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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 or aquacultural activities" have the same  
10 meanings as defined in section 166-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

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

13 "Agricultural or aquacultural production" has the same  
14 meaning as "agricultural or aquacultural activities".

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

17 "Healthy soils" means soils that enhance their continuing  
18 capacity to function as a biological system, increase soil  
19 organic matter, improve soil structure and water- and nutrient-  
20 holding capacity, and result in net long-term greenhouse gas  
21 benefits.



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

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

- 8 (1) Identify and study agricultural and aquacultural  
9 practices, public land and marine use policies, and  
10 on-farm management practices that would increase  
11 climate resiliency and improve sequestration of carbon  
12 content in Hawaii;
- 13 (2) Work with public and private stakeholders, establish  
14 short- and long-term benchmarks for increasing  
15 sequestration of carbon content in Hawaii's  
16 agricultural and natural environment;
- 17 (3) Identify appropriate criteria to measure baseline  
18 levels and increases in carbon sequestration,  
19 improvements in soil health, and other key indicators  
20 of greenhouse gas benefits from beneficial  
21 agricultural and aquacultural practices that may be



1 used to create a certification program for promoting  
2 agricultural and aquacultural practices that generate  
3 greenhouse gas benefits;

4 (4) Identify land and marine use policies, agricultural  
5 policies, and mitigation options that would encourage  
6 agricultural and aquacultural practices and land use  
7 practices that would promote increased carbon  
8 sequestration, build healthy soils, and provide  
9 greenhouse gas benefits;

10 (5) Identify ways to increase the generation and use of  
11 compost in Hawaii to build healthy soils; and

12 (6) Make recommendations to the legislature and governor  
13 on measures that would increase climate resiliency,  
14 build healthy soils, or provide greenhouse gas  
15 benefits.

16 (b) In addition to the objectives listed in subsection

17 (a), the task force may consider:

18 (1) Developing incentives and funding mechanisms for these  
19 incentives, including but not limited to loans, tax  
20 credits, or grants; research; technical assistance; or  
21 educational materials and outreach, to participating



1 agricultural or aquacultural activities or on-farm  
2 demonstration projects that are identified and  
3 approved by the task force as those that would promote  
4 greenhouse gas benefits, build healthy soils,  
5 sequester carbon, increase water-holding capacity, and  
6 increase crop yields;

7 (2) Providing for research, education, and technical  
8 support for agricultural and aquacultural activities  
9 identified by the task force.

10 (c) The carbon farming task force shall consist of the  
11 following:

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

14 (2) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or the  
15 chairperson's designee;

16 (3) The deputy director of the department of health's  
17 environmental health administration or the deputy  
18 director's designee;

19 (4) The director of the office of environmental quality  
20 control or the director's designee;



- 1 (5) The director of the center for island climate  
2 adaptation and policy at the University of Hawaii at  
3 Manoa;
- 4 (6) One researcher from the college of tropical  
5 agriculture and human resources at the University of  
6 Hawaii at Manoa;
- 7 (7) One extension agent from the college of tropical  
8 agriculture and human resources at the University of  
9 Hawaii at Manoa;
- 10 (8) Four members; provided that the mayors of Hawaii,  
11 Honolulu, Kauai, and Maui counties shall each appoint  
12 one member; and
- 13 (9) Three members to be jointly selected by the president  
14 of the senate and the speaker of the house of  
15 representatives, of which one member shall be selected  
16 from an environmental nonprofit organization, and  
17 another member from an agricultural or ranching  
18 association.

19 Task force members may recommend additional members with  
20 appropriate specialized expertise to the task force, for  
21 approval by the chairperson.



1 (d) Members of the task force shall be exempt from section  
2 26-34, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and shall serve without  
3 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses  
4 necessary for the performance of their duties, including travel  
5 expenses.

6 (e) The carbon farming task force shall:

7 (1) Submit a preliminary report of its findings and  
8 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,  
9 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to  
10 the convening of the regular session of 2023; provided  
11 that the preliminary report shall discuss the  
12 objectives and issues listed in subsections (a) and  
13 (b), including the following:

14 (A) Types of agricultural and aquacultural practices,  
15 public land and marine use policies, and on-farm  
16 managing practices that would provide greenhouse  
17 gas benefits;

18 (B) Short-term and long-term benchmarks on how  
19 agricultural and aquacultural activities can help  
20 the State of Hawaii reach carbon neutrality;



- 1 (C) Appropriate criteria that may be used in a  
2 certification program to measure baseline levels  
3 and increases in carbon sequestration,  
4 improvements in soil health, and other key  
5 indicators of greenhouse gas benefits from  
6 beneficial agricultural and aquacultural  
7 practices;
- 8 (D) Kinds of incentives, grants, research, and  
9 assistance that would promote:
- 10 (i) Agricultural and aquacultural practices to  
11 produce greenhouse gas benefits; and
- 12 (ii) Land and marine use policies and  
13 agricultural policies that would encourage  
14 agricultural and aquacultural practices and  
15 land use practices to provide greenhouse gas  
16 benefits; and
- 17 (2) Submit a final report of its findings and  
18 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,  
19 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to  
20 the convening of the regular session of 2025.





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

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

4 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the  
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
8 2018-2019 for the purposes of this Act.

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

11 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 28, 2018.



**Report Title:**

Carbon Farming Task Force; Climate Change; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Carbon Farming Task Force within the Office of Planning to identify agricultural practices to improve soil health and promote carbon sequestration in the State's agricultural and aquacultural sectors. Appropriates funds.  
(HB1578 HD1)

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

