A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the human-induced
global climate crisis requires thoughtful but bold responses on
many fronts to make Hawaii communities resilient to the impacts
of climate change that threaten the very survivability of these
fragile islands. Lest Hawaii lose its leadership position in
meeting the future of labor, justice and equity, the legislature
embraces aloha aina as a green new deal to decarbonize Hawaii's
systems of food, energy, and transportation, and to sequester
carbon through systems of agriculture, waste management, and
ecosystem restoration. This solid foundation finds synergies
with expanded access to health, housing and education,
multiplying good jobs and ensuring justice and equity for
Hawaii's citizens. This measure represents a forward step in
mitigating and adapting Hawaii to inevitable climate change.
The legislature further finds that our climate crisis is an
existential threat and that greenhouse gas emissions from the
burning of fossil fuels is the key contributor. It poses a
serious threat to our economy, public health, and environment. The State has committed to the elimination of fossil fuels from our energy sector and has committed to abiding by the Paris Climate Agreement's goal of limiting global warming to less than 1.5 degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Trees serve as a natural way of removing carbon from the atmosphere. No other approach is as effective for carbon sequestration. An environmental assessment should be required for the large-scale clear-cutting of trees and other perennial plants to produce electricity.

SECTION 2. Section 343-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended as follows:

1. By adding two new definitions to be appropriately inserted and to read:

   "Biomass" means organic material which is not a fossil fuel.

   "Fossil fuel" means long-dead organic material that no longer can be dated because it lacks isotopic markers."

2. By amending the definition of "power-generating facility" to read:

   "Power-generating facility" means:
(1) A new, fossil-fueled, electricity-generating facility, where the electrical output rating of the new equipment exceeds 5.0 megawatts; or

(2) An expansion in generating capacity of an existing, fossil-fueled, electricity-generating facility, where the incremental electrical output rating of the new equipment exceeds 5.0 megawatts; or

(3) A biomass generator exceeds 5.0 megawatts that is powered by perennial plants.

3. By deleting the definition of "renewable energy facility".

["#Renewable energy facility": DELETED.]

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.
Report Title:
Biomass; Fossil Fuel

Description:
Adds definitions of "biomass" and "fossil fuels", and amends the definition of "power generating facility".

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