

# OPINION

Pacific Business News welcomes letters to the editor

Send letters to Pacific Business News  
737 Bishop St., Suite 1590 Honolulu, HI 96813  
pacific@bizjournals.com

## IN MY OPINION

# Linking energy futures of Oahu, Maui is crucial



Mark Glick

We just celebrated National Energy Awareness Month in October, making it an opportune time to provide an update on the Abercrombie

administration's energy vision and progress from the lens of the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and the State Energy Office, which have been charged with crafting and moving the energy agenda forward.

Our aggressive pursuit of energy diversity and self-sufficiency is driven by a desire to establish a clean-energy economy and international presence as a proving ground for innovative energy technologies and strategies. With the nation's strongest renewable and energy efficiency portfolio standards firmly adopted by the Legislature, the state and its clean-energy stakeholder alliance have turned their attention to execution.

Hawaii's progress as a national leader in a variety of clean-energy and efficiency categories is indicative of this transformation. Perhaps the most important indication of clean energy's emerging economic clout is the fact that PV installations accounted for 28 percent of all construction revenue in Hawaii during 2012.

On Oahu, where the vast majority of the state's population lives, the percentage of renewable generation has already increased to 7.6 percent, while the percentage of renewable generation on Maui, Lanai and Molokai is approximately



PBN FILE

This wind farm on Oahu's North Shore shows the progress in renewable energy, but Mark Glick thinks linking Oahu's and Maui's futures is key.

21 percent. Kauai is 11 percent and Hawaii Island has reached a whopping 46.7 percent.

Yet, moving so far so fast on clean-energy deployment has its challenges. Building a 21st century electrical grid and fuels infrastructure and regulatory framework has become an essential ingredient in meeting and exceeding our clean-energy targets. Without such improvements, our communities will be significantly constrained in efforts to expand the amount of renewable-energy and energy-efficiency measures installed and utilized. We are in the midst of an integrated resources planning docket and the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission is expected to adopt recommendations from a reliability standards working group, which should accomplish the dual

purposes of expanding renewable penetration while preserving electricity reliability.

As a leading test bed for clean energy, Hawaii is also pursuing micro-grid and smart-grid development, energy storage projects and perhaps the most important strategy to improving grid reliability and greater renewable penetration – a two-way electrical grid interconnecting Maui and Oahu via an undersea electricity transmission cable. The PUC, which has recently taken courageous actions to move forward the clean-energy agenda, is expected to make decisions in the next several months regarding a number of these critical matters.

The state also has committed to double its energy savings performance contracts in the next two years. This is a bold challenge

## ► CLOSER LOOK

Hawaii's energy policy and programs can be found at [energy.hawaii.gov](http://energy.hawaii.gov)

considering that Hawaii has led the nation in energy savings performance contract per capita for the past two consecutive years.

Broad access to affordable financing, particularly to underserved residents and communities, is another focus to make sure everyone can benefit from the clean-energy revolution in Hawaii. One solution to make PV installations more affordable was initiated earlier this year with passage of a Gov. Neil Abercrombie initiative establishing green energy market securitization. This innovative approach uses a proven rate-reduction bond structure combined with an on-bill financing program to bring energy cost savings improvements to underserved community members, including low- and moderate-income homeowners, renters and nonprofits. DBEDT is collaborating with the PUC and other community stakeholders to bring this financing opportunity to fruition in 2014.

All of these activities are driving us toward one principal goal, as outlined in the new state energy policy: to maximize the deployment of renewable, efficiency and innovative resources, programs and policies in the most effective and beneficial ways to propel our clean-energy agenda.

Mark Glick is administrator of the Hawaii State Energy Office. Reach him at [mark.b.glick@dbedt.hawaii.gov](mailto:mark.b.glick@dbedt.hawaii.gov)

## ► WHAT DO YOU THINK?

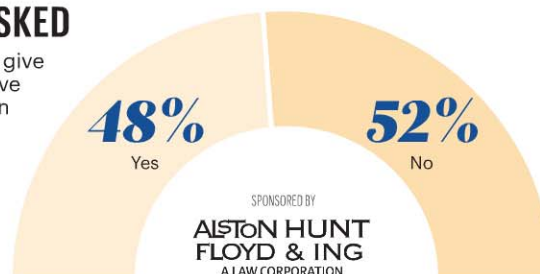
Pacific Business News welcomes letters from readers. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or clarity. All letters must be typewritten or emailed and include the writer's name, address and phone number. Mail to: Pacific Business News, 737 Bishop St., Suite 1590, Honolulu, HI 96813. Send via the Pacific Business News website at [PacificBusinessNews.com](http://PacificBusinessNews.com). Submissions become the property of PBN and may not be published or used in any other medium.

## ► BUSINESS PULSE SURVEY

### WE ASKED

Did you give or receive a raise in 2013?

Total votes: 424



### NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Some companies provide paid time for employees to do volunteer work for charities. How likely is it that you would use this benefit if it was offered at your business?

- I would definitely volunteer more than I do now
- I already volunteer on my own time
- That wouldn't cause me to start volunteering