
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that automatic fire
2 sprinkler systems have a proven record of significantly reducing
3 loss of life, injury, and property damage caused by fires. The
4 legislature also finds that eight out of ten deaths caused by
5 fire occur in the home. Only the sprinkler head closest to the
6 fire will activate and eighty-five per cent of fires are
7 contained by the operation of just one sprinkler. Today's newer
8 homes pose inherent fire hazards that not only affect occupants,
9 but also firefighters. This is due to the following:

10 (1) Engineered lumber is now used as a composite joist or
11 beam as part of today's modern, lightweight
12 construction material. Compared with traditional wood
13 materials in older homes, lightweight construction
14 assemblies collapse in six minutes versus eighteen
15 minutes for wood;

16 (2) Modern furnishings burn quicker and hotter than
17 traditional legacy furnishings. These place not only



1 occupants but fire fighters in extreme peril when a
2 fire occurs in a home without sprinklers; and
3 (3) Open plan designs contribute to rapid fire spread.
4 Higher ceiling heights and open plan designs with less
5 compartmentalization provide larger volumes of oxygen
6 to promote fire spread.

7 California, Maryland, and the District of Columbia require
8 residential sprinklers in all new one- and two-family dwellings.
9 Approximately eighteen states do not require sprinklers, but
10 allow local jurisdictions to require them. Communities that
11 have adopted a residential sprinkler requirement in new one- and
12 two-family dwellings have not seen any decrease in the
13 residential construction or the sale of new homes, and the
14 economies of scale reduce costs. However, residential fire
15 sprinklers in one- and two-family dwellings are rare in Hawaii.
16 One reason for the lack of residential fire sprinklers is the
17 cost. The legislature finds that an incentive is needed to
18 encourage the installation of fire sprinklers in new homes.

19 The purpose of this Act is to provide an incentive to
20 owner-occupants to install an automatic fire sprinkler system in
21 any new one- or two-family dwelling of a building that is used



1 only for residential purposes, by establishing a tax credit for
2 a percentage of the actual cost of the system, including
3 installation, materials, water and permitting fees, and any
4 related charges.

5 SECTION 2. Chapter 235, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
6 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
7 designated and to read as follows:

8 "§235- Tax credit to promote the installation of fire
9 sprinklers in residences. (a) Any qualifying taxpayer who owns
10 and occupies a dwelling unit and files an individual income tax
11 return for a taxable year may claim an income tax credit under
12 this section against the Hawaii state individual net income tax.

13 (b) The tax credit may be claimed for an eligible
14 automatic fire sprinkler system that is installed and placed in
15 service by the taxpayer during the taxable year in any one- or
16 two-family dwelling unit in a building that is used only for
17 residential purposes. For each automatic sprinkler system, the
18 tax credit that may be claimed shall be no more than
19 \$ _____, including installation, materials, water and
20 permitting fees, and any related charges; provided that:



- 1 (1) Only the owner-occupant of the dwelling or the
2 purchaser installing the automatic sprinkler system in
3 a new one- or two-family dwelling used only for
4 residential purposes shall be entitled to a single tax
5 credit;
- 6 (2) Only one credit may be claimed per tax map key number;
7 and
- 8 (3) The amount of the credit taken shall not exceed
9 \$5,000.
- 10 (c) If the tax credit claimed by the taxpayer under this
11 section exceeds the amount of the income tax payments due from
12 the taxpayer, the excess of credit over payments due shall be
13 used as a credit against the taxpayer's income tax liability in
14 subsequent years until exhausted.
- 15 (d) The director of taxation:
- 16 (1) Shall prepare forms that may be necessary to claim a
17 credit under this section;
- 18 (2) May require proof of the claim for the tax credit; and
- 19 (3) May adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 necessary to
20 carry out this section.



1 (e) All of the provisions relating to assessments and
2 refunds under this chapter and under section 231-23(c)(1) shall
3 apply to the tax credit under this section.

4 (f) Claims for the tax credit under this section,
5 including any amended claims, shall be filed on or before the
6 end of the twelfth month following the taxable year for which
7 the credit may be claimed.

8 (g) If the State or a county requires an automatic fire
9 sprinkler system to be installed, no claim for a tax credit for
10 the automatic sprinkler shall be allowed for the dwelling for
11 which an automatic fire sprinkler system is required."

12 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval
14 and shall:

15 (1) Apply to taxable years beginning after December 31,

16 2020; and

17 (2) Be repealed on June 30, 2030.



Report Title:

State Fire Council Package; Fire Protection; Fire Sprinklers;
Tax Credit

Description:

Establishes a tax credit for the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system in any one- and two-family dwelling in a structure used only for residential purposes. Sunsets 6/30/2030. (SD1)

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