
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENERGY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the development,
2 expansion, and protection of solar energy will help to meet the
3 present and future energy needs and renewable energy mandates of
4 the State. The legislature further finds that the use of solar
5 and energy storage systems can make Hawaii more resilient during
6 and after natural disasters and other crises. Because certain
7 parts of the State are more susceptible to disruptions in power
8 supply and transportation routes in times of crisis, ensuring
9 that essential businesses, which are those necessary for
10 residents to live and function, are energy self-sufficient and
11 resilient should be a priority in order to make disaster
12 response plans more functional, efficient, and equitable.
13 However, one of the biggest impediments to essential businesses
14 installing solar and energy storage systems is the time
15 consuming and onerous permitting process.

16 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
17 counties to establish an expedited streamlined permitting



1 process for essential businesses to install rooftop solar and
2 energy storage systems.

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 46, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
4 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
5 read as follows:

6 "§46- County building permits; expedited processing;
7 rooftop solar or energy storage systems; essential businesses.

8 (a) On or before July 15, 2024, each county, in consultation
9 with its respective county fire department and pursuant to its
10 powers under section 46-1.5(14), shall adopt an ordinance to
11 establish an expedited streamlined permitting process for
12 essential businesses to obtain the building permits necessary
13 for the installation of rooftop solar and energy storage
14 systems.

15 (b) In developing the expedited permitting process, the
16 counties shall adopt a checklist of all requirements with which
17 rooftop solar or energy storage systems for essential businesses
18 shall comply to be eligible for the expedited permitting
19 process. An application that satisfies the requirements of the
20 adopted checklist shall be deemed complete. Upon confirmation
21 by a county that the permit application and supporting documents



1 are completed, meet the requirements of the checklist, and are
2 consistent with the adopted ordinance, the county shall approve
3 the permit application and issue all required permits or
4 authorizations. Upon receipt of an incomplete application, a
5 county shall issue a written correction notice detailing all
6 deficiencies in the application and any additional information
7 required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance.

8 (c) The counties shall allow for electronical submittal of
9 a permit application and associated documentation and shall
10 authorize the electronic signature of applicants on all forms,
11 applications, and other documentation in lieu of a wet signature
12 by an applicant.

13 (d) The checklist and required permitting documentation
14 needed pursuant to subsection (b) shall be published on a
15 publicly accessible internet website.

16 (e) In developing the ordinances necessary to carry out
17 the purposes of this section, the counties shall make efforts to
18 substantially conform their expedited, streamlined permitting
19 processes with each other. A county may adopt an ordinance that
20 modifies the checklist established pursuant to subsection (b)



1 due to unique climatic, geological, seismological, or
2 topographical conditions.

3 (f) For rooftop solar and energy storage systems for
4 essential businesses that are eligible for expedited review
5 pursuant to this section, only one inspection shall be required,
6 which shall be done in a timely manner. If an essential
7 business's rooftop solar or energy storage systems fails an
8 inspection, a subsequent inspection shall be authorized;
9 provided that the subsequent inspection need not conform to the
10 requirements of this section."

11 SECTION 4. 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 2023-2024 and
14 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
15 year 2024-2025 for the counties to develop an expedited
16 permitting process for the installation of rooftop solar and
17 energy storage systems pursuant to this Act, to be distributed
18 as follows:

- 19 County of Hawaii \$;
- 20 City and county of Honolulu \$;
- 21 County of Kauai \$; and



H.B. NO. 1377

Report Title:

Counties; Building Permits; Rooftop Solar Systems; Energy Storage Systems; Essential Businesses; Appropriation

Description:

By 7/15/2024, requires the counties to adopt ordinances to establish an expedited streamlined permitting process for essential businesses to obtain the building permits needed for the installation of rooftop solar and energy storage systems. Appropriates funds.

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

