



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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by

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SB 283 Relating to Sustainability

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Solomon and honorable members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Housing, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 283, Relating to Sustainability. I am the director of the Social Sciences Public Policy Center ("Center") at the University of Hawai'i and along with Dr. Sharon Miyashiro have been working on updating the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan ("H2050 Plan"). As you recall, the state's H2050 Task Force developed the H2050 Plan that identified crucial areas for future planning to revitalize the state's economy, protect the environment, and preserve the culture and quality of life for future generations. This plan set in place an important long-term planning process for Hawai'i's future.

In 2008, the legislature adopted Act 225 that requested the Center to review the plan, consult with citizens and leaders from across the state to prioritize the goals and objectives in the Plan, and develop benchmarks for each of the major goals. The Center has completed its work and submitted its findings to the Legislature in January (see the report on our website, www.publicpolicycenter.hawaii.edu). Briefly, the report covers the following:

- ❖ Data gathered from email surveys and face to-face cross-sector meetings in each county, with representation from 10 major sectors of our community-- business, labor, the environment, kanaka maoli, youth, the military, the health sector, the non-profit sector, education and government (state and county level).
- ❖ developed a sustainability resource guide; and
- ❖ researched data sources and benchmarks.

The report proposed five major recommendations based on the voices of the community:

- ❖ **Incorporate the H2050 Plan definition of sustainability and its goals as a new section in Chapter 226, Hawai'i Revised Statutes.**
- ❖ **Develop and implement policies based on common themes heard across the state and counties in the cross sector dialogs.**
- ❖ **Support the continuing public-private collaborations, community discussions, activities, and work on sustainability efforts.**
- ❖ **Adopt measures of accountability, including data and data sources, indicators and benchmarks.**
- ❖ **Develop a sustainability coordinating entity to carry forward the H2050 Plan.**

S.B. 283 addresses the first recommendation. It provides for a sustainability policy to be incorporated in the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Chapter 226, Hawai'i Revised Statutes. It puts into law the definition of "sustainability" that was adopted by the many thousands of citizens who provided input in the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan, ie., "a Hawai'i that respects the culture, character, beauty, and history of the State's island communities, strikes a balance between economic, social and community, and environmental priorities; and meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." And further it provides seven guiding principles and five goals to achieve a sustainable Hawai'i by 2050.

We believe it is extremely important to continue the progress being made towards Hawai'i's sustainable future by putting this sustainability policy into the Hawai'i State Plan.

We would like to suggest some technical amendments to the bill for clarification; and have provided those suggestions as an attachment to this testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will be happy to answer any questions.