



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Education
and
Transportation and Energy
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SB 2536 – RELATING TO WHEELING FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Chairs Kidani, Inouye, Vice Chairs Harimoto, Gabbard, and members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i is supportive of the intention highlighted in SB 2536 to help the University achieve its net-zero energy goal by 2035 (as required in Act 199, SLH 2015).

Since 2014, the University has been working toward achieving a net-zero energy goal by 2035. To that end, the University is currently in the process of assessing the feasibility of developing a Photovoltaic Farm on the mauka lands associated with the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu campus. Initial research indicates that the site presents conditions that are ripe for generating at least 100 megawatts. To that end, the University has been working with HECO and consultants to determine next steps.

The University is one of the larger customers in the electrical utility for any system within each county of the state. While wheeling is one aspect that could be beneficial to the University in the short-term, we are also very aware that, as a major customer, any energy initiatives that we pursue could have impacts to remaining customers within the utility. As such, we are hopeful that recent University efforts to work with the electrical utility will continue to progress, as we believe a collaborative approach is the key to statewide energy modernization, and prolific alternative and renewable energy portfolios for all consumers.

While the University of Hawai'i is focused on lowering its cost of electricity and achieving an energy goal of net-zero, we are mindful that our solutions can be complex and have a greater consumer impact. As such, we support the intent of SB 2536 and defer to the Public Utilities Commission on the implementation of this measure.