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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the

SENATE COMMITTEES ON

TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
&
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, February 5, 2025
1:01 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

In Support of
SB 586

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committees, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 586, which requires the state and counties to upgrade to zero-emission buses by 2045.

Emissions from transportation account for more than half of energy-related emissions, with 36% of those emissions coming from ground transportation, as reported in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report for 2021.[1] For Hawai'i to meet its statutory target "to sequester more greenhouse gases than emitted as soon as practicable but no later than 2045," significant reductions in emissions from ground transportation will need to be made in the near to medium term. HSEO's Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization report, submitted to the Legislature in December 2023 pursuant to Act 238 (2022),

[1] State of Hawaii, Department of Health. Greenhouse Gas Inventory: Hawaii Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report for 2020 and 2021 (hawaii.gov)

emphasizes the transition to Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) as a key strategy to reducing emissions in ground transportation.[2]

SB 586 supports this goal by requiring the transition to zero-emission buses by 2045, establishing clear targets for the adoption of these vehicles in state and county transportation systems, including school buses. By prioritizing clean transportation, this bill provides multiple benefits, including:

- **Lowering Greenhouse Gas Emissions**: Transitioning to zero-emission buses will significantly reduce carbon dioxide and other pollutants that contribute to climate change and poor air quality.
- **Reducing Long-Term Operating Costs**: Zero-emission buses generally have lower fuel and maintenance costs compared to diesel and gasoline-powered buses.
- **Enhancing Public Health**: Eliminating exhaust pollutants improves air quality and reduces respiratory issues associated with fossil fuel emissions.
- **Strengthening Energy Security**: By reducing dependence on imported petroleum, Hawai‘i can enhance its energy independence and resilience.

HSEO recognizes the importance of ensuring a smooth transition to zero-emission buses. Achieving this will require strategic investments in charging and/or hydrogen refueling infrastructure, workforce development, and financial support for transit agencies. HSEO is committed to collaborating with state agencies, counties, and other stakeholders to support these efforts and help facilitate an effective and efficient transition. HSEO supports SB 586 as long as its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[2] Hawai‘i State Energy Office (2023). Hawai‘i Pathways to Decarbonization, Act 238 Report to the 2024 Hawai‘i State Legislature (Act 238 Report)