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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENERGY.

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

1           SECTION 1. Renewable energy resources offer Hawaii  
2 important economic, environmental, and energy security benefits,  
3 especially since Hawaii's dependency on petroleum is the highest  
4 in the nation, accounting for approximately ninety per cent of  
5 the State's energy needs. This high petroleum dependency makes  
6 consumers extremely vulnerable to any oil embargo, supply  
7 disruption, international market dysfunction, and many other  
8 factors beyond Hawaii's control.

9           Recognizing the importance and economic and environmental  
10 benefits of increasing energy self-sufficiency, over the past  
11 four years, the legislature and the department of business,  
12 economic development, and tourism have committed to energy  
13 objectives geared toward achieving dependable, efficient, and  
14 economical statewide energy systems, increased self-sufficiency,  
15 greater energy security, and reduction of greenhouse gas  
16 emissions.

17           Act 272, Session Laws of Hawaii 2001, recognized the  
18 economic, environmental, and fuel diversity benefits of



1 renewable energy resources and the need to encourage the  
2 establishment of a market for renewable energy in Hawaii using  
3 the State's renewable energy resources. Act 240, Session Laws  
4 of Hawaii 2006, provided a framework for energy self-  
5 sufficiency. The State has also committed to a renewable energy  
6 standard that requires twenty per cent of electricity sold to be  
7 generated from renewable resources by the end of 2020 and has  
8 sought to encourage private sector development of renewable  
9 energy projects.

10 However, renewable energy projects are often complex,  
11 large-scale undertakings requiring a number of permits. The  
12 process for obtaining the necessary permits for renewable energy  
13 projects and developments and the process for meeting state,  
14 county, and federal regulations has for decades been described  
15 as overly time-consuming, cumbersome, onerous, and costly. In  
16 fact, the "Hawaii Integrated Energy Policy Report" of 1991 found  
17 that the permit and approval process required for the  
18 development and siting of energy facilities for a single project  
19 can take up to seven years to complete. Thus, the inefficiency  
20 of the permitting and development process acts as a barrier to  
21 meeting Hawaii's renewable energy goals.



1           Understanding that renewable energy projects can provide  
2 substantial and long-term benefits to the State and that  
3 development of renewable energy projects would further state  
4 policies of developing indigenous renewable energy resources and  
5 decreasing Hawaii's dependency on imported fossil fuels, the  
6 legislature finds that there is a need to streamline the  
7 permitting process to provide predictability and to encourage  
8 private companies to commit substantial amounts of capital,  
9 time, and effort necessary to develop such projects. To these  
10 ends, the legislature also recognizes that investment in  
11 additional personnel is essential.

12           The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to  
13 establish a full-time, permanent renewable energy facilitator  
14 position in the department of business, economic development,  
15 and tourism.

16           SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
17 of business, economic development, and tourism one full-time  
18 equivalent permanent renewable energy facilitator position to  
19 facilitate the efficient permitting of renewable energy  
20 projects.



1 (b) The specific duties and responsibilities of the  
2 renewable energy facilitator shall include, but not be limited  
3 to, the following:

4 (1) Compilation of current information regarding all  
5 county, state, and federal permits and land use  
6 provisions that may be required for approval of a  
7 renewable energy project including statutes,  
8 ordinances, federal regulations, rules, processes,  
9 responsible agencies, contact information, and  
10 websites and categorization of that information by  
11 type of renewable energy technology and county. The  
12 renewable energy facilitator shall provide access to  
13 this information in both printed and internet-based  
14 forms;

15 (2) Development of a website to disseminate all state,  
16 county, and federal permitting and land use  
17 information relevant to permitting of renewable energy  
18 projects;

19 (3) Development of online resources, as practical,  
20 including:

21 (A) An online permit assistance system that includes  
22 project questionnaires, an environmental permit



- 1 handbook, permit process schematics, and fact  
2 sheets; and
- 3 (B) A one-stop electronic permitting service for  
4 environmental permits;
- 5 (4) Establishment and maintenance of a one-stop service  
6 center for call-in or walk-in assistance;
- 7 (5) Renewable energy project facilitation, as requested,  
8 including convening and facilitation of the initial  
9 meeting of project applicants with permitting agencies  
10 and continuing coordination through project approval;
- 11 (6) Identification of permitting efficiency opportunities;
- 12 (7) Development of a comprehensive permitting plan for  
13 project applicants, including multiple permits to  
14 facilitate interagency coordination and efficiency;
- 15 (8) Review and recommendation of modifications to Hawaii's  
16 permitting system, including the siting council  
17 approach; provided that reviews shall include  
18 coordination and validation of recommendations by  
19 stakeholder agencies; and
- 20 (9) Effective consultation and collaboration with all  
21 permitting agencies and land use agencies to ensure  
22 that the position promotes permit efficiency from the



1 perspective of the project developer and affected  
2 agencies.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$112,904 or so much  
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the  
6 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent  
7 renewable energy facilitator position in the department of  
8 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of  
9 section 2 of this Act.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
11 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of  
12 this Act.

13 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.



**Report Title:**

Energy Resources; Renewable Energy; DBEDT

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for a renewable energy facilitator position within the department of business, economic development, and tourism. Effective 7/1/08. (HB2505 HD1)

