
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 animals from the smallest
11 of endangered birds to the humpback whale. Worldwide, eighty-
12 two out of one hundred forty-four examined bird species had
13 plastic debris in their stomachs. Sixty-six per cent of giant
14 petrel shorebirds have been found to regurgitate plastic when
15 feeding their chicks. More than half of dead sea turtles have
16 been found to have ingested plastic. A university of Hawaii
17 study found that in Hawaii, "58 percent of the small-eye opah



1 and 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 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, by
11 weight, than fish.

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 more than ninety counties
17 in California concluded that taxpayers are paying \$428,000,000
18 per year to clean up plastic through storm drain management,
19 street sweeping, and marine cleanups. San Diego county, which
20 has a population of 1,300,000, equivalent to Hawaii, must now
21 spend \$14,000,000 annually cleaning up plastic. The department



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

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

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



1 council 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:

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

11 "Program" means the plastic pollution initiative program.

12 **§ -2 Plastic pollution initiative program.** There is
13 established within the department a plastic pollution initiative
14 program with the mission of eliminating plastic waste that
15 impacts native species and pollutes the State's environment.
16 The program shall include a plastic pollution advisory council,
17 which shall:

18 (1) Consist of the following members, who shall serve
19 without compensation but shall be reimbursed for
20 reasonable expenses, including travel expenses,
21 incurred during the performance of their duties:



- 1 (A) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
2 resources or the chairperson's designee, who
3 shall serve as the chair of the council;
- 4 (B) The director of health or the director's
5 designee;
- 6 (C) The chairs of the standing committees of the
7 legislature with subject matter jurisdiction over
8 the environment;
- 9 (D) One representative from each of the four
10 counties, to be selected by each county mayor;
- 11 (E) One representative from each of four community
12 organizations that focus on preventing plastic
13 waste and cleaning up plastic in the environment,
14 to be selected by the chair of the council; and
- 15 (F) A representative from the Hawaii tourism
16 authority;
- 17 (2) Be subject to section 26-34;
- 18 (3) Perform any relevant analysis and develop appropriate
19 plans or recommendations for the legislature, the
20 counties, and other stakeholders;



- 1 (4) Obtain from other state departments and county
- 2 agencies all relevant data on plastic pollution and
- 3 any associated cleanup costs as they relate to the
- 4 mission of the program;
- 5 (5) Assist with coordination between the department and
- 6 other government agencies with the general public on
- 7 the mission of the program; and
- 8 (6) Report to the legislature no later than twenty days
- 9 prior to the convening of each regular session on its
- 10 progress and any findings and recommendations to
- 11 eliminate the plastic polluting Hawaii's environment."

12 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general

13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much

14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the

15 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year

16 2020-2021 for the purposes of:

- 17 (1) Establishing the plastic pollution initiative program;
- 18 and
- 19 (2) Conducting an initial analysis of the baseline cost of
- 20 plastic pollution to Hawaii's taxpayers and
- 21 environment.



1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

4

INTRODUCED BY: 

JAN 18 2019



H.B. NO. 717

Report Title:

Plastic Pollution Initiative; Advisory Council; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Plastic Pollution Initiative Program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources to eliminate plastic waste polluting the State's environment. Establishes the Plastic Pollution Advisory Council to collect data on plastic pollution and associated cleanup costs. Appropriates funds.

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