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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State of  
2 California and numerous other states and private industries have  
3 established carbon credits that polluters buy to offset their  
4 carbon emissions. Billions of dollars have been raised by the  
5 State of California alone, and many industries are seeking new  
6 places to invest these dollars to offset their carbon emissions.

7           The legislature also finds that local farmers in Hawaii can  
8 benefit from additional subsidies and support to grow local  
9 agriculture, create jobs, and diversify our economy.

10 Accordingly, the legislature finds that it is in the public  
11 interest to establish a basic certification for carbon-negative  
12 agricultural practices to allow local farmers to qualify for  
13 carbon credit subsidies.

14           The legislature further finds that agricultural land  
15 management practices that sequester carbon could provide  
16 greenhouse gas benefits, enhance the sustainability of Hawaii's  
17 agricultural lands, decrease sedimentation of the marine



1 environment, improve the climate resistance of Hawaii's  
2 agricultural sector, and create new opportunities for local  
3 farmers.

4 The purpose of this Act is to create a carbon farming task  
5 force to identify agricultural or aquacultural activities and  
6 best practices that provide carbon sequestration benefits that  
7 may be used to establish a carbon farming certification.

8 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this Act:

9 "Agricultural activities" shall have the same meaning as in  
10 section 166-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

11 "Agricultural or aquacultural practices" means management  
12 practices for agricultural activities or aquacultural  
13 activities.

14 "Aquacultural activities" shall have the same meaning as in  
15 section 166-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

16 "Greenhouse gas benefits" means greenhouse gas emissions  
17 source reduction or carbon sequestration.

18 "Healthy soils" means soils that enhance their continuing  
19 capacity to function as a biological system, increase soil  
20 organic matter, improve soil structure and water- and nutrient-



1 holding capacity, and result in net long-term greenhouse gas  
2 benefits.

3 "On-farm demonstration projects" means projects that  
4 incorporate farm management practices in agricultural activities  
5 or aquacultural activities that result in greenhouse gas  
6 benefits.

7 SECTION 3. (a) The carbon farming task force is  
8 established within the office of planning for administrative  
9 purposes only. The task force shall have the following  
10 objectives:

- 11 (1) Identify and study agricultural and aquacultural  
12 practices, public land and marine use policies, and  
13 on-farm management practices that would increase  
14 climate resiliency and improve carbon sequestration in  
15 Hawaii;
- 16 (2) Work with public and private stakeholders, establish  
17 short- and long-term benchmarks for increasing carbon  
18 sequestration in Hawaii's agricultural and natural  
19 environment;
- 20 (3) Identify appropriate criteria to measure baseline  
21 levels and increases in carbon sequestration,



- 1 improvements in soil health, and other key indicators  
2 of greenhouse gas benefits from beneficial  
3 agricultural and aquacultural practices that may be  
4 used to create a certification program for promoting  
5 agricultural and aquacultural practices that generate  
6 greenhouse gas benefits;
- 7 (4) Identify land and marine use policies, agricultural  
8 policies, and mitigation options that would encourage  
9 agricultural and aquacultural practices and land use  
10 practices that would promote increased carbon  
11 sequestration, build healthy soils, and provide  
12 greenhouse gas benefits;
- 13 (5) Identify ways to increase the generation and use of  
14 compost in Hawaii to build healthy soils;
- 15 (6) Identify agroforestry practices that can be used to  
16 enhance carbon sequestration in Hawaii; and
- 17 (7) Make recommendations to the legislature and governor  
18 on measures that would increase climate resiliency,  
19 build healthy soils, or provide greenhouse gas  
20 benefits.



1 (b) In addition to the objectives listed in subsection  
2 (a), the task force may consider:

3 (1) Developing incentives and funding mechanisms for these  
4 incentives, including but not limited to loans, tax  
5 credits, or grants; research; technical assistance; or  
6 educational materials and outreach, to participating  
7 agricultural activities, aquacultural activities, or  
8 on-farm demonstration projects that are identified and  
9 approved by the task force as those that would promote  
10 greenhouse gas benefits, build healthy soils,  
11 sequester carbon, increase water-holding capacity, and  
12 increase crop yields; and

13 (2) Providing for research, education, and technical  
14 support for agricultural activities and aquacultural  
15 activities identified by the task force.

16 (c) The carbon farming task force shall consist of the  
17 following:

18 (1) The director of the office of planning or the  
19 director's designee, who shall serve as chairperson;

20 (2) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or the  
21 chairperson's designee;



- 1       (3) The deputy director of the department of health's  
2           environmental health administration or the deputy  
3           director's designee;
- 4       (4) The director of the office of environmental quality  
5           control or the director's designee;
- 6       (5) The director of the center for island climate  
7           adaptation and policy at the University of Hawaii at  
8           Manoa;
- 9       (6) The administrator of the division of forestry and  
10          wildlife within the department of land and natural  
11          resources or the administrator's designee;
- 12       (7) One researcher from the college of tropical  
13          agriculture and human resources at the University of  
14          Hawaii at Manoa;
- 15       (8) One extension agent from the college of tropical  
16          agriculture and human resources at the University of  
17          Hawaii at Manoa;
- 18       (9) Four members; provided that the mayors of Hawaii,  
19          Honolulu, Kauai, and Maui counties shall each appoint  
20          one member; and



1           (10) Three members to be jointly selected by the president  
2                   of the senate and the speaker of the house of  
3                   representatives, of which one member shall be selected  
4                   from an environmental nonprofit organization, and  
5                   another member from an agricultural or ranching  
6                   association.

7           Task force members may recommend additional members with  
8           appropriate specialized expertise to the task force, for  
9           approval by the chairperson.

10           (d) Members of the task force shall be exempt from section  
11           26-34, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and shall serve without  
12           compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses  
13           necessary for the performance of their duties, including travel  
14           expenses.

15           (e) The carbon farming task force shall:

16           (1) Submit a preliminary report of its findings and  
17                   recommendations, including any proposed legislation,  
18                   to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to  
19                   the convening of the regular session of 2023; provided  
20                   that the preliminary report shall discuss the



- 1 objectives and issues listed in subsections (a) and  
2 (b), including the following:
- 3 (A) Types of agricultural and aquacultural practices,  
4 public land and marine use policies, and on-farm  
5 managing practices that would provide greenhouse  
6 gas benefits;
- 7 (B) Short-term and long-term benchmarks on how  
8 agricultural activities and aquacultural  
9 activities can help the State of Hawaii reach  
10 carbon neutrality;
- 11 (C) Appropriate criteria that may be used in a  
12 certification program to measure baseline levels  
13 and increases in carbon sequestration,  
14 improvements in soil health, and other key  
15 indicators of greenhouse gas benefits from  
16 beneficial agricultural and aquacultural  
17 practices; and
- 18 (D) Kinds of incentives, grants, research, and  
19 assistance that would promote:
- 20 (i) Agricultural and aquacultural practices to  
21 produce greenhouse gas benefits; and





1           (ii) Land and marine use policies and  
2                   agricultural policies that would encourage  
3                   agricultural and aquacultural practices and  
4                   land use practices to provide greenhouse gas  
5                   benefits; and

6           (2) Submit a final report of its findings and  
7                   recommendations, including any proposed legislation,  
8                   to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to  
9                   the convening of the regular session of 2025.

10          (f) The office of planning shall provide administrative  
11          and clerical support required by the task force.

12          (g) The task force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2025.

13          SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
14          revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                   or so much  
15          thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the  
16          same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
17          2018-2019 for the purposes of this Act.

18                 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of  
19          planning for the purposes of this Act.

20          SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 28, 2081.



**Report Title:**

Carbon Farming Task Force; Climate Change; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Carbon Farming Task Force within the Office of Planning to identify agricultural and aquacultural practices to improve soil health and promote carbon sequestration in the State's agricultural and aquacultural sectors. Appropriates funds. Effective 1/28/2081. (SD2)

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

