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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 22, 2024
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
HB 2523, HD1

RELATING TO ELECTRIC UTILITY LINEMAN.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on HB 2523, HD1, which, beginning on January 1, 2027: (1) establishes licensing requirements, including minimum standards and qualifications, for licensure as a journey worker electric utility lineman and expands the Board of Electricians and Plumbers to include members engaged in electric utility work; and (2) repeals an existing exception to the impending sunset of the limited exemption from electrician licensing requirements that was originally enacted by Act 65, SLH 2013, and extended pursuant to Act 60, SLH 2018, and Act 68, SLH 2022. The HD1 deletes language that amended when electrical and plumbing contractors are required to visibly display their professional license, among other amendments.

HSEO supports the intent of HB 2523, HD1, to establish minimum state requirements for journey worker electric utility line workers to protect those performing this dangerous work and the public. HSEO generally supports any efforts to increase worker safety in the electricity sector and the workmanship of Hawai'i's electric grids.

HSEO also appreciates the intent of HB 2523, HD1, to develop a local workforce, while acknowledging the legitimate issues raised regarding the potential impacts to labor availability. HSEO hopes further discussion on this measure will inform long-term, consensual solutions in the public interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.