

JAN 19 2024

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# 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 finds that Act 97, Session Laws  
2 of Hawaii 2015, requires electric utilities in the State to  
3 achieve a one hundred per cent renewable portfolio standard by  
4 December 31, 2045, in order to transition the State away from  
5 imported fossil fuels and toward locally available renewable  
6 energy sources.

7           The legislature further finds that to encourage the timely  
8 build-out of a diverse, resilient, and reliable portfolio of  
9 low-cost renewable energy generation and storage assets, Hawaii  
10 must lower the administrative barriers that constrain deployment  
11 of residential and commercial-scale distributed energy  
12 resources.

13           The legislature further finds that the permitting processes  
14 currently can add substantial time and cost to the adoption of  
15 residential solar and energy storage projects and that online  
16 permitting tools such as the United States Department of  
17 Energy's SolarAPP+ have been successfully implemented by



1 hundreds of government entities that issue building permits  
2 throughout the nation and that Hawaii's permit-issuing  
3 government entities should similarly take advantage of these  
4 tools to help meet the State's clean energy, reliability, and  
5 resilience needs.

6 The purpose of this Act is to reduce administrative  
7 barriers to the deployment of energy generation and storage  
8 technology systems by requiring government entities in the State  
9 that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+, or a  
10 functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform,  
11 that processes and issues permits to licensed contractors for  
12 solar distributed energy resource systems in real time by  
13 January 1, 2025.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 196, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
16 designated and to read as follows:

17 "§196-A Building permits; issuing entities; adoption of  
18 online automated permitting platform; solar distributed energy  
19 resource systems. (a) Any government entity in the State that  
20 issues building permits shall:



- 1        (1) By January 1, 2025, implement SolarAPP+ or a  
2        functionally equivalent online automated permitting  
3        platform that processes and issues permits to licensed  
4        contractors for solar distributed energy resource  
5        systems in real time; provided that the government  
6        entity shall adopt a self-certification process  
7        pursuant to section 196-B for solar distributed energy  
8        resource systems that are not compatible with  
9        SolarAPP+, or a functional online equivalent, at the  
10       time the permit application is submitted to the  
11       government entity;
- 12       (2) Notify the Hawaii state energy office when it achieves  
13       compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1); and
- 14       (3) Submit annual notifications of its compliance with the  
15       requirements of paragraph (1) to the Hawaii state  
16       energy office.
- 17       (b) In issuing building permits in compliance with  
18       subsection (a), the applicable government entity in the State  
19       may promote the use of labor standards, including but not  
20       limited to living wages, benefits, and requirements for  
21       participation in state-approved apprenticeship programs.



1        (c) As used in this section:

2        "Solar distributed energy resource system" means an  
3 assembly of solar energy-generating or energy-storing materials,  
4 or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy-  
5 storing materials, and the related infrastructure necessary for  
6 its operation.

7        "SolarAPP+" means the web-based portal and associated  
8 software tools developed by the National Renewable Energy  
9 Laboratory, as updated from time to time.

10        **§196-B Adoption of self-certification for solar and energy**  
11 **storage projects.** (a) Any government entity in the State that  
12 issues building permits in any area of the State served by an  
13 investor-owned electric utility shall establish a self-  
14 certification process for residential and commercial on-site  
15 solar distributed energy resource systems that deems permit  
16 applications approved and allows applicants to proceed to build  
17 immediately; provided that the government entity receives  
18 written notice from:

19        (1) The project owner, or an agent of the project owner,  
20        that the owner or agent requests issuance of the  
21        permit and is prepared to pay any required fees; and



1        (2) The duly licensed architect, duly licensed engineer,  
2        duly licensed electrician, or duly licensed plumber,  
3        as applicable, who intends to install the solar  
4        distributed energy resource system that the  
5        installation of the system complies with all  
6        applicable codes and laws.

7        (b) A permit application or self-certification for a solar  
8        distributed energy resource system shall not require submission  
9        of an approved materials and methods number; provided that the  
10       following are submitted with the license holder's written  
11       notification pursuant to subsection (a):

- 12       (1) A manufacturer specification sheet;
- 13       (2) An installation and operations manual; and
- 14       (3) A UL or other national testing laboratory  
15       certification.

16       (c) If the requirements of subsection (a) are satisfied,  
17       the applicable government entity in the State that issues  
18       building permits shall issue the building permit number and  
19       close the permit within thirty days of submittal.



1           (d) As used in this section, "solar distributed energy  
2 resource system" has the same meaning as defined in section  
3 196-A."

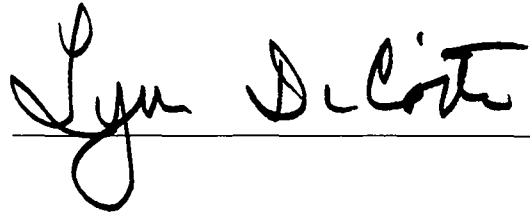
4           SECTION 3. In codifying the new sections added by  
5 section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
6 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
7 the new sections in this Act.

8           SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

9           SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

  
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# S.B. NO. 2539

**Report Title:**

Solar Distributed Energy Resource Systems; Building Permits;  
Online Automated Permitting Platform; Self-Certification Process

**Description:**

Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real-time by 1/1/2025. Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

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

