



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
and
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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by
Maenette Benham
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu

HB 848 HD2 SD1 – RELATING TO ENERGY MODERNIZATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Chairs Baker and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Dela Cruz, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting the intent of HB 848 HD2 SD1 – Relating to Energy Modernization at the University of Hawai'i, which requires UH to develop a microgrid plan for one demonstration project at any property owned, leased, or controlled by UH.

UH West O'ahu respectfully requests that the bill be amended to reflect the contents of HB 848 HD2. The University of Hawai'i System has a legislative mandate (Act 99, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2015) to achieve net-zero energy by 2035. While the University supports this visionary goal, the University hopes to maximize the use of alternative energy sources to ensure this unfunded mandate does not come at the expense of our students, either directly or indirectly.

To this end, the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (UHWO) has the opportunity to use its property, mauka of the H-1 freeway, to develop a photovoltaic farm that, via the previous version of this bill, HB 848 HD2, could connect to and meet the energy demands of the main UHWO campus. UHWO's enrollment continues to increase each year and, with the expansion of academic programs and related facilities, the energy demand and associated utility costs will also increase.

HB 848 HD2 would provide a vehicle to cost effectively develop and utilize this proposed alternate energy source. The power produced would not only service the planned 300-acre campus but could also serve the 168 acres of non-campus lands targeted for development through a private/public partnership agreement. The non-campus lands are planned for development in close coordination and collaboration with UHWO such that it will complement and enhance the college town experience and provide long-term financial benefits for the University.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.