
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that climate change is
2 the most pressing issue of our time. There are many
3 contributors to climate change, and transportation-generated
4 greenhouse gas emissions are a significant contributor. The
5 legislature acknowledges that, within the transportation sector,
6 the air transportation component faces particularly difficult
7 technical challenges in reducing carbon dioxide emissions
8 associated with air travel. Since air travel is essential to
9 tourism, the legislature finds that air travel and its
10 associated carbon emissions will remain key elements of Hawaii's
11 intertwined economy and climate for the foreseeable future.

12 In the past few years, the United Nations has established
13 an extensive framework for the provision of carbon offsets for
14 carbon emissions resulting from international air travel, known
15 as carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for international
16 aviation. A pilot phase for this program is scheduled for 2021.
17 However, the carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for



1 international aviation will not apply to air travel to Hawaii
2 from the continental United States.

3 The legislature further finds that, for essential
4 activities, including air travel, that are intractably
5 resistant, at least in the near term, to technological solutions
6 to carbon emission reductions, the use of carbon offsets to
7 compensate for those emissions is a strategic necessity for
8 achieving the zero emission clean economy target set for the
9 State by Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018.

10 The purpose of this Act is to provide a process by which
11 the department of transportation shall assist persons traveling
12 by air to or from airports in Hawaii in the purchase of
13 verifiable carbon offsets to compensate for carbon dioxide
14 emissions from air travel. While this Act relies on the
15 voluntary purchase of carbon offsets by air travelers from
16 providers of the offsets, the legislature anticipates that many
17 travelers will take advantage of the program, given the
18 increasing awareness by air travelers of the climate change
19 implications of their travel. The legislature additionally
20 finds that the ease of purchasing offsets may have the effect of
21 enhancing the desirability of travel to Hawaii.



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

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

9 (1) Shall receive requests from persons who will be
10 engaging in, or have recently engaged in, qualified
11 air travel to or from an airport in the State for
12 assistance in voluntarily purchasing a verified carbon
13 offset for the carbon dioxide emissions associated
14 with each person's qualified air travel;

15 (2) Shall use reasonable best efforts to facilitate the
16 requestor's connection with a provider of verified
17 carbon offsets for carbon dioxide emissions from air
18 travel from whom the requestor may purchase a carbon
19 offset for the requestor's trip;

20 (3) Shall place information on the department's website
21 describing the process being made available by the



1 department to assist air travelers with purchasing
2 verified carbon offsets for the air traveler's air
3 travel from providers of the offsets, including
4 interactive capability by which air travelers may
5 arrange for the online purchase of verified carbon
6 offsets;

7 (4) Shall encourage airlines using airports in the State
8 to provide links on the airlines' respective websites
9 to the department's webpage concerning carbon offsets
10 for air travel;

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

14 (6) May contract with other entities to conduct one or
15 more of the duties described in paragraphs (1) through
16 (5).

17 (b) For the purposes of this section:

18 "Carbon offset" means a reduction in carbon dioxide or
19 other greenhouse gases in, or emitted into, the atmosphere that
20 is achieved by or on behalf of a person to compensate, in a
21 carbon dioxide-equivalent amount, for the emissions of carbon



1 dioxide resulting from air travel by the person to or from an
2 airport in the State. "Carbon offset" includes an action that
3 removes greenhouse gases from the atmosphere or that reduces
4 future greenhouse gas emissions.

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

9 "Verified" means, with respect to a carbon offset, a
10 reduction in carbon dioxide, or carbon dioxide-equivalent amount
11 of other greenhouse gases, that is determined to be real,
12 permanent, and unlikely to occur in the absence of an offset
13 program, through a process of validation and verification by an
14 independent third party."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



Report Title:

DOT; Air Travel; Verified Carbon Offsets; Qualified Air Travel

Description:

Establishes procedures for the department of transportation to assist and enable a person to voluntarily purchase a verified carbon offset for carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the person's air travel to or from an airport in the State.

Effective 1/1/2050. (SD2)

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