
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 cleaning up plastic 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 1,300,000, equivalent to
21 Hawaii, spends \$14,000,000 annually cleaning up plastic. The



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

5 The legislature further finds that there is opportunity to
6 reduce costs to taxpayers and protect Hawaii's environment from
7 plastic inundation. Hawaii residents now generate 2.8 tons of
8 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
12 per cent of plastic packaging is discarded after a single 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 the
16 State's economy as it shifts toward a system of responsible
17 reuse, which is a foundational principle of Native Hawaiian
18 culture.

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



1 advisory council to collect data, identify next steps, and
2 provide 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 "Initiative" means the plastic pollution initiative.

13 § -2 Plastic pollution initiative. There is established
14 within the department of land and natural resources a plastic
15 pollution initiative with the mission of eliminating plastic
16 waste that impacts native species and pollutes the State's
17 environment. The initiative shall include the plastic pollution
18 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 chairperson of the council;

6 (B) The director of health or the director's
7 designee;

8 (C) The chairpersons of the standing committees of
9 the legislature with subject matter jurisdiction
10 over 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 selected by the chairperson of the council;

17 (F) A representative from the Hawaii tourism
18 authority; and

19 (G) A representative of the business community to be
20 selected by the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii;

21 (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 counties, and other stakeholders;

4 (4) Obtain from other state and county agencies all
5 relevant data on plastic pollution and any associated
6 costs of cleanup as it relates to the mission of the
7 initiative;

8 (5) Assist with coordination between the department and
9 other government agencies with the general public on
10 the mission of the initiative; and

11 (6) Report annually to the legislature on the advisory
12 council's progress and any findings or recommendations
13 to eliminate plastic waste polluting Hawaii's
14 environment no later than twenty days prior to the
15 convening of each regular session."

16 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 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; 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 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. (SD1)

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