



Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803
808.537.9019 hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

February 3, 2009, 9:00 A.M.

(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 197

Chair Morita and members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, supports HB 197, which ensures that condominiums have the choice to save money and energy by using solar and wind devices.

This measure is a logical extension to the bill passed into law in 2005 prohibiting restrictions that prevented individuals from installing solar energy devices on houses or townhomes that they own. Large common areas, such as laundry or exercise facilities, could provide a tremendous amount of energy and help a board fulfill its fiduciary duties to its tenants by saving on electrical expenses. In short, HB 197 removes yet another barrier to local residents doing the right thing for the environment and the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

February 3rd, 2008, 9:00 A.M.

Room 325

(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 197

Chair Morita and members of the committee:

The Blue Planet Foundation supports House Bill 197, giving boards of directors authority to install or allow the installation of solar energy or wind energy devices on the common elements of condominiums. This common sense measure will encourage further adoption of energy- and money-saving clean energy devices and move Hawai'i closer to energy independence.

Blue Planet believes Hawai'i's clean energy future will be largely decentralized and diversified, meaning our power will be generated from a variety of sources across the islands. Putting our rooftop spaces to work collecting solar energy will likely be a significant source of tomorrow's energy. The most populated parts of the state receive between 450 and 500 calories of solar radiation per square centimeter every day¹. To put into perspective, an average rooftop space of 1100 square feet receives the energy equivalent of approximately 15 gallons of gasoline daily. Common areas of condominiums or other shared living structures are likely much larger and could produce substantial amounts of power—if they are put to work.

Enabling associations to install solar or wind devices or lease their common area space for such a purpose is smart clean energy policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ State of Hawai'i (2003). Hawaii Statewide GIS Program Solar Radiation Maps.



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

February 1, 2008

HB197: Testimony in Support

Dear Chair Morita, Vice Chair Coffman, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA) is comprised of more than 30 installers, distributors, manufacturers and financiers of solar energy systems, both hot water and PV, most of which are Hawaii based, owned and operated. Our primary goals are: (1) to further solar energy and related arts, sciences and technologies with concern for the ecologic, social and economic fabric of the area; (2) to encourage the widespread utilization of solar equipment as a means of lowering the cost of energy to the American public, to help stabilize our economy, to develop independence from fossil fuel and thereby reduce carbon emissions that contribute to climate change; (3) to establish, foster and advance the usefulness of the members, and their various products and services related to the economic applications of the conversion of solar energy for various useful purposes; and (4) to cooperate in, and contribute toward, the enhancement of widespread understanding of the various applications of solar energy conversion in order to increase their usefulness to society.

HSEA members manufacture and install the majority of solar water heating systems and install the majority of solar PV systems in the State of Hawaii. Our comments on this measure are based on this expertise, and our related experience in other renewable energy technologies.

HSEA makes the following comments in support of this measure:

Current penetration of solar and other renewable energy on condominiums is currently limited by a number of factors including the inability to monetize the RETITC in third party financing arrangements (which matters because AOA's, as non-profits, cannot use the tax credits directly) and the classification of many condo developments as 'multi-family property' (which subjects them to a \$350 per unit tax credit cap rather than the \$5,000 per unit cap that applies for single-family detached homes). In this context it is unclear how much of an immediate effect the proposed measure would have on the penetration of renewable energy in the state. However, at some point in the future these other problems may be addressed through various legislative and/or regulatory actions and the changes proposed in HB197 will become very important prerequisites to getting renewable energy systems deployed. HSEA therefore strongly supports HB197 as a measure with no downside and a substantial potential benefit.