B. NO. 939

Report Title:

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism;
Climate Change; Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative Program; Carbon
Sequestration; Report

Description:

Expands the scope of the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative Program to include the design, implementation, and administration of pathways for supporting renewable energy and conservation projects that align carbon sequestration with marine ecosystem restoration and opportunities for strengthening carbon accounting methodologies to assist in the quantification and reduction of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. Requires a report to the Legislature.

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