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STATE OF HAWAII

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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 29, 2023
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

In SUPPORT of
SB 1024, SD2, HD1

RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai‘i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 1024, SD2, HD1, which establishes long-term goals for zero-emissions transportation in Hawai‘i and abroad to reduce and eliminate transportation emissions and price volatility, establishes the Clean Ground Transportation and Interisland Clean Transportation Working Groups, and requires reports to the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission and 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. Emissions from transportation account for the largest share of energy sector emissions in the state. As noted in the 2017 Greenhouse Gas Inventory, transportation emissions in Hawai‘i were at 8.98 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents, accounting for 51 percent of total energy sector emissions. For Hawai‘i to meet its statutory target “to sequester more greenhouse gases than emitted as soon as practicable but no later than 2045”, further planning and implementation of clean transportation alternatives are essential.

Hawai‘i is a national leader in the adoption of electric vehicles ranking second nationally in EV adoption per capita. HSEO has collaborated with the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT) on applications for the designation of alternative fuel corridors on the islands of Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i, Lāna‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, and O‘ahu and preparing the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Hawai‘i State Plan, both opening the door to federal funding opportunities. HSEO collaborated with 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). HSEO was the lead for the State on 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, HSEO collaborated with the 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.

HSEO has also focused on reducing the energy intensity of mobility. Working with the Department of Land and Natural Resources’ State Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, HSEO 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 reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT) through mode-shift, active transportation, and other associated means which was transitioned to general funds in the 2022 legislature.

The aviation sector accounts for a substantial portion of Hawai‘i’s GHG emissions. In 2017, aviation emissions from domestic and military flights totaled 4.1 MMT accounting for 17% of total statewide emissions (excluding sinks). Hawai‘i is poised to take a leadership role in the decarbonization of aviation. Mokulele Airlines has partnered with REGENT (a Boston based company that develops and manufactures low-altitude electric seagliders) and has expressed interest to start interisland flights using the world’s first electric seaglider, Viceroy, as early as 2025. Hawaiian Airlines has entered an investment agreement with REGENT to develop a seaglider for short interisland flights with larger 100-passenger capacity. Anticipated entry into commercial service is 2028.

Decarbonization of interisland flights will require collaboration to develop strategies, tactics and actionable workplans to implement upcoming solutions. However, decarbonization of the aviation sector still lags the ground transportation sector due to the lack of technological solutions, especially long-haul flights for which more technological solutions are still being developed.

Collaboration and coordination regarding ground transportation and interisland flights are needed among a wide range of stakeholders to make meaningful progress in decarbonizing the transportation sector. HSEO will continue to work with relevant agencies and stakeholders to support the goals of Chapter 225-P, SB 1024, SD2, HD1, and take holistic actions to achieve the decarbonization of the transportation sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.