THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

# S.B. NO. 2316

JAN 2 1 2026

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change is the most pressing issue of our time. There are many contributors to climate change, and transportation-generated greenhouse gas emissions are a significant source. The legislature acknowledges that air travel faces particularly difficult technical challenges in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since air travel is essential to tourism, the legislature notes that air travel and its associated emissions will remain key elements of the State's intertwined economy and climate for the foreseeable future.

In the past few years, the United Nations has established an extensive framework for the provision of carbon offsets for greenhouse gas emissions resulting from international air travel, known as the carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for international aviation (CORSIA). However, the Federal Aviation Administration's CORSIA program does not apply to air travel to the State from the continental United States.

For essential activities including air travel, which remain intractably resistant to the latest technological solutions to greenhouse gas emission reductions, the legislature further finds that the use of carbon offsets to compensate for those emissions is a strategic necessity for achieving the zero emissions clean economy target set for the State by Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018.

The legislature anticipates that many air travelers will take advantage of a program where they may voluntarily purchase carbon offsets from providers of the offsets, given the increasing awareness by air travelers of the climate change implications of their travel. The legislature additionally finds that the ease of purchasing offsets may have the effect of enhancing the desirability of travel to the State.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the department of transportation to facilitate the voluntary purchase of verified carbon offsets by any person traveling by air to or from an airport in the State to compensate for greenhouse gas emissions from air travel.

SECTION 2. Chapter 261, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"**§261- Air travel carbon offset purchase.** (a) Pursuant to its authority under section 261-4, the department shall facilitate the voluntary purchase of verified carbon offsets by any person engaging in qualified air travel to or from an airport in the State. To effectuate this purpose, the department:

(1) Shall accept a request from any person who will be engaging in, or has recently engaged in, qualified air travel to or from an airport in the State for assistance in voluntarily purchasing a verified carbon offset for the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the person's qualified air travel;

(2) Shall use reasonable efforts to facilitate the requestor's connection with a provider of verified carbon offsets for greenhouse gas emissions from air travel from whom the requestor may purchase a carbon offset for the requestor's trip;

(3) Shall place information on the department's website describing the process established by the department to assist air travelers with purchasing verified carbon offsets for their air travel from providers of the offsets, including an interactive capability by which an air traveler may arrange for the online purchase of a verified carbon offset;

(4) Shall encourage airlines using any airport in the State to provide links on every airline's respective website to the department's webpage concerning carbon offsets for air travel;

(5) Shall maintain a list of public and private entities that provide verified carbon offsets for passenger air travel; and

(6) May contract with other entities to conduct one or more of the duties described in paragraphs (1) through (5).

(b) As used in this section:

"Carbon offset" means the reduction or removal of a greenhouse gas emission into the atmosphere, or the prevention of future greenhouse gas emissions, that is achieved by or on

behalf of a person to equivalently compensate for greenhouse gas emissions resulting from air travel by the person to or from an airport in the State.

"Qualified air travel" means any air travel regulated under this chapter that occurs between an airport in the State and any other airport in the State, another state, or United States territory.

"Verified" means, with respect to a carbon offset, the carbon offset has been validated by an independent third party as real, permanent, and unlikely to occur in the absence of an offset program."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: Karl Rhoads

# S.B. NO. 2316

**Report Title:**
DOT; Air Travel; Verified Carbon Offsets; Qualified Air Travel

**Description:**
Requires the Department of Transportation to assist and enable a person to voluntarily purchase a verified carbon offset for greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the person's air travel to or from an airport in the State.

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