

JAN 15 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PLANT-BASED BUILDING MATERIALS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's climate,
2 with a year-round growing season and ample rain in many areas,
3 has several potential advantages for growing the materials that
4 can be processed into structural plant-based building materials.
5 For example, with sufficient water, there are types of clumping
6 bamboo that can grow very rapidly and can be processed into
7 building materials that are stronger, more flexible, and lighter
8 than timber or steel and can be made more fire- and termite-
9 resistant than wood. "Hempcrete" developed from industrial hemp
10 can substitute for building blocks. "Biocements" produced from
11 cyanobacteria, a blue-green algae also known as "pond scum," can
12 substitute for Portland cement. The legislature further finds
13 that these plant-based building materials, and others, could
14 bring green agriculture jobs to Hawaii.

15 The legislature further finds that these plant-based
16 building materials could also help Hawaii meet its net negative
17 carbon and greenhouse gas goals because they sequester carbon,



1 whereas production of traditional building materials such as
2 timber, steel, and cement emit very large amounts of greenhouse
3 gases.

4 The legislature finds that the development of plant-based
5 building materials in the State is a matter of statewide
6 concern.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish, and
8 appropriate funds for, a working group to report on how best to
9 grow the appropriate plants; develop plant-based building
10 materials; and create green jobs in Hawaii, while sequestering
11 carbon and other greenhouse gases to help reach the State's
12 climate target.

13 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a plant-based
14 building materials working group to study how best to grow the
15 appropriate plants for the development of plant-based building
16 materials in Hawaii and provide green agricultural jobs while
17 sequestering carbon and other greenhouse gases to help achieve
18 the State's climate target.

19 (b) The working group shall consist of the following:

20 (1) The dean and director of the university of Hawaii at
21 Manoa college of tropical agriculture and human



- 1 resources or their designee, who shall serve as
2 chairperson;
- 3 (2) Four individuals who have expertise in growing or
4 producing plant-based building materials, to be
5 invited by the chairperson;
- 6 (3) The director of the university of Hawaii at Hilo
7 college of agriculture, forestry, and natural resource
8 management, or their designee;
- 9 (4) The chairperson of the board of agriculture, or their
10 designee;
- 11 (5) The coordinator of the Hawaii climate change
12 mitigation and adaptation commission;
- 13 (6) An expert in building materials, who the chairperson
14 shall invite in consultation with the General
15 Contractors Association of Hawaii; and
- 16 (7) Additional members with appropriate specialized
17 expertise, as recommended by the members of the
18 working group, to be invited at the discretion of the
19 chairperson.
- 20 (c) Members of the working group shall serve without
21 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses



1 incurred, including travel expenses. No member of the working
2 group shall be made subject to chapter 84, Hawaii Revised
3 Statutes, solely because of that member's participation as a
4 member of the working group.

5 (d) The working group shall submit a report of its
6 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
7 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
8 to the convening of the regular session of 2027.

9 (e) The working group shall be dissolved on June 30, 2027.

10 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
13 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
14 year 2026-2027 for the plant-based building materials working
15 group to study the development of a plant-based building
16 materials industry in the State.

17 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the university
18 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 9

Report Title:

UH; Plant-Based Building Materials Working Group; Report; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the establishment and administration of the Plant-Based Building Materials Working Group to study how best to develop the plant-based building materials industry in the State. Requires a report to the Legislature.

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

