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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 sea level is  
2 rising at increasing rates due to global warming of the  
3 atmosphere and oceans and the corresponding melting of glaciers  
4 and ice sheets. Due to climate change, Hawaii has experienced  
5 over half a foot of sea level rise in recent decades. According  
6 to research from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, a large part  
7 of the heavily urbanized areas of Honolulu and Waikiki on Oahu  
8 are at risk of groundwater inundation—flooding that occurs as  
9 groundwater is lifted above the ground surface due to sea level  
10 rise. The city and county of Honolulu is expected to begin  
11 seeing regular flooding of the urban core in as little as  
12 fifteen years.

13           The legislature further finds that, according to the 2018  
14 Hawaii Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report, sea  
15 level rise, together with projections of stronger and more  
16 frequent El Nino events and tropical cyclones in surrounding  
17 waters, indicate a growing vulnerability to coastal flooding and



1 erosion for the State. As sea level rise continues accelerating  
2 and seas become warmer, the potential impact of a severe  
3 disaster grows, and it will be only a matter of time before a  
4 significant disaster will impact the State's shoreline  
5 communities. A direct hit on urban Honolulu by a major  
6 hurricane is estimated to result in a loss of \$40,000,000,000 to  
7 the State's infrastructure and economy. The loss of coastal  
8 property and infrastructure, increased cost for storm damage and  
9 insurance, and loss of life are inevitable if nothing is done,  
10 which will add significant burden to local taxpayers, the  
11 State's economy, and Hawaii's way of life.

12 The legislature also finds that a comprehensive plan, with  
13 input and support from shoreline communities, to protect the  
14 State's urban shorelines is likely to take over a decade to  
15 develop and implement. New York City only began planning for a  
16 comprehensive shoreline protection pilot project to prevent  
17 future flooding after the city experienced a \$19,000,000,000  
18 loss from storm surge flooding from Hurricane Sandy in 2012. As  
19 such, it is urgent and prudent that the State begin planning for  
20 shoreline protection from climate change now.



1 Finally, the legislature finds that while many coastal  
2 communities are exposed, urban Honolulu's shoreline will be the  
3 most challenging to protect. By first establishing a  
4 comprehensive shoreline protection pilot project for urban  
5 Honolulu and creating a shoreline buffer to reduce the risk and  
6 impact of coastal disaster events, this can serve as a model for  
7 engaging all neighborhoods in the discussion of protecting  
8 communities from climate change, while allowing residents  
9 opportunities to expand park space, redevelop the urban  
10 landscape, and add amenities to enrich their communities.

11 The purpose of this Act is to establish the Honolulu  
12 shoreline climate protection pilot project to require the Hawaii  
13 climate change mitigation and adaptation commission to develop a  
14 comprehensive plan to protect urban Honolulu and its shoreline  
15 from the impacts of climate change, with the goal of using the  
16 plan as a model to protect the State's shorelines from coastal  
17 disaster events.

18 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
19 of land and natural resources for administrative purposes the  
20 Honolulu shoreline climate protection pilot project.



1 (b) Under the pilot program, the Hawaii climate change  
2 mitigation and adaptation commission shall develop a coastal  
3 protection plan for the low-lying topography of urban Honolulu  
4 between the Daniel K. Inouye Honolulu International Airport and  
5 Diamond Head State Monument. The plan shall designate in the  
6 low-lying topography of urban Honolulu different protection  
7 compartments. Each protection compartment shall:

- 8 (1) Provide a physically separate flood-protection zone,  
9 isolated from flooding in the other compartments;
- 10 (2) Provide opportunities for integrated social and  
11 community planning processes;
- 12 (3) Be connected by a continuous shoreline pathway which  
13 may be used for emergency access along the length of  
14 the shoreline;
- 15 (4) Be built into shoreline parks and the urban landscape;
- 16 (5) Be tailored to respond to individual neighborhood  
17 topography; and
- 18 (6) Be capable of self-reliance in the event that the  
19 compartment becomes isolated from another due to  
20 climate change.



1 (c) The Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation  
2 commission may partner with the city and county of Honolulu  
3 office of climate change, sustainability and resiliency in the  
4 development of the plan required pursuant to subsection (b).

5 (d) The Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation  
6 commission shall submit a report to the legislature on the  
7 status of the development of its coastal protection plan  
8 pursuant to subsection (b), including any findings,  
9 recommendations, and proposed legislation, no later than twenty  
10 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2021.

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
13 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for  
14 the Honolulu shoreline climate protection pilot project;  
15 provided that no funds shall be released unless half the sum  
16 appropriated is matched by the city and county of Honolulu.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
18 land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050, and  
20 shall be repealed on June 30, 2022.



**Report Title:**

Coastal Disaster Planning; Shoreline Climate Protection Pilot Project; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Honolulu Shoreline Climate Protection Pilot Project. Requires the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission to develop a comprehensive plan to protect urban Honolulu from the risk of coastal disaster events. Anticipates use of the plan as a model for the State. Appropriates funds. Repeals 6/30/2022. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

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

