
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature recognizes that electricity
2 rates are a significant component of household budgets and
3 should be reduced where feasible. In recent years, the costs of
4 alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power, have
5 dropped below the costs of power from most existing power plants
6 fueled by fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, or natural gas; wood;
7 or trash. For example, the costs for the Kaua'i Island Utility
8 Cooperative's Lāwa'i solar and energy storage project average 11
9 cents per kilowatt hour, far below the cost of biomass plants.
10 With improved battery and storage technologies, alternative
11 renewable sources now can be just as reliable as plants that
12 burn wood, trash, or fossil fuels.

13 In addition, the existing power plants that burn fossil
14 fuels, wood, or trash are major contributors to climate change,
15 which is caused by excessive greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
16 The most prevalent greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, which is
17 emitted when trash, trees, coal, oil, or gas are burned.



1 According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
2 once carbon dioxide is emitted, it stays in the atmosphere for
3 three hundred to one thousand years, meaning what is done now to
4 reduce the emission of carbon dioxide will affect the livability
5 of the planet for generations.

6 Recent data shows that the rate and intensity of climate
7 change is greater than predicted. According to the National
8 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for
9 Environmental Information, the years from 2013-2021 rank among
10 the ten warmest years on record.

11 Twenty years ago, the legislature established the State's
12 renewable portfolio standards model to ensure that Hawaii's
13 electric utility companies transition from using fossil fuels to
14 renewable energy. At the time, biomass was considered a "carbon
15 neutral" energy source, even though two major sources of biomass
16 combustion are the burning of trees and the burning of waste.
17 Consequently, burning trees will actually add to climate change
18 for at least the next several decades or longer and is fifty per
19 cent worse for the climate than burning coal because of reduced
20 removal of carbon from the atmosphere, emissions, and lower
21 efficiency. Additionally, trees remove greenhouse gases from



1 the atmosphere, but mature trees remove more carbon than
2 saplings and it takes decades for trees to mature.

3 Furthermore, waste incineration is the most expensive and
4 polluting way to manage waste or to make energy. For the same
5 energy output, trash incineration produces sixty-five per cent
6 more pollution than burning coal. Compared to landfilling,
7 trash burning releases twice as much carbon pollution and is far
8 more polluting generally.

9 In order to reduce electricity rates and greenhouse gasses,
10 the State should immediately disincentivize expensive and
11 polluting biomass incineration by eliminating biomass from the
12 renewable portfolio standard.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to remove biomass
14 from the renewable portfolio standard definition of "renewable
15 energy".

16 SECTION 2. Section 269-91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended by amending the definition of "renewable energy" to read
18 as follows:

19 ""Renewable energy" means energy generated or produced
20 using the following sources:

21 (1) Wind;



- 1 (2) The sun;
- 2 (3) Falling water;
- 3 (4) Biogas, including landfill and sewage-based digester
- 4 gas;
- 5 (5) Geothermal;
- 6 (6) Ocean water, currents, and waves, including ocean
- 7 thermal energy conversion;
- 8 ~~[-(7) Biomass, including biomass crops, agricultural and~~
- 9 ~~animal residues and wastes, and municipal solid waste~~
- 10 ~~and other solid waste;~~
- 11 ~~-(8)]~~ (7) Biofuels; and
- 12 ~~[-(9)]~~ (8) Hydrogen produced from renewable energy sources."

13 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
 14 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

16

INTRODUCED BY: NAB
 JAN 25 2023



H.B. NO. 1445

Report Title:

Renewable Energy; Renewable Portfolio Standard; Definition;
Biomass

Description:

Removes biomass from the renewable portfolio standard definition of "renewable energy".

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