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Testimony of
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before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

SUPPORT
SB 3311 SD1
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai‘i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 3311 SD1, which establishes the ground transportation and interisland transportation working groups, requires the Department of Transportation to prepare for, and incentivize, the increased adoption of electric vehicles in the State, and establishes goals.

Hawai‘i is a national leader in renewable energy and in the adoption of electric vehicles ranking second nationally in EV adoption per capita. The Department of Transportation has made extensive efforts to reduce its operational emissions and has been in partnership with HSEO on addressing multiple modes of transportation fossil fuel energy use.

Hawai‘i is also poised to take a leadership role in the decarbonization of aviation. On November 22, 2020 Ampaire’s Electric EEL airplane became the first hybrid electric aircraft to conduct test flights on a commercial airline route, flying roundtrip from Maui’s Kahului airport to Hana. This flight made it apparent that for Hawai‘i to meet its statutory target “to sequester more greenhouse gases than emitted as soon as practicable but no later than 2045,” planning and implementation of clean transportation alternatives are essential. Emissions from transportation account for the largest share of energy sector emissions in the state. As noted in the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Inventory, transportation

emissions in Hawai‘i were at 8.69 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents, accounting for 51 percent of total energy sector emissions. To address transportation emissions, the HSEO is engaging with stakeholders to implement policies and programs to support the decarbonization of ground transportation and aviation.

A coordinated effort is needed amongst a wide range of stakeholders to make meaningful progress in transitioning the transportation sector. The HSEO will continue to work with relevant agencies and stakeholders to support the goals of Chapter 225P, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, and take holistic actions to achieve the decarbonization of the transportation sector.

HSEO collaborated with the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT) – Highways to put in place a vehicles-as-a-service contract to support the transition of the State’s fleet to zero emission vehicles (ZEVs); and on successful applications for the designation of alternative fuel corridor’s on the islands of Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i, Lāna‘i, Maui, Molokai, and O‘ahu opening the door to federal funding opportunities. The HSEO was the lead for the State’s signing onto the Multi-State Medium- and Heavy-Duty Zero Emission Vehicle MOU calling for 30% of new truck and bus sales to be zero-emission by 2030 and 100% by 2050. In support of that objective the HSEO collaborated with Hawai‘i Department of Health – Clean Air Branch to implement a Diesel Replacement Rebate to support the adoption of ZEVs for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

The HSEO has also focused on reducing the energy intensity of mobility. Working with the State Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, the HSEO has funded a Vehicle Miles Travelled and Active Transportation Specialist through a grant from the United State Climate Alliance to focus on development and implementation of strategies to achieve energy efficiency in transportation, primarily via reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT) through mode-shift, active transportation, and other associated means.

To prepare for the electrification of aviation, the HSEO partnered with HDOT-Airports on an application for a planning grant under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. The proposal is to study the infrastructure and energy requirements necessary

to support electrification of aviation and how to leverage that infrastructure to support resiliency hubs in response to all-hazard events such as hurricanes.

The HSEO appreciates the Senate Committee on Transportation's technical amendment to identify the "chief energy officer" as opposed to the "administrator" of the HSEO. Should the working groups ultimately be adopted, HSEO also supports the amendment to include HSEO as co-chair for both the ground transportation working group and interisland transportation working group. The two working groups address critical sectors in the decarbonization of Hawaii's economy. The HSEO does note there are currently no generally funded transportation positions within the HSEO to support these working groups and associated activities in the transportation sector. The only dedicated transportation positions within the HSEO are funded through a grant from the U.S. Climate Alliance and through the Volkswagen Settlement fund, which limit the specific functions those positions can perform in order to align with their funding source. The subject matter of the transportation working groups is significantly broader than the activities which the positions were funded to address. In order to adequately address the decarbonization of transportation, which represents two hundred and fifty percent of the fossil fuel consumption relative to the electric sector in the state, additional resources will be necessary.

HSEO defers to the appropriate agency in which the working groups are established on fiscal and administrative impacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.