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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Tuesday, February 10, 2026
9:05AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

In Opposition to
HOUSE BILL NO. 1568

RELATING TO ENERGY.

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers the following comments in opposition to House Bill No. 1568, which proposes to prohibit importation or storage of liquefied natural gas; the construction, expansion, or operation of liquefied natural gas infrastructure; and state agencies or counties from issuing a permit or lease that enables the development or expansion of liquefied natural gas, with certain exemptions.

HSEO opposes this protectionist bill for low sulfur fuel oil and diesel, since the perpetuation of oil-fired generation of electricity has profound harmful effects on Hawai'i's economy and environment. The State's 100% Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) and decarbonization policies continue to be the policy drivers of Hawai'i's energy transition. Post-Maui wildfires, current utility plans will not deliver affordable energy and attract capital to build a resilient, decarbonized energy ecosystem, particularly for Hawai'i's most populated and land constrained island of O'ahu.

Current plans result in Hawaiian Electric's continued burning of liquid petroleum fuels at diminishing levels until a total phase-out in 2045 switching to biofuels (biodiesel or renewable diesel) with the forecasted added cost of more expensive biofuels borne by ratepayers and yet-to-be-determined lifecycle carbon saving.

HSEO's Pathways to Decarbonization Report to the 2024 Hawai'i State Legislature confirmed that Hawai'i's continued reliance on LSFO and diesel has been a major contributor to the high costs of energy and the largest contributor of carbon emissions on the islands. Efforts to cancel any opportunity to evaluate and pursue the only fuel option that has been scientifically assessed to reduce cost and carbon of the electricity system by replacing the oil portion of power generation through 2045 is not in the public interest.

HSEO's Alternative Fuels, Repowering and Energy Transition Study, released in January of 2025 presented a preliminary pathway to meet Hawai'i's RPS law and decarbonization objectives, with Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) emerging as the most cost-effective transitional fuel to be used until carbon-emitting fossil fuels can be permanently eliminated by 2045 through a combination of hydrogen and renewable diesel, some of which should be locally produced to the extent possible. This is a fuels strategy that has been used successfully by each of the 49 other states in the nation, so it is confusing why HB 1568 seeks to isolate natural gas for prohibition as a fuel. HB 1568 forces upon Hawai'i's electricity ratepayers a market distortion by removing a viable fuels option that shows promise for reducing cost and carbon in the electricity sector while providing an opportunity for capital infusion into the State of Hawai'i.

Furthermore, the replacement of low sulfur fuel oil with natural gas is part of an urgently needed integrated plan to improve power plant efficiency. HSEO's updated energy strategy emphasizes that LNG aligns with carbon, cost, and investment goals, serving as a bridge fuel without compromising Hawai'i's long-term decarbonization targets. The migration pathway accounts for the complexity of energy demands by recommending investments in infrastructure and dual-fuel power plants, with future compatibility for hydrogen or biofuels as those markets emerge.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.