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State and Local Update

Hawaii Issues Preliminary Recommendations for a Sustainable Future

After a year of meetings and preliminary recommendations, the [Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force](#) has released its Sustainability Plan for the state: *Hawai'i 2050*. Hawaii's last attempt at a statewide plan occurred in the 1970s, but was largely ignored. As a result--and because of new concerns including the deterioration of public infrastructure, lack of affordable housing, and threats to the island ecosystems, among other issues--the legislature established the task force in 2005 to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the sustainability of the state for future generations.

The task force is comprised of representatives from government, the business community, the military, and nonprofit groups, as well as environmentalists and economists. To achieve a balance between economic, social, and environmental goals, the group sought to obtain input from as many sources as possible. They conducted meetings across the state that attracted thousands of residents and administered an online survey that received more than 2,200 responses. This process showed how much the citizens of Hawaii supported the goals and objectives of the 2050 initiative. According to the online survey, 80 percent of the Hawaiian public supports mandatory recycling and 67 percent supports greater energy independence for the state through the use of renewable sources, even if it results in higher prices.



Libby Dannenberg, director of state and local affairs, noted, "*Hawai'i 2050* is getting buy-in from the government, industry, and public. By using this holistic approach for sustainability, states will begin to transform the way they expend energy and plan for the future."

The plan includes the establishment of a new sustainability section in the state's statutes and the creation of a Sustainability Council to implement the 2050 plan. The council would have powers, responsibilities, and funding sources. The plan also addresses the establishment of a more diversified economy, the preservation of Hawaii's natural

resources, self-sufficiency, population growth, support for agriculture and public education, and the necessity of a sustainability ethic. To guarantee its success, the task force has suggested the implementation of an accountability program that would include periodic audits and report cards, as well as a plan review every five years to adjust the goals and strategies to reflect changes in society.

The state is committed to a citizen-based planning process and is hoping to receive buy-in from the community. As such, the plan is available for public comment before it is submitted to the legislature in 2008. To read the draft plan or to learn more about *Hawaii 2050*, visit their [Web site](#).