

JAN 15 2025

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, to transition the State away from imported
5 fossil fuels and toward locally available renewable energy
6 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 existing permitting
14 processes 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. The Legislature finds that Hawaii's
3 permit-issuing government entities should similarly take
4 advantage of these tools to help meet the State's clean energy,
5 reliability, and 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: (1) Requiring government entities in the
9 State 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, 2026; and

14 (2) Requiring government entities in the State that issue
15 building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric
16 utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar
17 distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+
18 compatible.

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



1 "§196-A Building permits; issuing entities; adoption of
2 online automated permitting platform; solar distributed energy
3 resource systems. (a) Any government entity in the State that
4 issues building permits shall:

5 (1) By January 1, 2026, implement SolarAPP+ or a
6 functionally equivalent online automated permitting
7 platform that processes and issues permits to licensed
8 contractors for solar distributed energy resource
9 systems in real time; provided that the government
10 entity shall adopt a self-certification process
11 pursuant to section 196-B for solar distributed energy
12 resource systems that are not compatible with
13 SolarAPP+, or a functional online equivalent, at the
14 time the permit application is submitted to the
15 government entity;

16 (2) Notify the Hawaii state energy office when it achieves
17 compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1); and

18 (3) Submit annual notifications of its compliance with the
19 requirements of paragraph (1) to the Hawaii state
20 energy office.



1 (b) In issuing building permits in compliance with
2 subsection (a), the applicable government entity in the State
3 may promote the use of labor standards, including but not
4 limited to living wages, benefits, and requirements for
5 participation in state-approved apprenticeship programs.

6 (c) As used in this section:

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 "Solar distributed energy resource system" means an
11 assembly of solar energy-generating or energy-storing materials,
12 or any combined assembly of solar energy-generating and energy-
13 storing materials, and the related infrastructure necessary for
14 its operation.

15 **§196-B Adoption of self-certification for solar**
16 **distributed energy resource systems; permit; approval; notice.**

17 (a) Any government entity in the State that issues building
18 permits in any area of the State served by an investor-owned
19 electric utility shall establish a self-certification process
20 for residential and commercial on-site solar distributed energy
21 resource systems that deems permit applications approved and



1 allows applicants to proceed to build immediately; provided that
2 the government entity receives written notice from:

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

6 (2) The duly licensed architect, duly licensed engineer,
7 duly licensed electrician, or duly licensed plumber,
8 as applicable, who intends to install the solar
9 distributed energy resource system that the
10 installation of the system complies with all
11 applicable codes and laws.

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

17 (1) A manufacturer specification sheet;

18 (2) An installation and operations manual; and

19 (3) A UL or other national testing laboratory
20 certification.



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

5 (d) As used in this section, "solar distributed energy
6 resource system" has the same meaning as defined in section
7 196-A."

8 SECTION 3. In codifying the new sections added by
9 section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute
10 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating
11 the new sections in this Act.

12 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

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

14

INTRODUCED BY:





S.B. NO. 232

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 1/1/2026. 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.

