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Statement of
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Tuesday, February 3, 2015
8:30a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 392

RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLES.

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen, and Members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB 392, which would expand the definition of an electric vehicle (EV) to include "fuel cell electric vehicle" and offer the same exemptions from HOV lane restrictions and the payment of state and county parking fees that are not granted to EVs.

Fuel cell EVs convert hydrogen and oxygen gas into electricity to charge their onboard batteries and power the vehicle. They would reduce gasoline consumption and assist in our efforts in achieving Hawaii's clean energy goals. While passenger vehicles are not yet commercially available in Hawaii, it is in our State's interest to encourage their sale by offering the same exemptions.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
February 3, 2015, 8:30 A.M.
Room 325

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 392

Chair Lee and members of the Energy & Environmental Protection Committee:

The Blue Planet Foundation supports HB 392, extending the electric vehicle (EV) parking and HOV incentives to hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. This policy will help encourage the adoption of fuel cell vehicles (FCV) that can be powered with 100% renewable energy.

Appropriate incentives for EVs and FCVs—such as free parking and high-occupancy vehicle lane use—will encourage more rapid development of Hawaii's clean transportation future. Electric vehicles and FCVs will play an integral role in Hawaii's clean energy future. Both EVs and FCVs can be "fueled" with 100% locally produced renewable energy. Further, by using stored energy, EVs and FCVs can take advantage of intermittent solar, wind, and other clean energy resources.

Currently, many utility scale wind and solar energy producers are unable to sell all of the clean energy that they generate. The utility "curtails" the purchase of the energy from these producers when the system cannot handle additional energy because of inflexible fossil fuel generating units (e.g., the units can't be readily turned down when the load drops). This curtailed energy is simply wasted. These renewable energy producers could use this curtailed energy to make hydrogen from water—if they had a market to sell this hydrogen. The availability of new hydrogen FCVs would help create this market, making more economic use of all of the renewable energy generated on our islands.

Fuel cell vehicles are no longer simply "demonstration" cars or something from "Back to the Future." Major auto manufacturers, such as Toyota, are making significant investments in developing mass market FCVs. Toyota recently unveiled the Mirai, a 100% hydrogen-powered FCV that will be available mid-2015 in select markets. Other manufacturers are developing similar offerings. The technology to make such vehicles available to all is evolving rapidly, with many more mainstream FCVs coming to market in Hawai'i within the next three to five years.

House Bill 392 will provide another reason for car buyers to invest in a renewably fueled vehicle.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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