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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
10:01 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
SB 1588, SD1

RELATING TO NUCLEAR ENERGY.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on SB 1588, SD1, which requires an interim report to the Legislature prior to the convening of the 2026 legislative session, and requires a final report forty days prior to the convening of the 2027 legislative session.

HSEO notes that Article XI, section 8, of the Hawaii State Constitution states that "No nuclear fission power plant shall be constructed or radioactive material disposed of in the State without the prior approval by a two-thirds vote in each house of the legislature."¹

Nationally, Advanced Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) have emerged as a goal of the U.S. Department of Energy to develop safe, clean, and affordable nuclear power options. SMRs can be built in relatively small physical footprints, reduced capital investment over full scale nuclear plants and can provide incremental power generation at sizes ranging from tens of megawatts up to hundreds of megawatts. Development of light water-cooled SMRs, which undergo licensing review by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), may initially be deployed around 2030 at a price that has yet to be

determined. For those reasons, HSEO will continue to monitor developments with SMRs.

The formation of a nuclear energy task force may be a number of years premature, given the current lack of cost, management of nuclear waste, production and safety information on SMRs.

Also, Governor Green's direction to HSEO has been to "conduct a full-scale analysis of every possible energy source, except nuclear, that can accelerate Hawaii's transition away from fossil fuel dependence."

Therefore, HSEO requests that the creation of a nuclear task force be set aside until commercial SMR units have been installed elsewhere, and operational data, installation cost, and waste management systems have been developed and can be evaluated for applicability in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ Hawaii State Constitution. <https://lrh.hawaii.gov/constitution/>.