



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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## Testimony of MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

### before the SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

January 31, 2023  
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

In SUPPORT of  
**SB 809**

### RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee, the Hawaii State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 809, which appropriates funding for the electric mobility rebate program and expands eligibility of the program to micro-mobility options such as to electric powered standing scooters, skateboards and other similar devices.

For Hawaii to meet its statutory target “to sequester more greenhouse gases than emitted as soon as practicable but no later than 2045”, significant reductions in emissions from ground transportation will need to be made in the near to medium term. For significant reductions to be made all market segments in Hawaii need to be addressed. SB 809 supports the proliferation of low-emission transportation options, including micro-mobility options which can reduce transportation emissions.

SB 809 may be particularly impactful in reducing fossil-fuel powered vehicle miles traveled and related transportation emissions because the majority of trips taken in Hawaii are short trips, the ideal trip to be made via micro-mobility options. According to the Drivers of VMT and Priority Reduction Strategies Report for Hawaii, 30% of all trips made are under 1 mile, 60% of trips made are under 3 miles, and 70% of trips made are under 5 miles.<sup>1</sup> This presents the State the tremendous opportunity to reduce

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<sup>1</sup> “Drivers of VMT and Priority Reduction Strategies for Hawaii.” State Smart Transportation Initiative. 2022.

fossil-fuel powered vehicle miles traveled and related transportation emissions by incentivizing the purchase of micro-mobility options that could serve residents' short trip needs.

SB 809 can reduce the cost of transportation for residents who need it the most. After housing, childcare, and food, the cost of transportation in Hawaii represents the biggest monthly expense for many residents.<sup>2</sup> While the high costs affect everyone, they especially hit low-income people who are struggling to get by. The average cost of owning a vehicle in Hawaii is \$8,100 annually, or \$675 per month, when factoring in the various costs, including gas, maintenance and insurance.<sup>3</sup> With 80% of Hawaii households owning two or more cars<sup>4</sup>, households who do own at least two cars face a \$16,200 annual expense, or about \$1,350 a month for transportation. Rebates for electric bicycles, scooters, and other micro-mobility devices will provide low-income residents with greater access to a diversity of affordable travel options while helping reduce Hawaii's greenhouse gas emissions.

HSEO would like to suggest that the language specifying that an electric micro-mobility device is "designed to transport a single person" be removed. In order to achieve the full benefits of micro-mobility adoption, the rebate should include devices that may assist people taking their children to school, kupuna on errands, among other examples. This will expand the number of trips people may swap from their cars to electric micro-mobility devices, reducing residents' transportation costs, vehicle miles traveled, and greenhouse gas emissions. HSEO's defers to the Department of Transportation regarding program funding, structure and administration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/03/why-it-costs-so-much-to-own-a-car-in-hawaii/#:~:text=According%20to%20a%202021%20study,includ%20gas%2C%20maintenanc%20and%20insurance.>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ulupono.com/news-listing/report-examines-hawaii-s-21-8-billion-vehicle-economy/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/03/why-it-costs-so-much-to-own-a-car-in-hawaii/#:~:text=According%20to%20a%202021%20study,includ%20gas%2C%20maintenanc%20and%20insurance.>