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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Tuesday, March 11, 2025
3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
HB 1406, HD1

RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) respectfully provides comments on HB 1406, HD1, which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit process.

HSEO candidly acknowledges the well-documented challenges with the permitting processes at the state and county levels throughout the Hawai'i. These challenges have impeded the progress of renewable integration that is essential to thwart the harmful impacts of oil price volatility and make Hawai'i more energy secure. Electricity ratepayers everywhere - residents and businesses, schools and hospitals, INDOPACOM facilities and first responders, will all be grateful.

HSEO has made permitting process improvements a priority and strongly supports the establishment of an intergovernmental Task Force dedicated to simplifying and streamlining the permitting process. We respectfully note, however, that the current draft of HB1406, HD1, does not explicitly specify HSEO as a member of this Task Force despite HSEO's statutory role under HRS § 196-72(15) to: "Facilitate the efficient, expedited permitting of energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and

energy resiliency projects by: (A) Coordinating and aligning state and county departments and agencies to support, expedite, and remove barriers to deployment of energy initiatives and projects; and (B) Identify and evaluate conflicting or onerous policies and rules that unreasonably impede project development and deployment and propose regulatory, legislative, administrative, or other solutions to applicable stakeholders.”

Given HSEO’s expertise in energy-related permitting matters, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to include HSEO as a member to provide guidance and support in addressing these critical issues.

The Task Force objectives and activities are also directly related to HSEO’s and state agency duties outlined in Executive Order No. 25-01 (“Order”), signed in January of this year.¹ The Order requires HSEO to work on multiple objectives related to accelerating the energy transition. Further, it requires all agencies to provide priority handling and processing for all state permits required for renewable energy projects”. HSEO’s participation in this working group could aid in achieving this objective of the Order.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ State of Hawai'i, Office of the Governor. (2025). *Executive Order No. 25-01: Accelerating Hawai'i's transition toward 100 percent renewable energy*. https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2501085_Executive-Order-No.-25-01.pdf