

JAN 22 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

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

1 SECTION 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "Climate Protection Plan Act of 2026".

3 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that the uncertainty of
4 federal funding threatens dozens of renewable and
5 climate-resilience projects already underway. The State's goals
6 of one hundred per cent renewable energy and carbon neutrality
7 are now at risk. Without decisive planning, the State faces
8 billions of dollars in future climate-related costs, from
9 sea-level rise in Waikiki to homes collapsing on the North
10 Shore.

11 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
12 Hawaii state energy office to contract with a third-party
13 consultant to develop a state climate protection plan by 2029
14 that will serve as a science-based roadmap to ensure the State
15 can continue developing renewable energy resources and reducing
16 harmful emissions even amid federal cuts to climate programs.



1 SECTION 3. (a) The Hawaii state energy office shall
2 contract with a third-party consultant, to create a climate
3 protection plan that includes but is not limited to:

4 (1) A clear vision that highlights a just transition to a
5 net-zero economy, Native Hawaiian values, and the
6 State's existing climate and energy commitments;

7 (2) Measurable statewide and sectoral goals for emissions
8 reduction, environmental resilience, and climate
9 equity, with a defined timeline and benchmarks;

10 (3) Defined roles for relevant state and local agencies,
11 the climate change mitigation and adaptation
12 commission, and community partners, including Native
13 Hawaiian organizations;

14 (4) Greenhouse gas inventories, projections, and reduction
15 pathways consistent with the State's existing net-zero
16 targets;

17 (5) Specific strategies for the sectors of electricity,
18 transportation, construction, and agriculture and land
19 use;

20 (6) An assessment of climate hazards specific to the
21 State;



- 1 (7) A prioritization of resilience actions for preserving
2 critical infrastructure, housing and communities in
3 zones at high risk for flooding, and key ecosystems,
4 including coral reefs, watersheds, and native forests;
5 (8) The identification of who in the population is most
6 vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, of how
7 benefits and burdens of the plan are shared, and of
8 how frontline communities shape decisions;
9 (9) The integration of Native Hawaiian rights and
10 knowledge systems into strategies;
11 (10) The arrangement of benefits of the plan, including
12 jobs, clean energy, and resilience investments, to
13 flow first to overburdened and low-income communities;
14 (11) The definition of the use of funding mechanisms,
15 including federal climate funds, state revenue tools,
16 and public-private partnerships;
17 (12) Implementation plans with relevant agencies,
18 timelines, performance indicators, and frameworks for
19 monitoring and evaluating progress;



(13) A commitment to regular public reporting, plan updates, and structured community engagement processes;

(14) An evaluation of emerging technologies, including geothermal, hydrogen, carbon capture, and nuclear microreactors; and

(15) Behavioral and fiscal incentives to accelerate the phaseout of fossil fuels.

(b) The Hawaii state energy office shall convene a climate protection advisory committee to advise the third-party consultant in the creation of the climate protection plan. The third-party consultant and advisory group shall meet on a monthly basis.

(c) The membership of the climate protection advisory committee shall include at least one representative from the following bodies to be designated by that body's head:

(1) The senate;

(2) The house of representatives;

(3) The office of planning and sustainable development;

(4) The Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission;



(5) The department of business, economic development, and tourism;

(6) The department of transportation;

(7) The department of health; and

(8) The university of Hawaii climate resilience collaborative.

(d) The climate protection advisory committee shall invite the following individuals to participate in the climate protection advisory committee:

(1) An expert in the area of energy;

(2) An expert in the area of agriculture;

(3) An expert in the area of equity;

(4) An expert in the area of private industry; and

(5) A representative from a youth-led nongovernmental organization that advocates for climate protection.

(e) The climate protection advisory committee shall elect its chairperson from among its members.

(f) Members of the climate protection advisory committee shall be designated no later than August 1, 2026.

(g) The members of the climate protection advisory committee shall not be compensated for their services, but shall



1 be reimbursed for necessary expenses, including travel expenses,
2 incurred while participating in meetings and events approved by
3 the chairperson. No member of the climate protection advisory
4 committee shall be made subject to chapter 84, Hawaii Revised
5 Statutes, solely because of the member's participation in the
6 climate protection advisory committee.

7 (h) The third-party consultant shall complete a scope of
8 work for the climate protection plan and submit it to the
9 climate protection advisory committee no later than December 1,
10 2026. The Hawaii state energy office shall submit the complete
11 climate protection plan to the legislature no later than twenty
12 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2029.

13 (i) The climate protection advisory committee shall
14 dissolve on June 30, 2029.

15 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
18 costs associated with expert consultation and modeling fees and
19 stakeholder engagement required by the third-party consultant
20 and the climate protection advisory committee for the purposes
21 of this Act.



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

3 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

4

INTRODUCED BY: Mike Gabbard



S.B. NO. 2486

Report Title:

HSEO; Climate Protection Plan; Consultant Services; Climate Protection Advisory Committee; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Hawaii State Energy Office to contract with a third-party consultant to develop a Climate Protection Plan for delivery to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2029. Establishes a Climate Protection Advisory Committee to assist the third-party consultant. Appropriates funds.

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