
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SOLAR ENERGY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that solar energy has
2 become one of the most cost-effective and clean energy sources
3 in the world. Hawaii has long capitalized on the State's
4 abundant sunlight by using large-scale solar farms to power
5 electric utilities and rooftop solar systems to serve individual
6 households. Hawaii currently leads the nation in rooftop solar
7 installations per capita, and advancements in technology
8 continue to make solar energy more accessible and affordable for
9 the State's residents.

10 The legislature further finds that portable solar
11 generation devices, also known as "balcony solar" or "plug-in
12 solar" devices, offer new opportunities for families to generate
13 their own electricity. These devices are particularly
14 advantageous to residents of apartments, other rental
15 properties, and small businesses. Apartment residents can
16 safely install units on balconies or patios, and renters can
17 easily relocate their systems when they move to a new home.



1 The legislature recognizes that portable solar generation
2 devices have significantly lower upfront costs than rooftop
3 solar systems and can be installed by consumers without any
4 specialized training. A typical portable solar generation
5 device costs less than \$2,500. Although the devices produce
6 less electricity than typical rooftop solar systems, they can
7 supply enough power to operate common household appliances like
8 lights, televisions, computers, and refrigerators. The devices
9 can help offset residents' consumption of electricity and help
10 save on customers' electricity bills.

11 The legislature notes that a portable solar generation
12 device is installed by plugging it in to a standard household
13 electricity outlet. Electricity generated by the device is used
14 by appliances connected to the home's other outlets. Built-in
15 safety features prevent electricity from flowing onto the grid
16 during a power outage, and any surplus energy generated cannot
17 be sold to the electric utility.

18 The legislature also notes that, while surplus energy
19 cannot be sold, it can be stored in a battery, which allows
20 users to save electricity produced during the day for use at
21 night or at other times when there is little sun. Although



1 batteries remain relatively expensive, costs are decreasing, and
2 combining these systems can yield long-term savings on a
3 household's overall electricity expenses and provide benefits to
4 the electric grid.

5 The legislature believes that establishing a clear
6 regulatory framework for portable solar generation devices will
7 help encourage safe and efficient use of the devices; expand
8 access to clean, renewable energy; promote equity among
9 electricity consumers; lower electricity bills; and advance
10 Hawaii's clean energy goals.

11 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish
12 standards and registration requirements for the use of portable
13 solar generation devices in the State.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding two new sections to part I to be appropriately
16 designated and to read as follows:

17 "§269- Portable solar generation devices. (a) Each
18 portable solar generation device used in the State shall be:

19 (1) Exempt from the net metering program requirements set
20 out in part VI of this chapter, any reliability
21 standards and interconnection requirements established



1 pursuant to section 269-143, and procedures for
2 interconnection established pursuant to section
3 269-145;

4 (2) Eligible for installation and use by an electric
5 utility customer without:

6 (A) Obtaining the electric utility company's
7 approval;

8 (B) Paying to the electric utility company any fee or
9 charge related to the use of the device; or

10 (C) Installing any controls or equipment beyond the
11 controls or equipment that are integrated into
12 the device; and

13 (3) Registered with the public utilities commission under
14 section 269- .

15 (b) The maximum aggregate rated power output of all
16 portable solar generation devices connected to the electrical
17 meter shall not exceed one thousand two hundred watts.

18 (c) No electric utility company shall be liable for any
19 damage or injury caused by a portable solar generation device.

20 **§269- Portable solar generation devices; registration.**

21 The public utilities commission shall establish and maintain an



1 online system for registration of portable solar generation
2 devices; provided that the public utilities commission may
3 delegate this responsibility to any person or organization. No
4 customer shall be required to pay a fee to register a portable
5 solar generation device."

6 SECTION 3. Section 269-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted
8 and to read as follows:

9 "Portable solar generation device" means a movable
10 photovoltaic generation device that:

- 11 (1) Has a maximum aggregate rated power output of one
12 thousand two hundred watts;
13 (2) Is designed to be connected to a building's electrical
14 system through a standard one hundred twenty-volt
15 alternating current outlet;
16 (3) Is intended primarily to offset part of the customer's
17 consumption of electricity from an electric utility
18 company;
19 (4) Includes a mechanism to prevent the device from
20 energizing the electric utility's distribution system
21 during a power outage; and



1 (5) Is certified by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. to
2 meet standard UL 3700, or an equivalent nationally
3 recognized testing laboratory, as recognized by the
4 federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration,
5 or each part of the device is so certified."

6 SECTION 4. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
7 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
8 begun before its effective date.

9 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

PUC; Portable Solar Generation Device; Requirements;
Registration

Description:

Defines and provides requirements for the use of a portable solar generation device. Provides that electric utility companies are not liable for any damage or injury caused by a portable solar generation device. Requires each portable solar generation device to be registered with the Public Utilities Commission. Requires the Public Utilities Commission to establish and maintain an online system for registration of portable solar generation devices, at no cost to the customer. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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