
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that affordability is an
2 essential component of climate policy and that strategies to
3 reduce greenhouse gas emissions must consider cost-effectiveness
4 and impacts on ratepayers, taxpayers, households, and the
5 broader economy, while also maintaining reliable and resilient
6 energy systems. Fossil fueled electricity generation
7 constitutes a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and
8 therefore represents a critical focus for emissions-reduction
9 efforts, while also considering the impact on customer energy
10 costs and system reliability.

11 The legislature further finds that climate change is driven
12 by the cumulative concentration of global greenhouse gases in
13 the atmosphere and that carbon dioxide is a globally mixed
14 pollutant. As recognized by the Intergovernmental Panel on
15 Climate Change, the climate benefit of greenhouse gas mitigation
16 and carbon sequestration depends on the net global reduction in
17 emissions and atmospheric concentrations, regardless of the



1 geographic location where sequestration or removal occurs;
2 provided that such reductions are real, measurable, additional,
3 and durable.

4 The legislature further finds that, taken as a whole, the
5 office of planning and sustainable development, in its 2019
6 report, "Feasibility and Implications of Establishing a Carbon
7 Offset Program for the State of Hawaii", reflects that that
8 although local sequestration projects may provide important co-
9 benefits, including ecosystem services, cultural value, and
10 local economic activity, the scale of available local
11 sequestration opportunities is limited and may be insufficient
12 on its own to achieve the State's long-term greenhouse gas
13 reduction goals, suggesting that access to broader sequestration
14 opportunities may be necessary and should be encouraged to
15 achieve cost-effective mitigation.

16 The legislature further finds that greenhouse gas emissions
17 are inherently interstate and global in nature, and that courts
18 have recognized regulation of greenhouse gas emissions as a
19 matter of federal concern due to their interstate and global
20 effects. Carbon sequestration and removal, as the corollary to
21 greenhouse gas emissions, similarly operate on a global



1 atmospheric basis. High-quality local sequestration projects
2 can deliver ecosystem, cultural, and community benefits, while
3 access to global sequestration opportunities can help reduce
4 overall costs and accelerate progress toward climate goals,
5 making local and global sequestration efforts complimentary.

6 The legislature further finds that chapter 225P, Hawaii
7 Revised Statutes (chapter 225P), establishes an aspirational
8 target for achieving a clean economy. As one of the statewide
9 planning chapters, chapter 225P is not to be construed as a
10 mandate. In fact, implementation of chapter 225P in a manner
11 that promotes or requires local sequestration over functionally
12 equivalent interstate or global sequestration, given that global
13 carbon sequestration and removal is a corollary to global
14 greenhouse gas emissions may raise concerns under the Dormant
15 Commerce Clause (article 1, section 8) of the United States
16 Constitution because it facially discriminates against out-of-
17 state sequestration services and credits and favors in-state
18 economic actors at the expense of interstate competitors.

19 The legislature further finds that a 2025 climate report
20 issued by the Council on Strategic Risks has concluded that
21 climate change presents systemic risks to both civilian and



1 military communities in the State, driven by global atmospheric
2 conditions and global emissions trends. These assessments
3 underscore that climate impacts are not confined by state
4 boundaries and that effective mitigation depends on reducing
5 cumulative global greenhouse gas concentrations. Accordingly,
6 the legislature believes that recognition of greenhouse gas
7 sequestration should reflect its equivalent climate benefit
8 regardless of geographic location, particularly where such
9 recognition supports cost-effective, resilient, and timely
10 emissions-reduction strategies.

11 The legislature also recognizes that the inclusion of a
12 representative from the Hawaii state energy office would
13 strengthen the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
14 commission's ability to evaluate mitigation and sequestration
15 strategies in a coordinated and informed manner that recognizes
16 the benefit of global opportunities. While each state agency
17 has been asked to consider the impact of their agency's internal
18 plans, departmental decisions, and strategies on the State's
19 ability to achieve the goals of a clean economy, there has been
20 no reporting of such consideration given.

21 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:



- (1) Include the chief energy officer of the Hawaii state energy office as a member of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission;
- (2) Ensure that the State's zero emissions clean economy aspirational target encourages both local and global sequestration;
- (3) Require each state agency to review the impacts of its internal plans as they relate to the purpose and goals of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission; and
- (4) Require the Hawaii state energy office to submit reports regarding each agency's findings towards incrementally advancing the purpose and goals of the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission.

SECTION 2. Section 225P-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is

17 amended to read as follows:

18 **"§225P-1 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to
19 address the effects of climate change to protect the State's
20 economy, environment, health, and way of life. This chapter
21 establishes the framework for the State to:

- (1) Adapt to the inevitable impacts of global warming and climate change, including rising sea levels, temperatures, and other risk factors; and
- (2) Mitigate its greenhouse gas emissions [by ~~sequestering~~ through the local and global sequestration of more atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gases than the State produces as quickly as practicable, but no later than 2045.]

9 SECTION 3. Section 225P-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

12 (1) The chairs of the standing committees of the
13 legislature with subject matter jurisdiction
14 encompassing environmental protection and land use;
15 (2) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
16 resources or the chairperson's designee, who shall be
17 the co-chair of the commission;
18 (3) The director of the office of planning and sustainable
19 development or the director's designee, who shall be
20 the co-chair of the commission;



- (4) The director of business, economic development, and tourism or the director's designee;
- (5) The chairperson of the board of directors of the Hawaii tourism authority or the chairperson's designee;
- (6) The chairperson of the board of agriculture and biosecurity or the chairperson's designee;
- (7) The chief executive officer of the office of Hawaiian affairs or the officer's designee;
- (8) The chairperson of the Hawaiian homes commission or the chairperson's designee;
- (9) The director of transportation or the director's designee;
- (10) The director of health or the director's designee;
- (11) The adjutant general or the adjutant general's designee;
- (12) The chairperson of the board of education or the chairperson's designee;
- (13) The directors of each of the county planning departments, or the directors' designees; [and]



1 (14) The manager of the coastal zone management program[.];

2 and

3 (15) The chief energy officer of the Hawaii state energy
4 office."

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

7 **"§225P-5 Zero emissions clean economy target.** (a)

8 Considering both atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gas emissions
9 as well as offsets from the local and global sequestration of
10 atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gases through long-term sinks
11 and reservoirs, a statewide target is hereby established to
12 sequester more atmospheric carbon and greenhouse gases than
13 emitted within the State as quickly as practicable, but no later
14 than 2045; provided that the statewide target includes a
15 greenhouse gas emissions limit, to be achieved no later than
16 2030, of at least fifty per cent below the level of the
17 statewide greenhouse gas emissions in 2005.

18 (b) The Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation
19 commission shall endeavor to achieve the goals of this section.
20 After January 1, 2020, agency plans, decisions, and strategies
21 shall give consideration to the impact of those plans,



1 decisions, and strategies on the State's ability to achieve the
2 goals in this section, weighed appropriately against their
3 primary purpose.

4 (c) Each agency of the State shall review the impacts of
5 its internal plans, departmental decisions, and strategies
6 showing incremental advancement towards the goals in this
7 section and submit the findings to the Hawaii state energy
8 office.

9 (d) The Hawaii state energy office shall submit a summary
10 report describing each agency's findings towards incrementally
11 advancing the goals of this section to the governor and
12 legislature, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
13 the regular session of 2027 and every five years thereafter."

14 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the energy
15 security special fund the sum of \$100,000 or so much thereof as
16 may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the Hawaii state
17 energy office to summarize each state agency's progress toward
18 contributing to the achievement of the state goals pursuant to
19 section 4 of this Act.

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

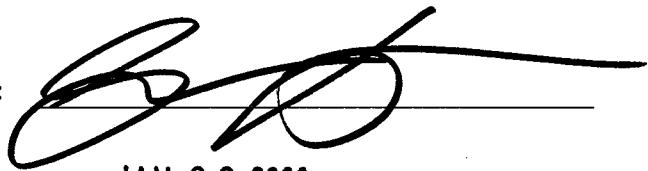


1 SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

3 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

4

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 28 2026



H.B. NO. 2492

Report Title:

HSEO; HCCMAC; GHG Sequestration; Climate Change; Reports; Appropriation

Description:

Includes the Chief Energy Officer of the Hawaii State Energy Office as a member of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. Ensures that the State's zero emissions clean economy aspirational target encourages both local and global sequestration. Requires each state agency to review the impacts of its internal plans as they relate to the purpose and goals of the Commission. Requires HSEO to submit summary reports to the Governor and Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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

