



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 **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Friday, February 27, 2026
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
HB 1725, HD1

RELATING TO BUILDING CODES.

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) respectfully offers comments on HB 1725, HD1, a comprehensive bill that makes several amendments to Chapter 46, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS). The bill establishes that once a county accepts a complete building permit application or issues an authorization to proceed with construction, the applicable building codes, standards, and county amendments shall be fixed for the life of the permit. The bill changes the adoption of the Hawaii state building code from a two-year cycle to a six-year cycle. The bill authorizes counties, under certain conditions, to adopt amendments to the Hawai'i State building code that are either more or less stringent than the corresponding state-adopted provisions, while repealing their prior ability to amend or adopt the State building codes independently.

HSEO's comments are guided by [HRS§196-71\(b\)2](#) and [HRS§196-72\(d\)11](#) and are limited to potential impacts on the adoption of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). By statute, HSEO is responsible for developing, evaluating, revising, and adopting energy-related codes and standards such as the IECC that advance the State's energy goals. Hawai'i has long recognized that a secure, clean, and affordable energy future requires thoughtful, forward-looking energy policy, and that energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective tools available to help families and

businesses manage their energy bills while reducing overall system costs. Building energy codes play a critical role in advancing energy affordability for residents, and modern energy codes help ensure that new construction is built to higher efficiency standards from the outset—locking in lower utility bills for homeowners, renters, and businesses for the entirety of the building's lifespan.

The buildings sector is key to Hawai'i's energy efficiency and decarbonization goals, being one of the major consumers of energy in the state, with the commercial and residential sectors accounting for ~62% of total electricity consumption.¹ Building energy codes are therefore one of the most impactful policy tools available to the state in pursuit of its clean energy and emissions targets ([HRS§196-10.5](#) and [HRS§225P-5](#)).

Part 1 (pages 2-6): Relating to Point-in-time Code Applicability

HSEO supports Part 1, which fixes in place the applicable building codes for the term of any project once a county issues authorization to proceed with construction. This simplifies and hastens the construction process, which in turn reduces initial costs. A clear statewide rule that fixes the applicable building codes at the outset will provide predictability, reduce rework, and speed-up delivery.

Part 2: Statewide Code Adoption Cycle (Pages 13-14)

HSEO strongly opposes the switch to a longer code cycle (**page 13, lines 14-21**). Accordingly, HSEO respectfully requests removing the highlighted amendments to HRS §107-24:

(c) ~~[The] Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, beginning on the effective date of the next statewide adoption of the codes under section 107-25(3), the council shall adopt, amend, or update codes and standards identified in section 107-25 on a staggered basis as established by the council [; provided that adoption of a code or standard shall be within two years of the official publication date of the code or standard, pursuant~~

¹ Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, *State of Hawaii Energy Data and Trends* (2022), https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/reports-studies/Energy%20Data%20Report%202022%20Final.pdf

~~to chapter 92, and exempt from the requirements of chapter 91.]~~
~~on a six-year cycle by adopting every other published edition of~~
~~each code. The council shall complete each statewide adoption~~
~~within twenty-four months after publication of the edition being~~
~~adopted.~~

Further HSEO requests removing reference to the six-year code adoption cycle on page 14, lines 6-7:

d) Between ~~six-year~~ adoptions, the council may adopt limited statewide amendments only to:

Continued efforts on energy efficiency standards in our building sector are paramount to meeting state-established goals and energy affordability. Energy efficiency is the least-cost path to achieving these state-established goals. Lengthening the code cycle amounts to imposing higher operating costs on consumers.

Part 2: Relating to County Amendments (pages 10-12, page 16)

HSEO notes that HB 1725, HD1, as written, repeals the county authority to amend and adopt the Hawai'i State Building Codes without council approval (page 16, lines 7-21); this authority appears to be added back into the statute through the addition of HRS §107-B, (page 10, lines 13-19; page 11; page 12, lines 1-17).

These proposed changes impose significant procedural burdens on counties seeking to adopt more stringent amendments, while establishing comparatively fewer requirements for counties that wish to adopt less stringent amendments. Further, **section b, states, “The adopted Energy Conservation Code may be enforced by the counties on a voluntary basis”** (page 12, lines 10-12).

As drafted, these provisions could effectively limit or create ambiguity around county enforcement authority for energy codes. In addition, with the removal of the automatic state adoption mechanism, it is unclear how updated state-adopted codes would be implemented or take effect at the county level.

For these reasons, HSEO respectfully requests the removal of these amendments in their entirety. As written, they risk undermining both the integrity of energy code requirements and the counties' ability to consistently enforce them.

Part 3 – Capacity Building for the State Building Code Council (SBCC)

HSEO strongly supports Part 3 that seeks to provide dedicated staffing and consultant support to the SBCC. The historical lack of financial support for the SBCC has caused lengthy delays in past code adoption and implementation activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.