

JAN 20 2023

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 the rate and
2 intensity of climate change is greater than predicted.
3 According to remarks made by the president of the United Nations
4 General Assembly in 2019, less than a decade remains to stop
5 irreversible damage and avert catastrophe from climate change.

6 Climate change is caused by excessive greenhouse gases in
7 the atmosphere. The most prevalent greenhouse gas is carbon
8 dioxide, which forms when fossil fuels, such as wood, coal, oil,
9 or natural gas, are burned. According to the National
10 Aeronautics and Space Administration, once carbon dioxide is
11 emitted, it stays in the atmosphere for three hundred to one
12 thousand years.

13 In 2001, the legislature established the State's renewable
14 portfolio standards to ensure that Hawaii's electric utility
15 companies transition from using fossil fuels to renewable
16 energy. At that time, all biomass, including trees and wood
17 pellets, was still considered a carbon neutral and renewable



1 energy source. However, when mature trees are cut and large
2 portions of stem wood are burned to generate electricity, the
3 emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere increases while
4 the amount of carbon dioxide captured and stored from the
5 atmosphere decreases. Recent data has also shown that newly
6 planted trees are ineffective until maturation two or three
7 decades later. With less than a decade to avoid a global
8 climate disaster, tree plantations are not the most effective
9 solution as the plantations, and any carbon-rich soils disrupted
10 during planting, would emit more carbon than the plantations can
11 store.

12 The legislature finds that existing forests, especially
13 older and middle-aged forests, are a vital component to control
14 climate change. To ensure that the planet remains habitable for
15 generations to come, not only must greenhouse gas emissions
16 decrease drastically, but existing mature forests, which have
17 superior carbon sequestration abilities, must be preserved.

18 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to remove from the
19 definition of "renewable energy" the energy generated or
20 produced using trees, wood pellets, and other wood products made
21 for burning.



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

4 "Renewable energy" means energy generated or produced
5 using the following sources:

- 6 (1) Wind;
- 7 (2) The sun;
- 8 (3) Falling water;
- 9 (4) Biogas, including landfill and sewage-based digester
10 gas;
- 11 (5) Geothermal;
- 12 (6) Ocean water, currents, and waves, including ocean
13 thermal energy conversion;
- 14 (7) [~~Biomass, including~~] Herbaceous biomass crops,
15 agricultural and animal residues and wastes, and
16 municipal solid waste and other solid waste[†],
17 excluding trees, wood pellets, and other wood products
18 made for burning;
- 19 (8) Biofuels; and
- 20 (9) Hydrogen produced from renewable energy sources."



S.B. NO. 425

1 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

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

4

INTRODUCED BY: *Mike Hubbard*



S.B. NO. 425

Report Title:

Renewable Energy; Renewable Portfolio Standards; Biomass; Trees;
Wood Pellets; Wood Products

Description:

Removes from the definition of "renewable energy" the energy generated or produced using trees, wood pellets, and other wood products made for burning.

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