

JAN 22 2008

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, where twenty per cent of electricity sold will 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. Towards
10 these 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. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$112,904 or so much
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the
19 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent
20 renewable energy facilitator position in the department of
21 business, economic development, and tourism to facilitate the
22 efficient permitting of renewable energy projects and to



1 initiate the implementation of key renewable energy projects
2 permitting efficiency improvement strategies identified by the
3 department of business, economic development, and tourism.

4 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
5 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of
6 this Act.

7 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.
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Report Title:

Energy Resources; Renewable Energy; DBEDT

Description:

Establishes a renewable energy facilitator position with DBEDT.

SB HMS 2008-1201

