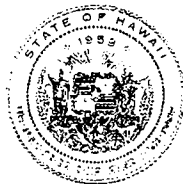


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



GOV. MSG. NO. 1283

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

June 26, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate,  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on June 26, 2026, the following bill was signed into law:

H.B. NO. 2474, H.D. 1, S.D. 2,  
C.D. 1

RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.  
**ACT 181**

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Josh Green M.D.".

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the existing scope  
2 of chapter 229, Hawaii Revised Statutes, needs to be broadened  
3 because, at present, it focuses largely on sister-state or  
4 province partnerships. The legislature further finds that  
5 modern government-to-government work requires the ability to  
6 enter into nonbinding memoranda of understanding with national  
7 governments or ministries, regional bodies, and other  
8 international partners. This will enable the State to advance  
9 in key areas, including agriculture, biosecurity, climate  
10 resilience, indigenous knowledge, education, renewable energy,  
11 and economic development.

12           The legislature also finds that it is important for  
13 international agreements between the State and other governments  
14 to be transparent to the public and subject to public input.

15           Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:

16           (1) Authorize the State to enter into nonbinding  
17           international cooperative agreements with national



- 1 governments; national ministries, departments, or  
2 agencies; provincial or regional governments; or  
3 international intergovernmental bodies relevant to the  
4 interests of the State or an international partner;
- 5 (2) Expand the definition of sister-state or province  
6 partnerships to include a partnership between the  
7 State and a prefecture or foreign nation; and
- 8 (3) Require the Hawaii sister-state and international  
9 partnerships commission to evaluate how a sister-state  
10 or province partnership or international cooperative  
11 agreement will enhance certain key state initiatives.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 229, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
13 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
14 designated and to read as follows:

15 "§229- Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to  
16 facilitate the State's engagement in international, regional,  
17 and sister-state or province partnerships and international  
18 cooperative agreements to support the cultural, educational,  
19 environmental, and economic goals of the State or an  
20 international partner. This chapter authorizes the State to  
21 enter into sister-state or province partnerships and



1 international cooperative agreements with foreign national  
2 governments, foreign subnational jurisdictions, and regional  
3 intergovernmental partners.

4 §229- International cooperative agreements; authorized.

5 (a) The governor may propose that the State enter into  
6 nonbinding international cooperative agreements with national  
7 governments; national ministries, departments, or agencies;  
8 provincial or regional governments; or international  
9 intergovernmental bodies relevant to the interests of the State  
10 or an international partner and may forward the proposal to the  
11 legislature.

12 (b) The legislature, through concurrent resolution or by  
13 enacting session law to that effect, may enter into nonbinding  
14 international cooperative agreements with national governments;  
15 national ministries, departments, or agencies; provincial or  
16 regional governments; or international intergovernmental bodies  
17 relevant to the interests of the State or an international  
18 partner.

19 (c) Any international cooperative agreement entered into  
20 pursuant to subsection (b):

21 (1) Shall be nonbinding;



- 1        (2) Shall not create legally enforceable obligations; and
- 2        (3) Shall not constitute any treaty, alliance, compact, or
- 3                other agreement that is prohibited by Article I,
- 4                Section 10, of the United States Constitution."

5        SECTION 3. Chapter 229, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
6 amended by amending its title to read as follows:

7                                "[+]CHAPTER 229[+]  
8                                INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS;  
9                                SISTER-STATE [AND] OR PROVINCE [RELATIONSHIPS]  
10                                PARTNERSHIPS; INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS"

11        SECTION 4. Section 229-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
12 amended to read as follows:

13        "§229-1 Definitions. For the purposes of this chapter,  
14 unless the context otherwise requires:

15        "Commission" means the Hawaii sister-state and  
16 international partnerships commission established under section  
17 229-2.

18        "International cooperative agreement" means a formal  
19 recognition of a joint agreement with a focus on an issue of  
20 mutual interest or concern between the State and the state,  
21 province, prefecture, or similar governmental or political



1 subdivision of a foreign nation, or between the State and a  
2 foreign nation, as appropriate.

3 "Sister-state or province partnership" means a partnership  
4 between the State [~~of Hawaii~~] and the state [~~of~~], province,  
5 prefecture, or similar governmental or political subdivision of  
6 a foreign nation[ ~~or~~], or between the State and a foreign nation,  
7 as appropriate."

8 SECTION 5. Section 229-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

10 "(b) The commission shall support the governor,  
11 legislature, and office of international affairs in building and  
12 maintaining strategic long-term sister-state or province  
13 partnerships and international cooperative agreements that  
14 promote and enrich the people, cultures, environments, and  
15 economies of the State and its international partners."

16 SECTION 6. Section 229-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17 amended to read as follows:

18 "**§229-3 Initiating sister-state [~~relationships~~] or**  
19 **province partnerships; proposal review; international**  
20 **cooperative agreements.** (a) The commission [~~shall~~] may  
21 evaluate and develop recommendations for the initiation of [~~all~~]



1 sister-state or province partnerships or international  
2 cooperative agreements and forward its recommendation to the  
3 legislature. Any evaluation made shall consider how the sister-  
4 state or province partnership or international cooperative  
5 agreement will enhance key state initiatives, including how it  
6 will support economic development, trade, education,  
7 agriculture, and biosecurity.

8 (b) The legislature [~~, if it so chooses, shall~~] may  
9 implement [~~the recommendation to initiate~~] a sister-state or  
10 province partnership or international cooperative agreement by  
11 either adopting a concurrent resolution or by enacting session  
12 law to that effect."

13 SECTION 7. Section 229-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
14 amended by amending its title to read as follows:

15 "**§229-4 Maintaining sister-state [~~relationships.~~] or**  
16 **province partnerships.**"

17 SECTION 8. Section 229-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
18 amended by amending its title to read as follows:

19 "**§229-5 Dissolving sister-state [~~relationships.~~] or**  
20 **province partnerships.**"



1 SECTION 9. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

3 SECTION 10. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 2474  
H.D. 1  
S.D. 2  
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 26th day of June, 2026



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

HB No. 2474, HD 1, SD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 6, 2026  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026.



Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker  
House of Representatives




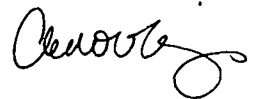
Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives

**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I**

Date: May 6, 2026  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2026.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate