
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 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 [~~or~~], province,
5 prefecture, or similar governmental or political subdivision of
6 a foreign nation[-], 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.



Report Title:

Legislature; Governor; International Relations; International Cooperative Agreements; Sister-State or Province Partnerships; Hawaii Sister-State and International Partnerships Commission

Description:

Authorizes the State to enter into nonbinding international cooperative agreements with national governments; national ministries, departments, or agencies; provincial or regional governments; or international intergovernmental bodies relevant to the interests of the State or an international partner. Expands the definition of sister-state or province partnerships to include a partnership between the State and a prefecture or foreign nation. Requires the Hawaii Sister-State and International Partnerships Commission to evaluate how a sister-state or province partnership or international cooperative agreement will enhance certain key state initiatives. (CD1)

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

