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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that urban temperatures  
2 are expected to rise significantly, particularly due to the loss  
3 of shade and increase in concrete in urban areas, such as  
4 highways. The difference in temperatures on an urban street  
5 having trees and cooling strategies versus one not having trees  
6 and cooling strategies can be as much as fifteen to twenty  
7 degrees on a hot day. During hot summers, extreme heat can lead  
8 to death and contribute to the loss of economic activity. The  
9 proliferation of hardening structures and concrete throughout  
10 Hawaii also impacts the visitor experience, which has been noted  
11 by foreign visitor bureaus. Studies have also found that  
12 residents' stress levels and quality of life are also impacted  
13 in urban areas, and that green, cool urban environments can help  
14 to reduce stress and improve mental and physical health. The  
15 legislature believes that efforts to mitigate the effects of  
16 increasing temperatures necessitates urgent action.



1           The legislature notes that the cost of maintaining greener  
2 highway corridors is estimated to be \$60,000 per mile. The  
3 legislature also notes that new temperature mitigation  
4 techniques and strategies used around the world have shown that  
5 this cost can be reduced, with minimal or no regular maintenance  
6 required, by using appropriate plant species. The legislature  
7 also believes that making the State's highway corridors greener  
8 now will help to reduce the potential financial burden placed on  
9 taxpayers in the future.

10           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish:

- 11           (1) Three highway corridors pilot projects to improve the  
12           State's freeway corridors with greenery; and
- 13           (2) A working group to develop projects and define best  
14           practices to achieve temperature reduction, carbon  
15           capture, habitat restoration; improve mental health,  
16           and beautification of commuter corridors; and minimize  
17           maintenance of those projects and practices over time.

18           SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department  
19 of transportation the greener highway corridors pilot project  
20 for the interstate H-1 freeway, to be administered by a  
21 representative of the department of transportation having



1 expertise in arboriculture, who shall be selected by the  
2 director of transportation.

3 (b) The purpose of the pilot project shall be to:

4 (1) Conduct arboriculture projects in areas surrounding  
5 the interstate H-1 freeway where there is limited  
6 space for trees;

7 (2) Reduce urban temperatures, sequester carbon emissions,  
8 reduce noise in areas surrounding the interstate H-1  
9 freeway; and

10 (3) Improve the visual appearance of the interstate H-1  
11 freeway.

12 (c) The department of transportation shall select one or  
13 more portions of the interstate H-1 freeway corridor located  
14 between Middle Street and Kapahulu Avenue in which to plant  
15 vegetation for the pilot project.

16 (d) The department of transportation shall submit a report  
17 on the status of the pilot project to the legislature no later  
18 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session,  
19 and a final report no later than twenty days prior to the  
20 convening of the regular session of .

21 (e) The pilot project shall be dissolved on June 30, .



1 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department  
2 of transportation the forest restoration pilot project for the  
3 interstate H-2 freeway to be administered by a representative of  
4 the department of transportation having expertise in  
5 arboriculture, who shall be selected by the director of  
6 transportation.

7 (b) The purpose of the pilot project shall be to:

8 (1) Plant vegetation and conduct reforestation projects  
9 where there is space;

10 (2) Reduce urban temperatures, sequester carbon emissions,  
11 reduce noise in areas surrounding the interstate H-2  
12 freeway; and

13 (3) Improve the visual appearance of the interstate H-2  
14 freeway.

15 (c) The department of transportation shall submit a report  
16 on the status of the pilot project to the legislature no later  
17 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session,  
18 and a final report no later than twenty days prior to the  
19 convening of the regular session of .

20 (d) The pilot project shall be dissolved on June 30, .



1 SECTION 4. (a) There is established within the department  
2 of transportation the greener highway corridors pilot project  
3 for the interstate H-201 freeway to be administered by a  
4 representative of the department of transportation having  
5 expertise in arboriculture, who shall be selected by the  
6 director of transportation.

7 (b) The purpose of the pilot project shall be to:

8 (1) Conduct arboriculture projects in areas surrounding  
9 the interstate H-201 freeway where there is space;

10 (2) Reduce urban temperatures, sequester carbon emissions,  
11 reduce noise in areas surrounding the interstate H-201  
12 freeway; and

13 (3) Improve the visual appearance of the interstate H-201  
14 freeway.

15 (c) The department of transportation shall submit a report  
16 on the status of the pilot project to the legislature no later  
17 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session,  
18 and a final report no later than twenty days prior to the  
19 convening of the regular session of .

20 (d) The pilot project shall be dissolved on June 30, .



1 SECTION 5. (a) There is established within the department  
2 of transportation for administrative purposes a working group.

3 (b) The working group shall consist of the following  
4 members or their designees:

5 (1) The director of department of transportation, who  
6 shall serve as chairperson;

7 (2) The chairperson of the department of land and natural  
8 resources; and

9 (3) A representative having expertise in arboriculture,  
10 who shall be selected by the chairperson.

11 (c) The working group shall:

12 (1) Develop projects and define best practices to achieve  
13 temperature reduction, carbon capture, and habitat  
14 restoration; improve the mental health and  
15 beautification of commuter corridors; and minimize  
16 maintenance of those projects and practices overtime;  
17 and

18 (2) Submit a report of its findings and recommendations,  
19 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature  
20 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
21 the regular session of 2025.



**1** SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



**Report Title:**

Department of Transportation; Greener Highway Corridors;  
Interstate Freeways; Pilot Project; Report

**Description:**

Establishes three greener highway corridors pilot projects to improve the Interstate H-1, H-2, and H-201 freeway corridors with greenery. Establishes a working group. Requires reports. (SD1)

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

