THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 2473

JAN 22 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE EDUCATION.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in response to the growing threat of climate change, the State has set standards and launched initiatives to expand reliance on sustainable and efficient energy, including setting a statewide benchmark of generating one hundred per cent of the State's electricity through renewable resources by 2045 and establishing a goal for statewide greenhouse gas emissions to be at least fifty per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

The legislature further finds that climate change education is necessary to ensure that the next generation are climate leaders. In 2024, Colorado enacted a law to award a seal of climate literacy diploma endorsement to students who complete certain courses and an experiential learning project.

The purpose of this Act is to require the department of education to establish a climate literacy certificate program to provide students with an advanced understanding of climate change through academic coursework and hands-on learning.

SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"**§302A- Climate literacy certificate program.** (a) The department shall establish a climate literacy certificate program to prepare high school students in addressing the economic and social impacts of climate change.

(b) The department shall:

(1) Establish program requirements and approved courses that include the completion of:

(A) At least two approved courses with climate literacy standards; and

(B) An experiential learning project;

(2) Issue a certificate of completion to every student upon satisfactory completion of the program; and

(3) Submit to the board and the legislature a report on the approved courses and data on the issuance of program certificates.

(c) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 for the purposes of this section."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the establishment of the climate literacy certificate program.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of education for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

INTRODUCED BY: Mike Gabbard

S.B. NO. 2473

Report Title:
Education; Climate Change; Climate Literacy Certificate Program; Appropriation

Description:
Requires the Department of Education to establish a climate literacy certificate program to provide students with an advanced understanding of climate change through academic coursework and hands-on learning.

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