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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

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RELATING TO A PROGRAM TO CHARACTERIZE CARBON SEQUESTRATION  
POTENTIAL AND GEOTHERMAL AND UNDERGROUND WATER RESOURCES  
STATEWIDE.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a better  
2 understanding of the carbon sequestration potential and location  
3 and temperature of geothermal and underground water resources  
4 across the State can have multiple benefits to agriculture,  
5 clean energy, and land use.

6       The legislature further finds that resource  
7 characterization via slim-hole bores, which have a diameter of  
8 seven inches or less for over ninety per cent of the depth of  
9 the bore, can identify geothermal, carbon sequestration, and  
10 water resources across the State.

11       The legislature additionally finds that a statewide  
12 environmental assessment of a slim-hole exploration program  
13 should be conducted, along with robust and continued community  
14 engagement, to identify the most appropriate locations for this  
15 scientific activity.



1       The purpose of this Act is to require the Hawaii state  
2   energy office to implement a slim-hole resource characterization  
3   program that identifies the location and characteristics of  
4   geothermal, carbon sequestration, and underground water  
5   resources across the State in collaboration with the Hawaii  
6   groundwater and geothermal resources center at the university of  
7   Hawaii.

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

11       "§196-       Geothermal, carbon sequestration, and  
12 underground water resource characterization program. (a) There  
13 is established the geothermal, carbon sequestration, and  
14 underground water resource characterization program within the  
15 Hawaii state energy office to identify the location and  
16 characteristics of geothermal, carbon sequestration, and  
17 underground water resources across the State using the slim-hole  
18 boring exploration method. The Hawaii state energy office shall  
19 implement the program, which shall include conducting a  
20 statewide environmental assessment of the program's actions  
21 pursuant to chapter 343, in collaboration with the Hawaii



1 groundwater and geothermal resources center at the university of  
2 Hawaii or similar institution.

3 (b) Before and during the statewide environmental  
4 assessment for the geothermal, carbon sequestration, and  
5 underground water resource characterization program activities,  
6 the Hawaii state energy office and collaborators shall meet with  
7 the counties and nearby communities, including individuals and  
8 civic organizations, in order to explain the purpose of the  
9 program and identify community needs, priorities, concerns, and  
10 appropriate locations to conduct the slim-hole boring for the  
11 characterization program.

12 (c) The Hawaii state energy office shall submit a progress  
13 report on the geothermal, carbon sequestration, and underground  
14 water resource characterization program, including its findings,  
15 recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the  
16 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
17 the regular session of 2029. The report shall be made available  
18 to the public in readily accessible formats, including commonly  
19 used mapping software."

20 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the energy  
21 security special fund the sum of \$ or so much thereof



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1 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to carry out the  
2 purposes of this Act.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii state  
4 energy office for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027  
8 for full-time equivalent ( FTE) permanent position to  
9 support the activities described by this Act.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii state  
11 energy office for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 23 2026



# H.B. NO. 1981

**Report Title:**

Hawaii State Energy Office; Carbon Sequestration; Water Resources; Geothermal Exploration; Appropriations

**Description:**

Establishes a Geothermal, Carbon Sequestration, and Underground Water Resource Characterization Program via slim hole bores and a related statewide environmental assessment. Appropriates funds for the program and positions to support the program.

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

