



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone:  
Web:

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**MARK B. GLICK**  
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 451-6648  
energy.hawaii.gov

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

### before the **SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM**

Thursday, February 8, 2024

1:01 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on  
**SB 3282**

### **RELATING TO ENERGY.**

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee, I am writing with comments on SB 3282 which proposes to return the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) to operate under the direction of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT).

When the Legislature passed HB 852 in 2019, it stated that "although the state energy office is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing one-eighth of Hawaii's economy, which impacts every business and household, the state energy office lacks an enabling statute, a mission, formal guidance, and reporting accountability. Additionally, appointment of the head of the state energy office, the Hawaii state energy office administrator, is exempt from the senate confirmation process required for the majority of other agency heads."

HSEO suggests that the Legislature reversing its course in SB 3282 would be a distraction from the important work conducted by the energy office. Furthermore, DBEDT is such a diverse and multifaceted department given the growth of its responsibilities over the years-- it would be detrimental to treat the energy sector as "just another issue" under DBEDT's portfolio.

Keeping HSEO independent and at the direction of the Governor will be critical to provide factual analysis and keeping state leadership informed on energy policy. This is especially true as the Green Administration is focused on an energy transition in Hawai'i that prioritizes affordability, reliability, and limiting our carbon emissions.

During 2023, HSEO focused on the nineteen statutory obligations of the chief Energy Officer to move forward policies, programs and services related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and energy resiliency and to seek and secure the resources to carry out our agenda. HSEO analyzed market gaps in firm renewable resources and long duration storage, especially geothermal and pumped hydro, and developed policies and pursued funding opportunities to fill those gaps. With Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Relief Funds (CSFRF) under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, Governor Green authorized HSEO to conduct initial slim-hole test wells to understand where geothermal resources might exist on Maui, Hawai'i and O'ahu and will engage energy stakeholders at the community level to gain insight on how and where development can appropriately take place in ways that meaningfully benefit the affected communities.

The Governor also authorized those ARP funds to be used by HSEO for a rapid and thorough analysis of proposed state actions to replace low sulfur fuel oil and lower efficiency power generation to mitigate oil price volatility and reduce electricity rates and carbon dioxide emissions. By mid-April of 2024, the Chief Energy Officer will report to Governor Green HSEO's assessment and its effect on the state's energy program.

In October of 2023, HSEO successfully completed its O'ahu Energy System and Critical Infrastructure Vulnerability and Resiliency Assessment funded by Federal Energy Management Agency's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program ("Advance Assistance" Program Grant). This comprehensive inventory and baseline assessment of O'ahu's major energy supply, distribution, and demand networks serves as a critical energy security assessment and plan to safeguard the State's critical energy infrastructure. The Governor's Office and HSEO has encouraged FEMA to release funds designated for an Advance Assistance 2.0 project which will conduct a similar energy system risk assessment and plan for Kaua'i, Maui and Hawai'i island.

During 2023, the Green Administration and the Chief Energy Officer placed the highest priority on securing funding and support of the U.S. Department of Energy under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

During 2023, HSEO was selected to receive approximately \$30 million in grant awards and was the lead applicant with more than fifty program partners in submitting applications of about \$1.15 billion in grants. In November of 2023, HSEO and was one of three states to be invited to make an early application for \$34 million in energy efficiency appliance rebates targeted for low- and moderate-income residents. HSEO anticipates approval of that rebate program during the first quarter of 2024, at which time it will submit applications for another \$534 million in grant opportunities featuring additional energy efficiency rebates including \$250 million for an innovative statewide sensor-based system to shut-off power for compromised transmission and distribution lines during wildfire events.

Since January 2023, HSEO has been coordinating with local workforce development entities and employers in Hawai'i's energy sectors to identify priority workforce needs that can be met through the federally funded Good Jobs Hawai'i (GJHI) that HSEO supports. GJHI is a statewide collaboration of over 70 employers, training providers, community-based organizations, and key stakeholders focused on workforce training and placement in quality clean energy jobs. HSEO works with GJHI leads, University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC) and the Hawai'i Chamber of Commerce. From April 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2023, GJHI served 272 clean energy enrollees, while 152 successfully completed and 100 were placed in full time employment.

Given the productivity of the Energy Office under the direction of Governor Green, the fundamental question in considering SB 3282 may be "If it is not broke, why fix it?"

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.