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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds and acknowledges that  
2 plastics have become a significant threat to Hawaii's  
3 environment, ecosystems, and beaches on which the State's  
4 economy, culture, and native species rely.

5           Plastic litter and debris can be increasingly found on  
6 every island and in every watershed and protected area from the  
7 remote Kalalau Valley on Kauai to Kilauea Caldera on Hawaii  
8 island. Hawaii's forests, streams, and beaches are strewn with  
9 plastic debris, including micro plastic debris smaller than  
10 grains of sand which are consumed by the smallest of endangered  
11 birds to the humpback whale. Worldwide, eighty-two of one  
12 hundred forty-four examined bird species contained plastic  
13 debris in their stomachs. Sixty-six per cent of giant petrel  
14 shorebirds have been found to regurgitate plastic when feeding  
15 their chicks. More than half of dead sea turtles have been  
16 found to have ingested plastic. A University of Hawaii study  
17 has found that in Hawaii, "58 percent of the small-eye opah and



1 43 percent of the big-eye opah had ingested some kind of  
2 debris," contributing to population reduction and reduced  
3 commercial catch.

4 Additionally, the Washington Post recently reported that an  
5 estimated five million to thirteen million tons of plastic  
6 debris enter the oceans every year, which has contributed to  
7 creating the Pacific garbage patch, a mass of plastic debris  
8 larger than the state of Texas floating in the Pacific Ocean  
9 north of Hawaii. If nothing changes, it is estimated that by  
10 2050 there will be more plastic in the Pacific Ocean than fish,  
11 by weight.

12 The legislature further finds that plastic cleanup is a  
13 significant cost to Hawaii taxpayers. The cost of increasing  
14 cleanups by government agencies, businesses, and the general  
15 public is rising to account for expensive best management  
16 practices and mitigation. A study of over ninety counties in  
17 California recently concluded that taxpayers are paying  
18 \$428,000,000 per year to clean up plastic through storm drain  
19 management, street sweeping, and marine cleanups. San Diego  
20 county, which has a population of 1.3 million, equivalent to  
21 Hawaii, must now spend \$14,000,000 annually cleaning up plastic.



1 The department of transportation has already produced a trash  
2 management plan which shows styrofoam and plastic bags as the  
3 top two contributors to the waste stream, and which must be  
4 regularly removed from storm drains at cost to the department.

5 The legislature further finds that there is opportunity to  
6 both reduce costs to taxpayers and protect Hawaii's environment  
7 from plastic inundation. Hawaii residents now generate 2.8 tons  
8 of waste per person per year, more waste per capita than the  
9 residents of any other state. More than eighty per cent of the  
10 plastic entering the Pacific Ocean comes from land-based litter  
11 and pollution which can be prevented. Globally, ninety-five per  
12 cent of plastic packaging is discarded after a single-first use,  
13 at a cost of \$80,000,000,000 to \$120,000,000,000. Minimizing  
14 packaging and utilizing alternatives derived from compostable  
15 materials, which are now widely available, can benefit our  
16 economy as it shifts toward a system of responsible reuse which  
17 is a foundational principle of Native Hawaiian culture.

18 The purpose of this Act is to establish a long-term plan to  
19 eliminate plastic pollution in Hawaii's environment and reduce  
20 cleanup costs to taxpayers through the establishment of a



1 committee to collect data, identify next steps, and provide  
2 recommendations.

3 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by  
4 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read  
5 as follows:

6 "CHAPTER

7 PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

8 § -1 Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the  
9 context clearly indicates otherwise:

10 "Department" means the department of land and natural  
11 resources.

12 "Program" means the plastic pollution initiative program.

13 § -2 Plastic pollution initiative program. There is  
14 established within the department of land and natural resources  
15 a plastic pollution initiative program with the mission of  
16 eliminating plastic waste impacting native species and polluting  
17 the State's environment. The program shall include the plastic  
18 pollution advisory council, which shall:

19 (1) Consist of the following members, who shall serve  
20 without compensation but shall be reimbursed for



- 1 reasonable expenses, including travel expenses,
- 2 incurred during the performance of their duties:
- 3 (A) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
- 4 resources or the chairperson's designee, who
- 5 shall serve as the chair of the council;
- 6 (B) The director of health or the director's
- 7 designee;
- 8 (C) The chairs of the standing committees of the
- 9 legislature with subject matter jurisdiction over
- 10 the environment;
- 11 (D) One representative from each of the four
- 12 counties;
- 13 (E) One representative each from four community
- 14 organizations that focus on preventing plastic
- 15 waste and cleaning up plastic in the environment,
- 16 to be determined by the chair of the council; and
- 17 (F) A representative from the Hawaii tourism
- 18 authority;
- 19 (2) Be subject to section 26-34;



- 1 (3) Perform any relevant analysis and develop a plan or  
2 recommendations as appropriate for the legislature,  
3 the counties, and other stakeholders;
- 4 (4) Obtain from other state departments and county  
5 agencies all relevant data on plastic pollution and  
6 any associated costs of cleanup as it relates to the  
7 mission of the program;
- 8 (5) Assist with coordination between the department and  
9 other government agencies with the general public on  
10 the mission of the program; and
- 11 (6) Report annually to the legislature on its progress and  
12 any findings or recommendations to eliminate plastic  
13 waste polluting Hawaii's environment no later than  
14 twenty days prior to the convening of each regular  
15 session."

16 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000 or so much  
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the  
19 purpose of:

- 20 (1) Establishing the plastic pollution initiative program;
- 21 and



1           (2)    Conducting an initial analysis of the baseline cost of  
2                    plastic pollution to Hawaii's taxpayers and  
3                    environment.

4            The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
5   land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

6            SECTION 4.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.



**Report Title:**

Plastic Pollution Initiative; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Plastic Pollution Initiative Program with the mission to eliminate plastic waste impacting native species and polluting the State's environment. Establishes the Plastic Pollution Advisory Council to collect data regarding plastic pollution and provide recommendations to eliminate plastic waste. Appropriates funds. (HB2107 HD1)

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