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► ENERGY

ENERGY OFFICE STAFFS UP FOR 'HIGH-IMPACT' PROJECTS

The Hawaii Energy Office is staffing up to deal with what it sees as major challenges during a critical time as the state moves closer to its renewable-energy goals, the head of the office told PBN.

The office hopes to have all of its 36 authorized positions filled by the end of the year, said Administrator Mark Glick. Its annual operating budget currently stands at \$5.88 million.

"Overall, we are doing well and building capacity," Glick said. "We have been able to have the resources thus far to develop these high-impact solutions and analyses."

He noted that the Energy Office has been highly encouraged by the state



Mark Glick

Legislature's vote of confidence in returning much-needed funding via the tax on oil shipped into Hawaii.

One of the high-impact projects that Glick is talking about is the Green Energy

Market Securitization, or GEMS program, which will use a market-based funding mechanism to channel \$150 million in private capital into clean-energy investments.

The program provides a sustainable financing structure that will make solar panels and other clean-energy improvements available to traditionally underserved markets in Hawaii.