

JAN 21 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WATER CATCHMENT SYSTEMS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State continues
2 to face a severe potable water shortage. Recent high-profile
3 petroleum leaks at the Red Hill bulk fuel storage facility
4 underscore the fragility of the State's water system. As
5 recently as December 2021, the board of water supply of the city
6 and county of Honolulu was forced to take precautionary measures
7 and shut down the Halawa Shaft, Halawa Wells, and Aiea Wells
8 amid concerns arising from contamination of the nearby Navy
9 water distribution system coupled with drought conditions.

10 The legislature further finds that access to water is a
11 prerequisite to addressing many of the State's current problems
12 relating to developing affordable housing, empowering local
13 businesses, diversifying the economy, and improving the economic
14 stability of the State's most vulnerable residents. Therefore,
15 the State must pursue innovative solutions to decrease use of
16 the State's limited aquifers, including the use of water
17 catchment systems.



1 The legislature further finds that water catchment systems
2 help to capture and utilize rainwater more efficiently and keep
3 existing state water infrastructure, including both municipal
4 water and stormwater systems, in working order. In 2017, the
5 Journal of Contemporary Water Research and Education published
6 an article entitled "Survey of Rainwater Catchment Use and
7 Practices on Hawaii Island", which states that "[u]p to 60,000
8 people in the state of Hawaii were estimated to be dependent on
9 rainwater catchment as their primary domestic water source in
10 2010", with the majority of people dependent upon captured water
11 living on Hawaii island.

12 The legislature further finds that water catchment systems
13 can supplement potable water systems, conserving natural
14 resources while serving as the sole daily water source for
15 people living in rural districts. However, existing law allows
16 captured water for personal uses only and prohibits the use of
17 captured water for business activities. A lack of nearby
18 commercial kitchens and county water infrastructure in
19 underserved rural areas inherently disadvantages local
20 businesses and contributes to unviable local business
21 conditions.



1 The legislature further finds that the department of health
2 recommends following the university of Hawaii at Manoa college
3 of tropical agriculture and human resilience's revised 2020
4 rainwater catchment systems guidelines. The design,
5 maintenance, and treatment guidelines outline a safe process for
6 utilizing water captured for personal use that can be
7 appropriately applied to business activities under certain
8 regulatory conditions.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
10 working group within the department of health to assess the
11 feasibility of allowing business owners in the State to utilize
12 filtered water collected by water catchment systems for business
13 activities.

14 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department
15 a business activity water catchment system working group.

16 (b) The working group shall assess and make
17 recommendations on:

18 (1) The feasibility of allowing business owners in the
19 State to utilize filtered water collected by water
20 catchment systems for business activities, including
21 the types and sizes of businesses that are best suited



1 to implement water catchment systems for business
2 activities;

3 (2) The feasibility of establishing a business activity
4 water catchment system testing program within the
5 department that provides or otherwise assists business
6 owners in conducting annual testing of filtered water
7 produced from a water catchment system for business
8 activities, including determining the types of
9 chemicals or substances, in addition to lead and
10 copper, that need to be tested to ensure the safety of
11 the filtered water for business activities;

12 (3) How the State and counties can cooperate in ensuring
13 that water catchment systems utilized for business
14 activities are in compliance with applicable plumbing
15 codes; and

16 (4) Possible means by which the State can assist business
17 owners in safely utilizing filtered water from a water
18 catchment system for business activities.

19 (c) The working group shall consist of the following
20 members:



- 1 (1) One member of the senate, appointed by the president
- 2 of the senate, who shall serve as co-chair of the
- 3 working group;
- 4 (2) One member of the house of representatives, appointed
- 5 by the speaker of the house of representatives, who
- 6 shall serve as co-chair of the working group;
- 7 (3) Director of health or director's designee;
- 8 (4) One representative from each county's board or
- 9 department of water supply;
- 10 (5) One member representing the public, invited by the
- 11 president of the senate; and
- 12 (6) One member representing the public, invited by the
- 13 speaker of the house of representatives.
- 14 (d) The working group shall report its findings and
- 15 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
- 16 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
- 17 the regular session of 2028.
- 18 (e) The members of the working group shall serve without
- 19 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
- 20 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.



1 (f) No member of the working group shall be subject to
2 chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, solely because of the
3 member's participation in the working group.

4 (g) The working group shall be dissolved on June 30, 2028.

5 (h) As used in this section:

6 "County" means the city and county of Honolulu, the county
7 of Hawaii, the county of Kauai, and the county of Maui.

8 "Department" means the department of health.

9 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to retain
12 the professional services of a facilitator to direct the
13 business activity water catchment system working group, and
14 assist the department of health with preparing a report to the
15 legislature.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
17 health for the purposes of this Act.

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

19

INTRODUCED BY:

DKR



S.B. NO. 2085

Report Title:

DOH; Water Catchment Systems; Business Activity Water Catchment System Working Group; Report; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a Business Activity Water Catchment System Working Group within the Department of Health to assess the feasibility of allowing business owners in the State to utilize filtered water collected by water catchment systems for business activities. Requires the Business Activity Water Catchment System Working Group to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2028 and dissolve on 6/30/2028. 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.

