



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
February 24, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.

by
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HB 848 HD2 – RELATING TO ENERGY MODERNIZATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports HB 848 HD2, Relating to Energy Modernization at the University of Hawai'i.

The purpose of this bill is to encourage and facilitate the development and use of microgrids at the various campuses and facilities operated by the University of Hawai'i in such a manner as to expand access to locally generated renewable energy and advanced distributed energy resources, and to promote the efficient distribution of electricity to the State's residents and businesses. To this end, the measure seeks PUC oversight and authority over micro-grid related rates and charges that the electric utility may charge the University.

Despite the title of the bill, this measure does not seek to exempt the University from PUC authority. In fact, it seeks to accomplish the opposite. Currently, there is no PUC oversight of microgrids that require interface and cooperation with the public utility. This measure inserts PUC oversight and authority over microgrids managed by the University, which ensures review by an independent body.

In order to achieve UH's Net Zero Energy mandate (Act 99, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2015), the University will need to develop large-scale renewable energy projects that will benefit our students and the communities we serve, can help to increase the macro electric system grid's stability and resilience, and support the State in achieving its goal of 100% clean energy by 2045.

This bill will encourage the facilitation, development and use of microgrids and renewable energy across the University System, as well as increase the options available to develop collaborative solutions to finance and develop large-scale renewable energy projects.

It also establishes initial parameters on the microgrid size and distance from the power source, striking a balance between the University's need to use renewable energy to help achieve net-zero energy and an allowable use of the electric utility's facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the measure.