

JAN 28 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that established ocean
2 industries, including shipping and fishing, have evolved into
3 innovation-driven sectors such as ocean technology, marine
4 robotics, offshore energy, and ocean data systems. The World
5 Bank defines the "blue economy" as the sustainable use of ocean
6 resources to support economic growth, improve livelihoods, and
7 create jobs, while maintaining the long-term health of ocean
8 ecosystems.

9 The legislature further finds that the blue economy
10 represents one of the fastest-growing economic opportunities
11 globally, encompassing industries such as marine construction,
12 ship and boat building, marine transportation, energy, tourism
13 and recreation, fisheries and fishery-related businesses,
14 aquaculture, marine biotechnology, ocean and coastal management,
15 and conservation. The blue economy is projected to double in
16 value to an estimated \$3 trillion by 2030, with growth
17 increasingly driven by technological innovation.



1 The legislature also finds that Hawaii is uniquely
2 positioned to be a nationally competitive leader in the blue
3 economy. Located at the center of the Pacific Ocean, Hawaii
4 serves as a strategic crossroads for ocean-based industries,
5 research, and innovation, building upon the longstanding
6 knowledge and stewardship Native Hawaiians have maintained with
7 the ocean.

8 However, the legislature finds that, to remain competitive
9 with other coastal states and international regions, the State
10 must modernize its approach and more strategically leverage its
11 technological, infrastructure, and manufacturing capabilities,
12 including marine biotechnology, autonomous maritime systems,
13 maritime cybersecurity, shipping, ports and harbors, and ocean
14 data and observation systems.

15 The legislature further finds that numerous states,
16 including Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Maine,
17 Michigan, Mississippi, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington,
18 have advanced their participation in the blue economy through
19 strategic initiatives, enacted legislation, and the development
20 of ocean technology hubs.



1 The legislature further finds that the Hawaii technology
2 development corporation, as the state agency supporting
3 technology development and commercialization, is an appropriate
4 entity to coordinate efforts to advance the blue economy. The
5 Hawaii technology development corporation has existing
6 relationships across public, private, academic, and federal
7 partners and has the capacity to support strategy development,
8 facilitate access to capital, support workforce development, and
9 advance the commercialization of ocean-related technologies.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
11 Hawaii technology development corporation to conduct a study
12 supporting the development and coordination of the State's blue
13 economy strategy, including activities related to maritime,
14 aquaculture, coastal resiliency, and ocean observation and
15 sensing technologies.

16 SECTION 2. (a) The Hawaii technology development
17 corporation shall procure the services of a third-party
18 consultant to develop a statewide blue economy and ocean
19 technology and innovation strategy that supports the State's
20 blue economy objectives and the development, coordination, and



1 implementation of ocean technology and ocean initiatives,
2 including but not limited to:

3 (1) Developing a strategy that provides a clear vision,
4 implementation roadmap with milestones, defined
5 stakeholder roles, and actionable implementation
6 steps;

7 (2) Coordinating cross-agency collaboration with missions
8 that intersect with the blue economy, including but
9 not limited to the department of business, economic
10 development, and tourism; department of land and
11 natural resources; department of transportation;
12 department of agriculture; Hawaii emergency management
13 agency; office of Hawaiian affairs; university of
14 Hawaii; natural energy laboratory of Hawaii; and other
15 relevant entities;

16 (3) Conducting research and analysis of ocean-related
17 industries, including regulatory and permitting
18 frameworks, capital needs, workforce requirements,
19 infrastructure gaps, innovative solutions, and
20 opportunities for public-private partnerships and
21 community engagement;



1 (4) Pursuing public, private, and federal funding
2 opportunities to support the development, deployment,
3 and commercialization of ocean technology and
4 innovation;

5 (5) Providing technical, operational, and project
6 management support to the corporation to accelerate
7 its ocean innovation initiatives during the interim
8 period before the establishment of permanent staff and
9 sustained resources;

10 (6) Designing workforce development programs aligned with
11 maritime, coastal resiliency, and aquaculture sector
12 needs; and

13 (7) Supporting planning, feasibility analysis, and the
14 development of conceptual, architectural, and site
15 plans necessary to advance the establishment of a
16 statewide ocean technology innovation hub to support
17 research, commercialization, workforce training, and
18 public-private collaboration in ocean and maritime
19 technologies.

20 (b) The Hawaii technology development corporation shall
21 submit an annual report of its findings and recommendations,



1 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later
2 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session
3 for the duration of the third-party consultant's contract.

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
7 Hawaii technology development corporation to procure a third-
8 party consultant to support the development, coordination, and
9 implementation of ocean technology and innovation initiatives.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
11 technology development corporation for the purposes of this Act.

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

13

INTRODUCED BY:

Lyn D. Coote



S.B. NO. 3167

Report Title:

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; HTDC; Blue Economy; Ocean and Maritime Technology; Workforce Development; Coastal Resiliency; Aquaculture; Report; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to procure a third-party consultant to develop a statewide blue economy and ocean technology and innovation strategy. Requires an annual report to the 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.

