
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the climate crisis
2 is the overriding challenge of the twenty-first century,
3 presenting significant threats to the environment, public
4 health, and economic stability of the State.

5 In 2024, the department of transportation reached an
6 unprecedented settlement in the *Navahine v. Hawaii Department of*
7 *Transportation* constitutional climate lawsuit, underscoring the
8 State's commitment to addressing climate change through
9 responsible governance and innovative solutions. The settlement
10 further emphasized the importance of ensuring that future
11 generations and youth will inherit a life-sustaining climate
12 with access to the same diversity and cultural resources enjoyed
13 by previous generations.

14 The legislature recognized in Act 32, Session Laws of
15 Hawaii 2017 (Act 32), that on December 12, 2015, one hundred
16 ninety-five countries at the 21st Conference of the Parties of
17 the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change



1 adopted an agreement addressing greenhouse gas emissions
2 mitigation, adaptation, and finance starting in the year 2020,
3 known as the Paris Agreement. Act 32 further documented the
4 State's commitment to implement the goals of the Paris
5 Agreement, demonstrating the State's proactive stance in
6 contributing to global climate mitigation efforts by
7 systematically reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

8 Furthermore, the United States has set ambitious,
9 nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement,
10 aiming to significantly reduce national greenhouse gas
11 emissions. In December 2023, the Hawaii state energy office
12 completed the first Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization report to
13 estimate sector and category-level projections of greenhouse gas
14 emissions necessary to reach the overarching emissions target
15 established in section 225P-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, by Act
16 238, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022. Through this work, sector-
17 specific targets can be derived, providing a clearer roadmap for
18 achieving comprehensive emissions reductions across all sectors
19 of the State's economy.

20 The legislature further finds that the current overarching
21 targets established within section 225P-5, Hawaii Revised



1 Statutes, are consistent with the nationally determined
2 contributions but can be strengthened by providing more
3 specificity and clarity. Similarly, the responsibilities and
4 powers of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
5 commission could be updated to better address the environmental
6 threats facing the State.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 8 (1) Establish an executive committee and amend the
9 membership and duties of the Hawaii climate change
10 mitigation and adaptation commission;
- 11 (2) Require each member agency of the Hawaii climate
12 change mitigation and adaptation commission to
13 implement its own actions to address certain
14 strategies and goals established by the commission;
- 15 (3) Establish reporting and review requirements for member
16 agencies relating to climate change mitigation and
17 adaptation efforts and clean economy targets;
- 18 (4) Update reporting requirements for the sea level rise
19 vulnerability and adaptation reports;



- 1 (5) Allow the Hawaii climate change mitigation and
- 2 adaptation commission to enter into certain
- 3 procurement contracts; and
- 4 (6) Update the zero emissions clean economy target

5 SECTION 2. Section 225P-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
6 amended by adding twelve new definitions to be appropriately
7 inserted and to read as follows:

8 "Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions" means the release
9 of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere as a direct result of
10 human activities generated through sources including but not
11 limited to fuel combustion, industrial operations,
12 deforestation, agricultural practices, and waste management.

13 "Carbon sink" means any process, activity, or mechanism
14 that removes greenhouse gases, an aerosol, or a precursor of a
15 greenhouse gas from the atmosphere.

16 "Emission leakage" means the net increase of anthropogenic
17 greenhouse gas emissions occurring outside an established
18 inventory system boundary in one location or sector that results
19 from efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in another
20 location or sector.



1 "Greenhouse gas" means any gas in the atmosphere that traps
2 or emits heat and results in increasing the Earth's surface
3 temperatures. "Greenhouse gas" includes carbon dioxide,
4 methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases.

5 "Greenhouse gas emission" means the production or release
6 of greenhouse gases from human activities including but not
7 limited to the burning of carbon-based fuels, the release of
8 gases from certain chemical reactions, the release and leakage
9 of refrigerants, the application of fertilizer, or
10 deforestation.

11 "Greenhouse gas emitting category" means the various
12 economic sub-classifications within each sector as defined by
13 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United
14 Nations.

15 "Greenhouse gas emitting sector" means the various economic
16 classifications that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions,
17 including the energy, transport, buildings, industry,
18 agriculture, forestry, and waste management sectors, as
19 determined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of
20 the United Nations.



1 "Greenhouse gas emissions inventory" means the statewide
2 greenhouse gas emissions inventory report published by the
3 department of health pursuant to section 342B-71.

4 "Greenhouse gas reservoir" means a physical unit or
5 component of the biosphere, geosphere, or hydrosphere with the
6 capability to store, accumulate, or release a greenhouse gas
7 removed from the atmosphere by a greenhouse gas sink or a
8 greenhouse gas captured from a greenhouse gas emission source.

9 "Member state agency" mean any state agency represented by
10 a member of the commission pursuant to section 225P-3(c).

11 "Member agency" mean any state or county agency represented
12 by a member of the commission pursuant to section 225P-3(c).

13 "Net greenhouse gas emission" means the estimated balance
14 between the emissions produced or released into the atmosphere,
15 subtracted from the emissions sequestered through natural and
16 technological processes, or the sum of emissions sources and
17 sinks."

18 SECTION 3. Section 225P-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended to read as follows:

20 **"§225P-3 Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation**
21 **commission; general functions, duties, and powers.** (a) There



1 is established the Hawaii climate change mitigation and
2 adaptation commission that shall be placed within the department
3 of land and natural resources for administrative purposes only.

4 (b) ~~Coordination of the~~ The commission shall be ~~headed~~
5 ~~jointly by the chairperson of the board of land and natural~~
6 ~~resources, or the chairperson's designee, and the director of~~
7 ~~the office of planning and sustainable development, or the~~
8 ~~director's designee.] headed by a five-member executive~~
9 ~~committee, to be elected annually from among the members of the~~
10 ~~commission at its first meeting of the calendar year. The~~
11 executive committee shall consist of:

12 (1) One of the commission members described in subsection
13 (c) (1);
14 (2) Two of the commission members described in subsection
15 (c) (2) to (14);
16 (3) One of the commission members described in subsection
17 (c) (15); and
18 (4) One of the commission members described in subsection
19 (c) (2), (4), (6), (8), (9), (10), (12), or (13) that
20 is not elected under paragraph (3).
21 (c) The commission shall include the following members:



1 (1) The chairs of the standing committees of the
2 legislature with subject matter jurisdiction
3 encompassing environmental protection, climate
4 mitigation, transportation, and land use;
5 (2) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
6 resources or the chairperson's designee[, ~~who shall be~~
7 ~~the co-chair of the commission~~];
8 (3) The director of the office of planning and sustainable
9 development or the director's designee[, ~~who shall be~~
10 ~~the co-chair of the commission~~];
11 (4) The director of business, economic development, and
12 tourism or the director's designee;
13 (5) The chairperson of the board of directors of the
14 Hawaii tourism authority or the chairperson's
15 designee;
16 (6) The chairperson of the board of agriculture and
17 biosecurity or the chairperson's designee;
18 (7) The chief executive officer of the office of Hawaiian
19 affairs or the officer's designee;
20 (8) The chairperson of the Hawaiian homes commission or
21 the chairperson's designee;





1 and others as necessary[–] to participate in or provide input to
2 the commission.

3 (e) The members of the commission shall serve without pay
4 but shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses,
5 including travel expenses, incurred in carrying out their
6 duties.

7 (f) The commission shall provide policy direction,
8 facilitation, coordination, and planning among state and county
9 agencies, federal agencies, and other partners as appropriate.

10 (g) The commission shall establish climate change
11 mitigation and adaptation strategies and goals to help guide
12 planning and implementation statewide using the latest
13 scientific analysis and risk assessment to monitor and forecast
14 climate change related impacts at the regional, state, and local
15 level, including any additional information deemed necessary.

16 Each member agency shall implement actions within its own agency
17 to address the strategies and goals established by the
18 commission.

19 (h) The commission shall identify vulnerable people,
20 communities, industries, ecosystems, and the potential economic



1 and public health ramifications for climate change related
2 impacts.

3 (i) The commission shall identify existing climate change
4 mitigation and adaptation efforts at the federal, state, and
5 local levels and make recommendations [~~for how~~, set standards,
6 and determine direct actions needed to meet or exceed Hawaii's
7 state mitigation goals and shall adopt a liberal approach in
8 preparation, so as to minimize future risk to the people and
9 environment of Hawaii.

10 (j) The commission shall assess the capacity and
11 availability of existing resources and identify new sources of
12 revenue necessary to address climate change mitigation and
13 adaptation and shall advise the governor, legislature, and
14 counties on the economic and budgetary ramifications of climate
15 change impacts, mitigation, and adaptation.

16 (k) The commission and each member agency shall identify
17 the information necessary to track progress in implementing
18 climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and shall each
19 submit an annual report to the governor and legislature no later
20 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session
21 of the legislature.



1 (1) The commission shall maintain a website that includes
2 a mission statement as well as access to climate change related
3 actions, plans, policies, and results.

4 (m) The commission shall conduct a comprehensive review of
5 the implementation as required by this section and submit a
6 report to the governor, legislature, and the counties no later
7 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session
8 of 2023 and every five years thereafter. Each member agency
9 shall select implementation actions relating to climate
10 mitigation and adaptation that align with the agency's primary
11 purpose and submit to the commission a comprehensive review of
12 its implementation actions no later than twenty days prior to
13 the convening of the regular session of 2028 and every five
14 years thereafter. The commission shall assist member agencies
15 with the documentation requirements specific to each agency and
16 make the reports publicly available.

17 (n) The commission shall[~~, as a first step, focus on and~~
18 ~~develop~~] maintain and publish sea level rise vulnerability and
19 adaptation reports that shall include:

20 (1) Identification of the major areas of sea level rise
21 impacts affecting the State and counties through



1 2050[+] and shall publish updated reports as these
2 impacts over a fifty-year planning horizon are
3 identified;

4 (2) Identification of expected impacts of sea level rise
5 based on the latest scientific research for each area
6 through 2050[+] and shall publish updated reports as
7 these expected impacts over a fifty-year planning
8 horizon are identified;

9 (3) Identification of the economic ramifications of sea
10 level rise;

11 (4) Identification of applicable federal laws, policies,
12 or programs that impact affected areas; and

13 (5) Recommendations for planning, management, and
14 adaptation for hazards associated with increasing sea
15 level rise.

16 The ~~reports shall be made publicly available no later than~~
17 ~~December 31, 2017, and the~~ commission shall reevaluate and
18 update the 2017 sea level rise vulnerability and adaptation
19 report every five years.

20 (o) In developing the report, pursuant to subsection (n),
21 the commission shall:



5 (p) The commission may enter into contracts for the
6 procurement of goods and services to advance climate change
7 mitigation and adaptation."

8 SECTION 4. Section 225P-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended to read as follows:

10 "§225P-5 Zero emissions clean economy target. (a)

11 Considering [~~both atmospheric carbon and~~] all in-state

12 anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions as well as [~~offsets~~]

13 carbon sink capacity from the local in-state sequestration of

14 atmospheric carbon [~~and greenhouse gases~~] through long-term

15 carbon sinks and greenhouse gas reservoirs, a statewide net

16 greenhouse gas emission target is hereby established to

17 sequester more atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gases than are

18 anthropogenically emitted within the State as quickly as

19 practicable[, but no later than 2045; provided that the

20 statewide target includes a greenhouse gas emissions limit, to

21 be achieved no later than].



1 The net greenhouse gas emissions target shall be as
2 follows:

3 (1) By December 31, 2030, [ef] statewide net greenhouse
4 gas emissions shall be at least fifty per cent below
5 the level of the statewide net greenhouse gas
6 emissions in 2005[-], as determined by the greenhouse
7 gas emissions inventory; and
8 (2) By December 31, 2045, statewide net greenhouse gas
9 emissions shall be no greater than zero.

10 (b) The commission shall work:

11 (1) With stakeholders in all greenhouse gas emitting
12 sectors and categories to develop and inform science-
13 based targets in those sectors and categories; and
14 (2) To ensure that all member agencies avoid emission
15 leakage resulting from policies, projects, and
16 programs implemented to achieve the targets
17 established pursuant to this section.

18 [~~(b)~~] (c) The [Hawaii climate change mitigation and
19 adaptation] commission shall [endeavor to] provide policy and
20 program guidance to member agencies and non-governmental



1 agencies on the actions needed to achieve the goals of this
2 section.

3 (d) After January 1, [2020,] 2027, member state agency
4 plans, decisions, including procurement decisions, and
5 strategies shall [give consideration to] consider the impact of
6 those plans, decisions, and strategies on the State's ability to
7 achieve the [goals] targets outlined in this section, weighed
8 appropriately against their primary purpose.

9 (e) Each member agency shall submit to the commission and
10 include in its annual report to the legislature and governor
11 pursuant to section 225P-3(k) a summary of actions taken, or not
12 taken, to help the State meet the established clean economy
13 targets. The commission shall develop a standardized reporting
14 template to facilitate reporting for member agencies."

15 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
16 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

17 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



H.B. NO. 1623

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INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 16 2026



H.B. NO. 1623

Report Title:

Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; Duties; Executive Committee; Member Agencies; Reports; Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Reports; Zero Emissions Clean Economy Target

Description:

Establishes an executive committee and amends the membership and duties of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission). Requires each member agency of the Commission to implement its own actions to address certain strategies and goals established by the Commission. Establishes reporting and review requirements for member agencies relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and clean economy targets. Updates reporting requirements for the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation reports. Allows the Commission to enter into certain procurement contracts. Updates the zero emissions clean economy target.

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

