A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SOLAR ENERGY.

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

SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to enable the complementary uses of utility scale solar energy generation and local food production on agricultural land with an overall productivity rating of class B or C.

SECTION 2. Section 205-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

"(d) Agricultural districts shall include:

(1) Activities or uses as characterized by the cultivation of crops, crops for bioenergy, orchards, forage, and forestry;

(2) Farming activities or uses related to animal husbandry and game and fish propagation;

(3) Aquaculture, which means the production of aquatic plant and animal life within ponds and other bodies of water;

(4) Wind generated energy production for public, private, and commercial use;
(5) Biofuel production, as described in section 205-4.5(a)(16), for public, private, and commercial use;

(6) Solar energy facilities; provided that:

(A) This paragraph shall apply only to land with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class B, C, D, or E; and

(B) Solar energy facilities placed within land with soil classified as overall productivity rating class B or C shall not occupy more than ten percent of the acreage of the parcel, or twenty acres of land, whichever is lesser[, unless a special use permit is granted pursuant to section 205-6;]

(7) Bona fide agricultural services and uses that support the agricultural activities of the fee or leasehold owner of the property and accessory to any of the above activities, regardless of whether conducted on the same premises as the agricultural activities to which they are accessory, including farm dwellings as defined in section 205-4.5(a)(4), employee housing,
farm buildings, mills, storage facilities, processing facilities, photovoltaic, biogas, and other small-scale renewable energy systems producing energy solely for use in the agricultural activities of the fee or leasehold owner of the property, agricultural-energy facilities as defined in section 205-4.5(a)(17), vehicle and equipment storage areas, and plantation community subdivisions as defined in section 205-4.5(a)(12);

(8) Wind machines and wind farms;

(9) Small-scale meteorological, air quality, noise, and other scientific and environmental data collection and monitoring facilities occupying less than one-half acre of land; provided that these facilities shall not be used as or equipped for use as living quarters or dwellings;

(10) Agricultural parks;

(11) Agricultural tourism conducted on a working farm, or a farming operation as defined in section 165-2, for the enjoyment, education, or involvement of visitors; provided that the agricultural tourism activity is accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural
use and does not interfere with surrounding farm
operations; and provided further that this paragraph
shall apply only to a county that has adopted
ordinances regulating agricultural tourism under
section 205-5;

(12) Agricultural tourism activities, including overnight
accommodations of twenty-one days or less, for any one
stay within a county; provided that this paragraph
shall apply only to a county that includes at least
three islands and has adopted ordinances regulating
agricultural tourism activities pursuant to section
205-5; provided further that the agricultural tourism
activities coexist with a bona fide agricultural
activity. For the purposes of this paragraph, "bona
fide agricultural activity" means a farming operation
as defined in section 165-2;

(13) Open area recreational facilities;

(14) Geothermal resources exploration and geothermal
resources development, as defined under section 182-1;

and

(15) Agricultural-based commercial operations, including:
(A) A roadside stand that is not an enclosed structure, owned and operated by a producer for the display and sale of agricultural products grown in Hawaii and value-added products that were produced using agricultural products grown in Hawaii;

(B) Retail activities in an enclosed structure owned and operated by a producer for the display and sale of agricultural products grown in Hawaii, value-added products that were produced using agricultural products grown in Hawaii, logo items related to the producer's agricultural operations, and other food items; and

(C) A retail food establishment owned and operated by a producer and permitted under title 11, chapter 12 of the rules of the department of health that prepares and serves food at retail using products grown in Hawaii and value-added products that were produced using agricultural products grown in Hawaii.

The owner of an agricultural-based commercial operation shall certify, upon request of an officer or
agent charged with enforcement of this chapter under section 205-12, that the agricultural products displayed or sold by the operation meet the requirements of this paragraph.

Agricultural districts shall not include golf courses and golf driving ranges, except as provided in section 205-4.5(d).

Agricultural districts include areas that are not used for, or that are not suited to, agricultural and ancillary activities by reason of topography, soils, and other related characteristics."

SECTION 3. Section 205-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Within the agricultural district, all lands with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A or B and for solar energy facilities, class B or C, shall be restricted to the following permitted uses:

(1) Cultivation of crops, including crops for bioenergy, flowers, vegetables, foliage, fruits, forage, and timber;

(2) Game and fish propagation;
(3) Raising of livestock, including poultry, bees, fish, or other animal or aquatic life that are propagated for economic or personal use;

(4) Farm dwellings, employee housing, farm buildings, or activities or uses related to farming and animal husbandry. "Farm dwelling", as used in this paragraph, means a single-family dwelling located on and used in connection with a farm, including clusters of single-family farm dwellings permitted within agricultural parks developed by the State, or where agricultural activity provides income to the family occupying the dwelling;

(5) Public institutions and buildings that are necessary for agricultural practices;

(6) Public and private open area types of recreational uses, including day camps, picnic grounds, parks, and riding stables, but not including dragstrips, airports, drive-in theaters, golf courses, golf driving ranges, country clubs, and overnight camps;

(7) Public, private, and quasi-public utility lines and roadways, transformer stations, communications equipment buildings, solid waste transfer stations,
major water storage tanks, and appurtenant small buildings such as booster pumping stations, but not including offices or yards for equipment, material, vehicle storage, repair or maintenance, treatment plants, corporation yards, or other similar structures;

(8) Retention, restoration, rehabilitation, or improvement of buildings or sites of historic or scenic interest;

(9) Agricultural-based commercial operations as described in section [205-2(d)(15)];

(10) Buildings and uses, including mills, storage, and processing facilities, maintenance facilities, photovoltaic, biogas, and other small-scale renewable energy systems producing energy solely for use in the agricultural activities of the fee or leasehold owner of the property, and vehicle and equipment storage areas that are normally considered directly accessory to the above-mentioned uses and are permitted under section 205-2(d);

(11) Agricultural parks;

(12) Plantation community subdivisions, which as used in this chapter means an established subdivision or
cluster of employee housing, community buildings, and agricultural support buildings on land currently or formerly owned, leased, or operated by a sugar or pineapple plantation; provided that the existing structures may be used or rehabilitated for use, and new employee housing and agricultural support buildings may be allowed on land within the subdivision as follows:

(A) The employee housing is occupied by employees or former employees of the plantation who have a property interest in the land;

(B) The employee housing units not owned by their occupants shall be rented or leased at affordable rates for agricultural workers; or

(C) The agricultural support buildings shall be rented or leased to agricultural business operators or agricultural support services;

(13) Agricultural tourism conducted on a working farm, or a farming operation as defined in section 165-2, for the enjoyment, education, or involvement of visitors; provided that the agricultural tourism activity is accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural
use and does not interfere with surrounding farm
operations; and provided further that this paragraph
shall apply only to a county that has adopted
ordinances regulating agricultural tourism under
section 205-5;

(14) Agricultural tourism activities, including overnight
accommodations of twenty-one days or less, for any one
stay within a county; provided that this paragraph
shall apply only to a county that includes at least
three islands and has adopted ordinances regulating
agricultural tourism activities pursuant to section
205-5; provided further that the agricultural tourism
activities coexist with a bona fide agricultural
activity. For the purposes of this paragraph, "bona
fide agricultural activity" means a farming operation
as defined in section 165-2;

(15) Wind energy facilities, including the appurtenances
associated with the production and transmission of
wind generated energy; provided that the wind energy
facilities and appurtenances are compatible with
agriculture uses and cause minimal adverse impact on
agricultural land;
Biofuel processing facilities, including the
appurtenances associated with the production and
refining of biofuels that is normally considered
directly accessory and secondary to the growing of the
energy feedstock; provided that biofuel processing
facilities and appurtenances do not adversely impact
agricultural land and other agricultural uses in the
vicinity.

For the purposes of this paragraph:

"Appurtenances" means operational infrastructure
of the appropriate type and scale for economic
commercial storage and distribution, and other similar
handling of feedstock, fuels, and other products of
biofuel processing facilities.

"Biofuel processing facility" means a facility
that produces liquid or gaseous fuels from organic
sources such as biomass crops, agricultural residues,
and oil crops, including palm, canola, soybean, and
waste cooking oils; grease; food wastes; and animal
residues and wastes that can be used to generate
energy;
(17) Agricultural-energy facilities, including appurtenances necessary for an agricultural-energy enterprise; provided that the primary activity of the agricultural-energy enterprise is agricultural activity. To be considered the primary activity of an agricultural-energy enterprise, the total acreage devoted to agricultural activity shall be not less than ninety per cent of the total acreage of the agricultural-energy enterprise. The agricultural-energy facility shall be limited to lands owned, leased, licensed, or operated by the entity conducting the agricultural activity.

As used in this paragraph:

"Agricultural activity" means any activity described in paragraphs (1) to (3) of this subsection.

"Agricultural-energy enterprise" means an enterprise that integrally incorporates an agricultural activity with an agricultural-energy facility.

"Agricultural-energy facility" means a facility that generates, stores, or distributes renewable energy as defined in section 269-91 or renewable fuel.
including electrical or thermal energy or liquid or
gaseous fuels from products of agricultural activities
from agricultural lands located in the State.

"Appurtenances" means operational infrastructure
of the appropriate type and scale for the economic
commercial generation, storage, distribution, and
other similar handling of energy, including equipment,
feedstock, fuels, and other products of agricultural-
energy facilities;

(18) Construction and operation of wireless communication
antennas; provided that, for the purposes of this
paragraph, "wireless communication antenna" means
communications equipment that is either freestanding
or placed upon or attached to an already existing
structure and that transmits and receives
electromagnetic radio signals used in the provision of
all types of wireless communications services;
provided further that nothing in this paragraph shall
be construed to permit the construction of any new
structure that is not deemed a permitted use under
this subsection;
(19) Agricultural education programs conducted on a farming operation as defined in section 165-2, for the education and participation of the general public; provided that the agricultural education programs are accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural use of the parcels or lots on which the agricultural education programs are to occur and do not interfere with surrounding farm operations. For the purposes of this section, "agricultural education programs" means activities or events designed to promote knowledge and understanding of agricultural activities and practices conducted on a farming operation as defined in section 165-2;

(20) Solar energy facilities that do not occupy more than ten per cent of the acreage of the parcel, or twenty acres of land, whichever is lesser[+] or for which a special use permit is granted pursuant to section 205-6; provided that this use shall not be permitted on lands with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A; [e±]
Solar energy facilities on lands with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating B or C for which a special use permit is granted pursuant to section 205-6; provided that:

(A) The area occupied by the solar energy facilities is also made available for compatible agricultural activities at a lease rate that is at least fifty per cent below the fair market rent for comparable properties;

(B) Proof of financial security to decommission the facility is provided to the satisfaction of the appropriate county planning commission prior to date of commencement of commercial generation; and

(C) Solar energy facilities shall be decommissioned at the owner's expense according to the following requirements:

(i) Removal of all equipment related to the solar energy facility within twelve months of the conclusion of operation or useful life; and
(ii) Restoration of the disturbed earth to substantially the same physical condition as existed prior to the development of the solar energy facility.

For the purposes of this paragraph, "agricultural activities" means the activities described in paragraphs (1) to (3); or

[(21)](22) Geothermal resources exploration and geothermal resources development, as defined under section 182-1."

SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
Report Title:
Solar Energy; Agricultural Land

Description:
Allows solar energy facilities to occupy no more than 10% of a parcel, or 20 acres of land, within agricultural lands with soil classified as overall productivity rating class B or C if a special use permit has been granted and the area occupied by the solar energy facilities is also made available for compatible agricultural activities. Requires that solar energy facilities be decommissioned and removed within 12 months of the conclusion of operation. (SB2658 HD2)

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