
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PERMITTING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Simplifying
2 Permitting for Enhanced Economic Development (SPEED) task force
3 was established pursuant to Act 133, Session Laws of Hawaii
4 2025. The SPEED task force brought together various state and
5 county agencies and stakeholders to address issues related to
6 obtaining permits for housing, infrastructure, and other
7 projects. The legislature further finds that the SPEED task
8 force is responsible for identifying actions taken, challenges
9 encountered, and legislative measures needed to facilitate,
10 expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental permitting
11 processes.

12 In its initial phase, the SPEED task force split into three
13 permitted interaction groups, each focused on a specific, high-
14 impact segment of the permitting system. The SPEED task force
15 then submitted to the legislature a December 2025 final report
16 of the permitted interaction groups, representing a combined
17 report of the three permitted interaction groups, which outlined



1 findings regarding existing actions and persistent challenges
2 and presented initial recommendations for legislative and
3 administrative measures to improve permitting processes
4 statewide.

5 The December 2025 final report identifies lengthy waiting
6 times as a common issue in the permitting process and finds that
7 applicants, staff, and the process itself share responsibility
8 for these delays. However, a major delay in the process occurs
9 before state and county personnel can even begin their
10 substantive technical review, in the form of incomplete or
11 incorrect submissions, misrouted applications, and poor quality
12 plans. The final report suggests that a digital system or
13 intake portal could be used to prevent the submission of
14 incomplete applications and standardize data across
15 jurisdictions. The legislature additionally finds that some
16 counties have already begun to implement artificial intelligence
17 tools as part of the application screening process to reduce
18 repetitive tasks for staff while preserving professional
19 judgement.

20 The final report also notes that counties currently use
21 incompatible data standards to represent permit status, key



1 dates, valuations, and categories, which can lead to confusion
2 amongst contractors working in more than one county and degrade
3 application quality. A statewide platform that ensures
4 consistent data, shared metrics, and public-facing information
5 could therefore help ensure a more cohesive permitting process
6 across jurisdictions.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
8 department of business, economic development, and tourism to
9 develop a statewide permitting intake platform.

10 SECTION 2. The department of business, economic
11 development, and tourism shall develop a statewide permitting
12 intake platform. The statewide permitting intake platform
13 shall:

- 14 (1) Utilize artificial intelligence to support the permit
15 intake, routing, and review process;
- 16 (2) Be shared, or at minimum interoperable, amongst
17 counties and state permitting agencies;
- 18 (3) Screen applications for completeness, missing
19 documentation, and inconsistencies;
- 20 (4) Enforce required fields at intake;
- 21 (5) Validate basic parcel and zoning information;



- (6) Route applications concurrently to all relevant agencies;
- (7) Offer guidance to applicants through an applicant-facing chat and frequently asked questions resources; and
- (8) Preserve the use of in-person assistance and phone support and ensure that any use of automation or artificial intelligence enhances, rather than replaces, human service.

10 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000 or so much
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
13 department of business, economic development, and tourism to
14 develop a statewide permitting intake platform pursuant to
15 section 2 of this Act; provided that no funds shall be made
16 available under this Act unless each county provides matching
17 funds in the sum of \$12,500 per county.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
19 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of
20 this Act.

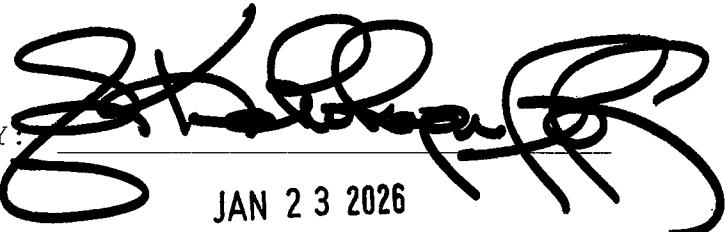
21 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 1968

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INTRODUCED BY:


JAN 23 2026



H.B. NO. 1968

Report Title:

DBEDT; Counties; Permitting; Statewide Permitting Intake Platform; Appropriation

Description:

Implements certain recommendations of the SPEED Task Force. Requires the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to develop a statewide permitting intake platform. Appropriates funds for the development of the platform, subject to a matching funds requirement from the counties.

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