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Testimony of
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before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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9:45 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

**COMMENTS
HB 1937
RELATING TO THE HAWAII HYDROGEN STRATEGIC PLAN.**

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Marten, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on HB 1937, which requires the Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) to conduct a study to examine the State's ability to advance hydrogen production from local renewable energy resources and develop the Hawai'i Hydrogen Strategic Plan utilizing the results of its study, which shall be reviewed and updated every four years, and to report to the Legislature.

HSEO's comments are guided by its mission to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation to help achieve a resilient, clean energy, decarbonized economy.

HSEO agrees that hydrogen has the potential to be an increasingly important component of Hawai'i's energy system, including: energy storage for the electrical grid; flexible, dispatchable demand to support the electrical grid during hydrogen use and production; stored energy for use in the transportation sector, including for light-and heavy-duty vehicles; and in the production of electrofuels, or other liquid and gaseous fuels, for use by all parts of Hawai'i's energy system (including aviation energy), in the immediate, mid, and long-term.

While it is appropriate for HNEI "to conduct a study to evaluate the technical feasibility to produce and use hydrogen locally," HSEO, in cooperation with HNEI, is the

appropriate agency to develop the Hawai'i Hydrogen Strategic Plan as part of HSEO's overall energy planning mandate to decarbonize the economy. In 2019, Act 122 established the Hawai'i State Energy Office "with a clear mission... to assist both the public and private sectors in achieving the State's energy goals" and "achieving a clean energy economy," and mandated Hawai'i's Chief Energy Officer to "Identify market gaps and innovation opportunities, collaborate with stakeholders, and facilitate public-private partnerships [...] that will support the State's energy and decarbonization goals."

The Hydrogen Study and the Hydrogen Strategic Plan may be most effective if conducted within the overall framework of Hawai'i's energy planning. HSEO looks forward to collaborating with HNEI on the study of hydrogen production in Hawai'i and to collaboratively incorporating the results of the study with the creation of a Hydrogen Strategic Plan as part of planning for the decarbonization of Hawai'i's economy.¹

HSEO supports the intent of this bill with these changes, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ Another measure, HB1800 HD1, requires HSEO to conduct a study to determine Hawai'i's pathway to decarbonization and identify challenges, opportunities, and actions that will be needed to achieve those goals, and appropriates funds.