



HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE

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Kauai High Student's Solar Power Idea Becomes a Reality

KAUAI -- Kauai High School sophomore Dillon Ancheta was excited to learn that on Tuesday, December 13, 2011, Governor Neil Abercrombie and Schools Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi announced that the State Department of Education (DOE) awarded a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) contract to install photovoltaic (PV) systems at 15 Kaua'i schools. Under the agreement, the installation of the PVs at the schools will be completed at no cost to the state.

During the 2010 Hawaii Secondary Student Conference (SSC), Dillon introduced a resolution that PV systems be installed in public schools to reduce electricity costs. Dillon's resolution was adopted by the SSC and as a result parts of the resolution were included in House Bill 10 in the 2011 legislative session. Although the bill did not move through the legislative session, it is evident that the SSC and the State were both looking at the same statewide goals of having a more sustainable future.

"I was thrilled to hear the governor's announcement," said Dillon. "As a student I felt empowered that the resolution I proposed during the SSC and some of my ideas were included in House Bill 10 during the 2011 legislative session."

Sen. Ronald D. Kouchi (D-Kauai and Niihau) and Rep. James K. Tokioka (D-Wailua Homesteads, Hanamaulu, Lihue, Puhi, Portion of Old Koloa Town, Omao) met with Dillon and fellow Kauai students last year and encouraged them to share their forward-thinking idea with Legislators.

"I am ecstatic for Dillon with this recent announcement by the Governor and Superintendent Matayoshi," said Sen. Ronald D. Kouchi. "The fact that the focus of Dillon's resolution related to the renewable operation of state institutions will inspire other students to propose ideas to their lawmakers. This shows that we should be listening to our vibrant youth and validates their belief that their voices can make a difference in shaping the future of Hawaii into what they want it to be."

"The future is bright," said Rep. James K. Tokioka, "and it is encouraging to see a project that mirrors a young student's proposal like Dillon's become reality, because our youth truly can author change."

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The PV installation at the schools will begin in January and is expected to be completed by summer 2014. The DOE will save an estimated \$30 million over the life of the project, taking into account a projected 3 percent yearly increase in commercial electricity rates.

(photo courtesy: The Office of Senator Ronald D. Kouchi)

(photo caption: (L-R) Mrs. Marissa Purcell, Cy Corona, Dillon Ancheta, and Bryson Cayaban visiting with legislators during the 2010 Secondary Student Conference.)

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