



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
Thursday, March 20, 2025 — 3:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1295 HD 2, Relating to Clean Energy.

Dear Chair Wakai and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports HB 1295 HD 2, which requires all state and county agencies to utilize applicable federal clean energy tax credits, pursuant to the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, for the purchase and financing of capital improvement projects that use clean energy technology and zero-emission vehicles.

Ulupono supports this forward-thinking legislation which mandates that all state and county agencies take advantage of the Inflation Reduction Act's elective pay provisions, thus unlocking federal clean energy tax credits that government entities were previously unable to access. By requiring the use of these credits for capital improvement projects utilizing clean energy technology and zero-emission vehicles, Hawai'i will accelerate its progress toward renewable energy goals while maximizing taxpayer value.

To the extent such federal funding is available and accessible, Ulupono strongly encourages state and county agencies to pursue all opportunities to leverage federal funds for local projects. Doing so helps to mitigate cost impacts and creates an ongoing skillset for said agencies to engage at the federal level to secure vital resources. As our communities continue to face the challenges of climate change and energy security, this approach will help reduce our carbon footprint, decrease our dependence on imported fossil fuels, and strengthen our state's position as a leader in clean energy policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

HB-1295-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 2:01:27 PM

Testimony for EIG on 3/20/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pedro Haro	Testifying for American Lung Association in Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Pedro Haro, Executive Director, American Lung Association in Hawai'i

Before the Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Regarding House Bill 1295, Relating to Clean Energy

March 20, 2025 - 9 AM

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and esteemed members of the Committee,

My name is Pedro Haro, and I am the Executive Director of the American Lung Association in Hawai'i. We submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill 1295, which requires all state and county agencies to utilize applicable federal clean energy tax credits, pursuant to the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, for the purchase and financing of capital improvement projects that use clean energy technology and zero-emission vehicles.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education, and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association in Hawaii and across the nation is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases.

Our mission is inextricably linked to the quality of the air we breathe. While Hawai'i is renowned for its natural beauty, we are not immune to the adverse health impacts of air pollution. The continued reliance on fossil fuels for energy production and transportation contributes significantly to harmful emissions. These emissions degrade air quality and negatively impact the respiratory health of our residents, particularly our most vulnerable populations: keiki (children), kūpuna (elders), and individuals with pre-existing lung conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The transition to clean energy and zero-emission vehicles, as facilitated by HB 1295, is essential for improving air quality and safeguarding the lung health of our community. By mandating that state and county agencies leverage available federal tax credits, this bill ensures that Hawai'i

maximizes the benefits of the Inflation Reduction Act. This will accelerate our progress towards a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future.

The transition to clean energy offers numerous benefits, including:

- **Substantial Reduction in Air Pollution:** The adoption of clean energy sources and zero-emission vehicles will significantly decrease the release of harmful air pollutants. These pollutants include particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and sulfur dioxide (SO2), all of which are known to exacerbate respiratory illnesses and contribute to the development of new lung conditions.
- **Tangible Improvements in Public Health:** Cleaner air will result in a measurable reduction in the incidence of asthma attacks, decreased rates of respiratory infections (such as bronchitis and pneumonia), and improved overall lung function across the population. This is especially critical for sensitive groups.
- **Decisive Mitigation of Climate Change:** By actively reducing greenhouse gas emissions, HB 1295 aligns with Hawai'i's commitment to combating climate change. Climate change poses a significant threat to our environment and public health, with far-reaching consequences for future generations.

The American Lung Association in Hawai'i firmly believes that HB 1295 represents a crucial step forward in achieving a healthier and more sustainable future for our state. We therefore urge the Committee to pass this bill and demonstrate Hawai'i's continued leadership in embracing clean energy solutions and protecting the health of its people.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Pedro Haro
Executive Director
American Lung Association in Hawaii
pedro.haro@lung.org

HB-1295-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 8:45:55 AM

Testimony for EIG on 3/20/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Wildberger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

In strong support for municipalities purchasing zero emission vehicles. If you watch state and county workers in vehicles around town doing their work, you can observe idling, burning costly fuel and creating emissions for a vehicle going nowhere. This bill will help curb emissions and create fuel savings for state and county departments. Thank you for considering this measure.

LATE

HB-1295-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 7:05:02 AM

Testimony for EIG on 3/20/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

March 20, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature
House of Representatives
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill No. 1295 of the Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2025, which mandates state and county agencies to leverage federal clean energy tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. This legislation offers a pragmatic and forward-thinking approach to advancing renewable energy projects and deploying zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) across Hawaii. As a [resident of Hawaii/concerned citizen—customize as applicable], I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of this bill, which promises significant environmental, economic, and public health benefits for our state.

H.B. 1295 aligns with federal guidelines (40 CFR § 88.1), defining ZEVs as vehicles with no tailpipe emissions. For Hawaii, this includes not only electric vehicles but also practical, cost-effective options such as bicycles, electric scooters, and even walking—modes of transport that require no fuel and produce zero emissions. Additionally, transitioning public transit fleets to electric buses, funded through the bill's tax credits, offers a scalable solution. These alternatives stand in stark contrast to the Honolulu rail project, which has escalated to a \$12 billion expenditure (HART, 2023) from an initial \$5.2 billion estimate, with projected annual operating costs of \$500 million. By comparison, bicycle infrastructure and electric buses—serving 41 million riders in 2019 (TheBus data)—are far more affordable and immediately implementable, delivering value without burdening taxpayers.

Beyond fiscal responsibility, this legislation addresses a pressing public health imperative. Hawaii faces a diabetes prevalence of 11.3% among adults (CDC, 2022), exceeding the national average of 10.5%, alongside obesity rates of 24.5% and an overweight population of 38%

(Hawaii Department of Health, 2023). Encouraging active transportation—walking or biking for the 60% of Oahu trips under five miles (Hawaii DOT, 2021)—can reduce diabetes risk by 58% with just 30 minutes of daily activity (American Diabetes Association), while burning 200–300 calories per session. Integrating electric buses further supports this shift, offering a low-emission option that saves 20% on fuel costs (U.S. Department of Energy) and encourages physical activity en route to stops. These measures promote not only sustainability but also a healthier, more vibrant populace.

The broader implications of H.B. 1295 are transformative. By harnessing federal funds, state and county agencies can reduce reliance on costly, inefficient projects and invest in solutions that deliver immediate environmental benefits—cleaner air for future generations—and economic savings. Drawing inspiration from global leaders like Copenhagen, where 62% of residents bike to work (City of Copenhagen, 2022), Hawaii can leverage its ideal climate to foster a culture of sustainable mobility. This bill empowers agencies to act decisively, utilizing the Inflation Reduction Act’s elective pay provisions to level the playing field with private entities and drive meaningful progress.

I urge you to pass House Bill No. 1295, effective July 1, 2025, and position Hawaii as a model of innovation and resilience. This legislation offers a rare opportunity to align fiscal prudence, environmental stewardship, and public well-being in a single, actionable framework. I stand ready to provide testimony or further assistance to support its adoption. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our state’s future.

Sincerely,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

www.Ohanaunityparty.com

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.