

JAN 28 2026

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that established ocean  
2 industries, including shipping and fishing, have evolved into  
3 innovation-driven sectors such as ocean technology, marine  
4 robotics, offshore energy, and ocean data systems. The World  
5 Bank defines the "blue economy" as the sustainable use of ocean  
6 resources to support economic growth, improve livelihoods, and  
7 create jobs, while maintaining the long-term health of ocean  
8 ecosystems.

9           The legislature further finds that the blue economy  
10 represents one of the fastest-growing economic opportunities  
11 globally, encompassing industries such as marine construction,  
12 ship and boat building, marine transportation, energy, tourism  
13 and recreation, fisheries and fishery-related businesses,  
14 aquaculture, marine biotechnology, ocean and coastal management,  
15 and conservation. The blue economy is projected to double in  
16 value to an estimated \$3 trillion by 2030, with growth  
17 increasingly driven by technological innovation.



1           The legislature also finds that Hawaii is uniquely  
2 positioned to be a nationally competitive leader in the blue  
3 economy. Located at the center of the Pacific Ocean, Hawaii  
4 serves as a strategic crossroads for ocean-based industries,  
5 research, and innovation, building upon the longstanding  
6 knowledge and stewardship Native Hawaiians have maintained with  
7 the ocean.

8           However, the legislature finds that, to remain competitive  
9 with other coastal states and international regions, the State  
10 must modernize its approach and more strategically leverage its  
11 technological, infrastructure, and manufacturing capabilities,  
12 including marine biotechnology, autonomous maritime systems,  
13 maritime cybersecurity, shipping, ports and harbors, and ocean  
14 data and observation systems.

15           The legislature further finds that numerous states,  
16 including Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Maine,  
17 Michigan, Mississippi, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington,  
18 have advanced their participation in the blue economy through  
19 strategic initiatives, enacted legislation, and the development  
20 of ocean technology hubs.



1           The legislature further finds that the Hawaii technology  
2 development corporation, as the state agency supporting  
3 technology development and commercialization, is an appropriate  
4 entity to coordinate efforts to advance the blue economy. The  
5 Hawaii technology development corporation has existing  
6 relationships across public, private, academic, and federal  
7 partners and has the capacity to support strategy development,  
8 facilitate access to capital, support workforce development, and  
9 advance the commercialization of ocean-related technologies.

10           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the  
11 Hawaii technology development corporation to conduct a study  
12 supporting the development and coordination of the State's blue  
13 economy strategy, including activities related to maritime,  
14 aquaculture, coastal resiliency, and ocean observation and  
15 sensing technologies.

16           SECTION 2. (a) The Hawaii technology development  
17 corporation shall procure the services of a third-party  
18 consultant to develop a statewide blue economy and ocean  
19 technology and innovation strategy that supports the State's  
20 blue economy objectives and the development, coordination, and



1 implementation of ocean technology and ocean initiatives,  
2 including but not limited to:

3 (1) Developing a strategy that provides a clear vision,  
4 implementation roadmap with milestones, defined  
5 stakeholder roles, and actionable implementation  
6 steps;

7 (2) Coordinating cross-agency collaboration with missions  
8 that intersect with the blue economy, including but  
9 not limited to the department of business, economic  
10 development, and tourism; department of land and  
11 natural resources; department of transportation;  
12 department of agriculture; Hawaii emergency management  
13 agency; office of Hawaiian affairs; university of  
14 Hawaii; natural energy laboratory of Hawaii; and other  
15 relevant entities;

16 (3) Conducting research and analysis of ocean-related  
17 industries, including regulatory and permitting  
18 frameworks, capital needs, workforce requirements,  
19 infrastructure gaps, innovative solutions, and  
20 opportunities for public-private partnerships and  
21 community engagement;



- 1 (4) Pursuing public, private, and federal funding  
2 opportunities to support the development, deployment,  
3 and commercialization of ocean technology and  
4 innovation;
- 5 (5) Providing technical, operational, and project  
6 management support to the corporation to accelerate  
7 its ocean innovation initiatives during the interim  
8 period before the establishment of permanent staff and  
9 sustained resources;
- 10 (6) Designing workforce development programs aligned with  
11 maritime, coastal resiliency, and aquaculture sector  
12 needs; and
- 13 (7) Supporting planning, feasibility analysis, and the  
14 development of conceptual, architectural, and site  
15 plans necessary to advance the establishment of a  
16 statewide ocean technology innovation hub to support  
17 research, commercialization, workforce training, and  
18 public-private collaboration in ocean and maritime  
19 technologies.
- 20 (b) The Hawaii technology development corporation shall  
21 submit an annual report of its findings and recommendations,



1 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later  
2 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session  
3 for the duration of the third-party consultant's contract.

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the  
7 Hawaii technology development corporation to procure a third-  
8 party consultant to support the development, coordination, and  
9 implementation of ocean technology and innovation initiatives.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii  
11 technology development corporation for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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INTRODUCED BY: Lyn D. Coite



# S.B. NO. 3167

**Report Title:**

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; HTDC; Blue Economy; Ocean and Maritime Technology; Workforce Development; Coastal Resiliency; Aquaculture; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to procure a third-party consultant to develop a statewide blue economy and ocean technology and innovation strategy. Requires an annual report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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

