Aloha,

Attached and pasted below are my testimony for tomorrow's meeting. The testimony is in wholehearted support of fossil fuel divestment for UH Manoa.

----

Aloha,

As Student Sustainability Coordinator of the UH System, I represent hundreds of students across the Hawaiian Islands, and I am testifying today in full support of UH fossil fuel divestment.

Having millions of dollars of the University I attend being invested in the very companies that are at the root of our environmental crisis is simply unacceptable. Together, we must take a stand by voting with our dollars and denying any further financial support for companies that threaten the livelihoods of our people and our planet.

Hawaii has rapidly become the most dependent on fossil fuel imports compared to any other state in this nation, but the islands also have the most potential and the highest need to become energy independent. These islands we love are one of the most vulnerable places on the planet for climate change. This is not a projection, but our present reality. Almost 40% of the endangered species in the United States are from Hawaii, and nearly 75% of all U.S. extinctions have occurred in Hawaii. We have lost so much of our biodiversity already, and today, we remain so heavily dependent on imports that in a time of crisis, we would only have enough supply of food and energy to last our people 7 days.

Because of these realities along with passionate student testimony, the BOR unanimously voted to adopt a sustainability policy into its mission statement this time last year. With goals of “carbon neutrality, zero waste & local food self-sufficiency,” this extremely ambitious statement received full support by every regent, so divesting university dollars from fossil fuels is a much simpler, straightforward & tangible solution you can tackle to ensure that the University is not only aligning with its mission but also to ensure that it the UH transforms rhetoric into action.

Even more, your leadership for divestment will galvanize momentum behind the entire movement for action on climate change and sustainability. For every victory in this movement, there are incredible feelings of hope and inspiration fostered within our students, staff, faculty, as well as administrators and the regents themselves. Successes in campaigns like these give us the optimism we need to continue and grow our movement.

We are now living in the time that climate scientists and researchers have been warning us about for decades, and we continue to fail mother earth and our communities if we delay action any longer. As the generation facing the climate crisis that we have unwillingly inherited, together we plead for you to take action so that some of our impending suffering may be relieved. I ask each of you to open your hearts and act with compassion for our generation and to act with love for the only planet that creates the energy we need, the food we eat and the water we drink.

Martin Luther King, Jr said that, “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our
friends.” Mahalo nui loa for your openness to hear testimony regarding divestment, and thank you for your continued leadership for the sustainability of our campuses and these islands we call home.

—

Doorae Shin
Sustainability Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Student Sustainability Coordinator, UH System Coordinator, Sustainable UH Coordinator, Student Sustainability Coalition of HI
dooraesgin.wordpress.com

Did you know that over a quarter of every tuition dollar students spend goes straight to pay the campus utility bill? UH Manoa spends about $40 million/year on electricity.

“Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.” ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.