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## 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 additionally finds that the permitting  
14 review process currently adds substantial time and cost to the  
15 adoption of residential solar and energy storage projects and  
16 that self-certification by duly licensed design professionals



1 can significantly reduce this time, cost, and administrative  
2 burden without sacrificing public health and safety.

3 The purpose of this Act is to reduce administrative  
4 barriers to the deployment of energy generation and storage  
5 technology systems by requiring government entities in the State  
6 that issue building permits to:

7 (1) Establish a self-certification process for  
8 behind-the-meter, customer-sited solar distributed  
9 energy resource systems that deems permit applications  
10 approved and allows applicants to proceed to build  
11 solar distributed energy resource system immediately;  
12 and

13 (2) Develop guidance for determining specific conditions  
14 under which a Federal Emergency Management Agency-  
15 mandated No-Rise Certification is not required for a  
16 solar distributed energy resource system located in a  
17 regulatory floodway.

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



1        "S196-A Building permits; self-certification; solar  
2        distributed energy resource systems. (a) By , each  
3        government entity in the State that issues building permits  
4        shall establish a self-certification process for  
5        behind-the-meter, customer-sited solar distributed energy  
6        resource system projects that deems permit applications approved  
7        and allows applicants to proceed to build the solar distributed  
8        energy resource system immediately; provided that:  
9                (1) The project is not located on a property within a  
10        special flood hazard area as identified on the Federal  
11        Emergency Management Agency's current Flood Insurance  
12        Rate Maps; and  
13                (2) The government entity receives from the project owner  
14        or agent of the project owner, prior to the  
15        commencement of any work:  
16                (A) An attestation from a licensed design  
17        professional that the proposed project is not  
18        located within a flood zone that requires it to  
19        comply with federal, state, or county floodplain  
20        management development codes or laws pursuant to  
21        the requirements of the National Flood Insurance



Program. As part of the attestation form, the licensed design professional shall provide available Flood Insurance Rate Map panel information, which shall include the:

- (i) Community name and community identification number;
- (ii) Panel number;
- (iii) Suffix indicating the number of times the specific panel has been revised;
- (iv) Panel date; and
- (v) Flood zones;

(B) A request for issuance of the permit that includes a statement that the owner or agent of the owner is prepared to pay any required fees;

(C) Proof of a valid license in the respective field for any professional installing the project and confirmation that the installation of the project will comply with all applicable codes and laws.

20                   (b) The self-certification process shall allow a project's  
21                   licensed design professionals to conduct permit reviews and



1 inspections using commercially available software. The licensed  
2 design professionals' approvals shall be accepted without  
3 additional documentation; provided that the submitted  
4 documentation demonstrates compliance with all applicable codes  
5 and laws. The self-certification process shall allow a  
6 project's licensed design professionals to utilize offline field  
7 reports for inspections.

8 (c) If the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) are  
9 satisfied, the applicable government entity in the State that  
10 issues building permits shall issue the building permit number  
11 and close the permit within thirty days after the date that the  
12 application was submitted.

13 (d) As used in this section:

14 "Licensed design professional" means a professional  
15 engineer, architect, surveyor, or landscape architect licensed  
16 under chapter 464.

17 "Offline field report" means a report that uses photos and  
18 videos taken of the project on-site and submitted to a  
19 permitting authority to allow inspection remotely and  
20 asynchronously.



1        "Solar distributed energy resource system" means an  
2        assembly of solar energy-generating or energy-storing materials,  
3        or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy-  
4        storing materials, and the related infrastructure necessary for  
5        its operation.

6        **§196-B Solar distributed energy resource systems; No-Rise**  
7        **Certification; exemption; regulatory floodways.** (a) Each  
8        government entity in the State that issues building permits  
9        shall develop Federal Emergency Management Agency-accepted  
10        guidance for determining specific conditions under which a  
11        Federal Emergency Management Agency-mandated No-Rise  
12        Certification is not required for a solar distributed energy  
13        resource system located in a regulatory floodway as identified  
14        on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current Flood  
15        Insurance Rate Maps.

16        (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), the project owner or  
17        agent of the project owner shall:  
18            (1) Comply with all applicable codes and laws;  
19            (2) Properly install the solar distributed energy resource  
20            system on an already existing structure; and



1                   (3) Not create additional obstruction within the  
2                   regulatory floodway.

3                   (c) As used in this section, "solar distributed energy  
4                   resource system" has the same meaning as in section 196-A."

5                   SECTION 3. In codifying the new sections added by section  
6                   2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
7                   appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
8                   the new sections in this Act.

9                   SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

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

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INTRODUCED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JAN 23 2026



# H.B. NO. 1984

**Report Title:**

Solar Distributed Energy Resource Systems; Building Permits; Self-Certification Process; No-Rise Certification; Regulatory Floodways

**Description:**

Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to establish a self-certification process for behind-the-meter, customer-sited solar distributed energy resource systems that deems permit applications approved and allows applicants to proceed to build solar distributed energy resource system immediately. Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to develop guidance for determining specific conditions when a Federal Emergency Management Agency-mandated No-Rise Certification is not required for a solar distributed energy resource system located in a regulatory floodway.

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

