



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

By  
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### SB 243 – RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and members of the committee:

The Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) supports the intent of this bill and provides the following comments.

SB 243 directs HNEI to conduct a feasibility study to determine the State's ability to achieve the goal of providing 100% of electricity from renewable energy sources by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2045. SB243 further directs that if HNEI determines the State cannot meet this goal, HNEI shall provide an estimate on what it believes is realistic.

The report of HNEI's findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, is due to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2022.

Firstly, HNEI welcomes the opportunity to work with the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) to evaluate the feasibility of the State achieving its 100% renewable electricity goal by 2045 but believes that a one-time study focused on 2045 is not likely to provide adequate information for decision making by the Legislature. Renewable generation and other related enabling technologies continue to evolve rapidly. Similarly, related issues such as advanced controls and communications, methodologies to provide grid services, inverter technologies, and new grid architectures are also evolving rapidly. Based on this continually evolving energy environment, HNEI believes the evaluation of the feasibility of achieving the State's goals should be conducted and reported to the Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission (HPUC) and legislature at regular intervals, biannually or even annually. Additionally, this study should include an assessment, not only of the 2045 goals but key intermediate dates aligned with the HSEO strategic plan, including an assessment of the impact on resilience and greenhouse gas emissions. In order to more effectively align HNEI's analyses with the development of HSEO's strategic plan, it would be of value for HNEI to have a representative on the development team.

Secondly, HNEI currently conducts, at five year intervals, an assessment of the likelihood of the utility to meet the State's RPS goals that, as required by prior legislation, is reported to the HPUC. Additionally, HNEI conducts ongoing studies to identify the major barriers to continued progress toward the State's goals that are included in HNEI's Annual Report to the legislature. While this legislation expands and formalizes that effort, HNEI currently has adequate funding from the Energy Systems Development Special Fund (ESDSF) to complete this task.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on SB 243.