

TESTIMONY OF  
LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.  
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
STATE OF HAWAII

TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
AND  
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

March 17, 2023  
9:55 a.m.

Chair Keohokalole, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

**MEASURE:** H.B. No. 1415, HD1

**TITLE:** RELATING TO ENERGY.

**DESCRIPTION:** Requires the public utilities commission to administer an electric vehicle charging system loan program to provide loans to applicants who install eligible electric vehicle charging systems. Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

**POSITION:**

The Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) supports this measure and offers the following comments for consideration.

**COMMENTS:**

The Commission agrees with the intent of this measure to support low-income customers by providing low-interest loans for installation of electric vehicle (“EV”) charging infrastructure and thanks the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection and the House Committee on Finance for moving this measure forward. The Commission continues to support minor adjustments to the language in the measure to allow delivery of this program in the most efficient and effective way, as described below.

The Commission currently manages the Electric Vehicle Charging System (“EVCS”) Rebate Program in consultation with electric vehicle stakeholders and in cooperation with the program’s administrator, Hawaii Energy. The program directly supports the state’s decarbonization goals and continues to provide benefits to Hawaii’s residents. This

measure would be a meaningful addition to the program. In service of long-term administrative efficiency of this beneficial EV Infrastructure program, within its budget request for the fiscal biennium 2023-2025, the Commission has requested establishment of a permanent spending authority to expend the funds that are automatically collected in the sub-account for this program. However, the Commission observes that the ceiling for spending authority in SB354/HB300 is currently requested at a \$750,000 level and requests that should this measure pass, that level be increased to include the amount appropriated for this loan program to ensure that the Commission can expend the full amount of funds.

The Commission observes that such a loan program must be carefully designed to ensure longevity and success, and offers the following comments, which are intended to allow the Commission and a contracted third-party administrator greater flexibility in designing and administering such a program. First, the Commission offers suggested edits to the measure's introductory framing:

(a) The public utilities commission, in consultation with electric vehicle stakeholders and the Hawaii state energy office, shall design and administer a loan program that incentivizes the installation of an eligible electric vehicle charging system, as provided in this section, and may contract with a third-party administrator or administrators pursuant to section 269-73 to operate and manage the loan program.

The Commission observes that there are many design options for such a program that could support the intent of this measure, such as allowing on-bill financing or other loan repayment risk mitigators depending on the source of funding for the program. Allowing design flexibility will preserve the ability to make modifications to the program as needed to support a rapidly changing industry. The Commission notes that while Hawaii Energy currently administers the EVCS program, it would like to consider whether another entity may have more relevant expertise and authority uniquely required to administer loan programs. The Commission notes that if this suggestion is adopted, references to "the program administrator" throughout the measure should be modified to read "the program administrator(s)".

Second, the Commission recommends modifying the language regarding low-income households to read:

(b) An applicant may be eligible for a loan under this section if the applicant installs an eligible electric vehicle charging system

and is: (1) ~~[A homeowner whose household income is no more than one hundred per cent of the area median income;]~~ A low- to moderate-income homeowner, as defined and identified by the Program Administrator; or (2) An existing or new affordable housing development, as defined and identified by the Program Administrator. ~~[located in and serving households that make no more than one hundred per cent of the area median income.]~~

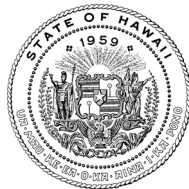
The Commission offers this suggestion noting that income verification can be a barrier to program participation for many customers and can place a significant administrative burden on the administrator, should they not already have access to income information. Preserving the flexibility to define income thresholds will allow the Administrator to pursue streamlined income verification practices, such as via proxies like enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or participation in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Additionally, such flexibility will ensure that income thresholds can readily be aligned with existing or proposed definitions of low- and moderate-income. For example, some programs define affordable housing as housing that is affordable to a household with an income at or below 140% of the area median income and is often considered a “moderate” income.

Third, the Commission observes that reducing the cost for electric vehicle charging for low- and moderate-income customers is a high priority and offers that it may be prudent to remove the provision that disqualifies a loan recipient from also receiving a charging system rebate. The Commission recognizes that receipt of certain types of Federal funding may prohibit customers from also receiving such a rebate. However, this is the type of program design element that the Commission and the Administrator could consider when standing up the program to ensure that all funds are being expended harmoniously to best meet the objectives of the measure.

Equity is a high priority for the Commission, and we support the provisions of this measure to increase EV charging access for low- and moderate-income communities. The Commission has worked with electric vehicle stakeholders to begin identifying communities that are underserved by electric vehicle charging infrastructure and will further explore equity measures related to transportation electrification in Docket No. 2022-0250, which is investigating equity holistically across Commission functions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**WRITTEN ONLY**

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
AND TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1415, H.D. 1

**March 17, 2023**  
**9:55 a.m.**  
**Room 229 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO ENERGY

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill (H.B.) No. 1415, H.D. 1, amends Chapter 269, HRS, by adding two new sections to Part III to: 1) require the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to administer an Electric Vehicle Charging System Loan Program (EVCSLP) in consultation with EV stakeholders and the Hawai'i State Energy Office; 2) allow the PUC to contract with a third-party administrator to operate and manage the EVCSLP; 3) establish eligibility requirements for applicants; 4) require the PUC to apply for any federal funding available, prepare forms, adopt administrative rules, and require each applicant to furnish applicable documentation for loan eligibility; and 5) establish a EVCSL Revolving Fund (RF), to be administered by the PUC, consisting of federal funds, monies appropriated by the Legislature, private contributions, principal and interest on loans issued, and interest on funds deposited into the EVCSLRF. This bill also amends Section 269-72, HRS, to prevent a person from being eligible under the EVCSLP if they claim a rebate under the existing EVCS Rebate Program and

appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 24 to be deposited into the EVCSLRF and a corresponding unspecified amount of revolving funds for FY 24 for the EVCSLRF.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any revolving fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.4, HRS. Revolving funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding H.B. No. 1415, H.D. 1, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed revolving fund would be self-sustaining.

Additionally, B&F does not support the inclusion of language to allow the deposit of federal funds into the EVCSLRF. Federal funds should be kept separate from other types of funds for compliance and reporting purposes. Further, the purpose of a federal grant may not be totally aligned with the statutory uses of the revolving fund.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

## Big Island Electric Vehicle Association

hawaiidriveelectric@gmail.com

bigislandev.org



March 15, 2023

### SUPPORT for HB1415 HD1 - RELATING TO ENERGY

Dear Chairs Keohokalole and Lee, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Inouye, and Committee members,

**Big Island EV Association supports HB1415 HD1, which *“Requires the public utilities commission to administer an electric vehicle charging system loan program to provide loans to applicants who install eligible electric vehicle charging systems.***

Hawaii is making progress in the decarbonization of its ground transportation. There are now over 22,000 electric vehicles (EVs) in the State, and YoY growth is impressive. More must be done to accelerate this progress. EVs still represent 2% of passenger vehicles, and we consume over 30 million gallons of gasoline each month. This translates into a massive carbon footprint and highlights our dependence on energy imports and the security risks that this presents.

The transition to clean transportation must be equitable for us to achieve our decarbonization goals. Measures to reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.

**HB1415 HD1 is such a measure. It will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing.**

Please support HB1415 HD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noel Morin', is written over a horizontal line.

Noel Morin – President  
Big Island EV Association

**Big Island Electric Vehicle Association** (bigislandev.org), established in 2011, is a grassroots non-profit group dedicated to accelerating EV adoption in Hawaii Island. Our members are EV owners and supporters.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEES ON COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION AND TRANSPORTATION &  
CULTURE & THE ARTS

Friday, March 17, 2023 — 9:55 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1415 HD1, Relating to Energy.**

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Chair Lee, and Members of the Committees:

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 1415 HD1**, which requires the Public Utilities Commission to administer an electric vehicle charging system loan program to provide loans to applicants who install eligible electric vehicle charging systems (EVCS).

Ulupono supports clean, alternative fuel transportation, as ground transportation makes up a significant portion of Hawai'i's reliance on imported oil and is the largest contributor to our state's greenhouse gas emissions. To streamline meeting State climate change goals and sustainability efforts, the EVCS loan program can provide the necessary infrastructure capital to support electric vehicle (EV) adoption.

While significant impact has been made from the current EVCS Rebate Program, continued support is still needed. A recent survey by Cox Automotive indicates that a lack of EV charging remains the top barrier to EV adoption, with 57% of consumers noting the issue (per Cox Automotive Path to EV Adoption survey conducted in July 2021). We are hopeful that building off the momentum of the 2021 and 2022 State Legislatures, this program, with dedicated resources, can look to expand its overall impact in our community. We are supportive of the new emphasis to serve low- and moderate-income communities, which helps to ensure that all community members stand to benefit from access to EVs.

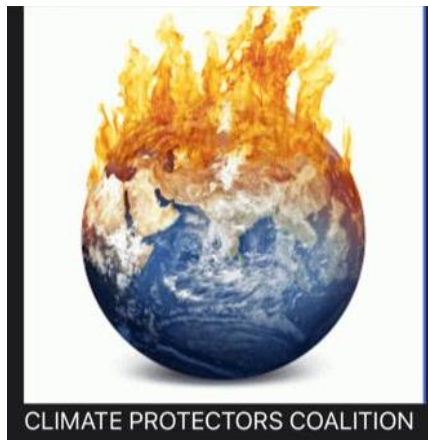
As Hawai'i's energy issues become increasingly complex and challenging, we appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support the continued adoption of clean transportation throughout the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



To: The Honorable Chairs, the Honorable Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees:

From: Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: **Hearing HB1415 HD1 RELATING TO ENERGY**

Hearing: Friday March 17, 2023, 9:55 a.m., room 229

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees:

**Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB1415 HD1.**

The transition to clean transportation must be equitable for us to achieve our decarbonization goals. Measures to reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.

HB1415 HD1 will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo for providing the opportunity to testify!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)





To: The Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection (CPN)  
and  
The Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)  
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023, 9:55am

### **In strong support of HB1415 HD1**

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Lee, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Inouye, and members of the CPN and TCA committees,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of HB1415 HD1** that requires the public utilities commission to administer an electric vehicle charging system loan program to provide loans to applicants who install eligible electric vehicle charging systems.

The transportation sector contributes more to the climate crisis than any other sector in Hawaii. The widespread adoption of electric vehicles is vital in our strategy for reducing emissions and meeting our emission reduction goals. Hawaii will not be able to reach its carbon reduction goals, however, if we do not enact policies that support these outcomes. HB1415 HD1 is one such policy, as it will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing.

350Hawaii fully supports efforts by the legislature to establish social equity as a foundational principle in the State's efforts to strengthen climate resilience. A Just Transition means leaving no one behind. That includes efforts such as HB1415 HD1 which reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment, and as a result, will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

**Hawaii Electric Vehicle Association**

hawaiiev.org  
info@hawaiieva.com



March 15, 2023

**SUPPORT for HB1415 HD1 - RELATING TO ENERGY**

Dear Chairs Keohokalole and Lee, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Inouye, and Committee members,

**Big Island EV Association supports HB1415 HD1, which *“Requires the public utilities commission to administer an electric vehicle charging system loan program to provide loans to applicants who install eligible electric vehicle charging systems.***

Hawaii is making progress on the decarbonization of its ground transportation systems. There are now over 22,000 electric vehicles (EVs) in the State, and year-over-year growth is impressive. More must be done, however, to accelerate this progress in order to meet state climate and energy goals.

EVs still represent only 2% of passenger vehicles, and we consume over 30 million gallons of gasoline each month. This translates into a massive carbon footprint and highlights our dependence on energy imports and the security risks that this presents.

The transition to clean transportation must be equitable for us to achieve our decarbonization goals. Measures to reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.

**HB1415 HD1 is such a measure. It will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing.**

Please support HB1415 HD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TH", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tam Hunt  
Board Member and Policy Manager



## Hawaii EV Association

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**Hawaii EV Association** is a grassroots non-profit group representing electric vehicle owners in Hawaii. Our mission is to accelerate the electrification of transportation through consumer education, policy advocacy, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure expansion. For more information, please visit [hawaiiev.org](http://hawaiiev.org).

### Hawaii EV Board

Noel Morin, President  
Nanette Vinton, Secretary, and Treasurer  
Bill Bugbee – Director  
Tam Hunt - Director  
Sonja Kass – Director  
Rob Weltman – Director

### Hawaii EV Clubs

Big Island EV Association  
Kauai EV  
Maui Nui EV  
Tesla Hawaii Club

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 6:20:31 PM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would be a help to anyone considering going electric. And, it would help in our transition to a cleaner environment. Please support this bill. Mahalo.

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:17:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

End this Scam!!!!

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 6:20:49 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HD1. Thank you.

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 8:49:33 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Virginia Tincher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Members of the CPN/TCA committees,

Mahalo for supporting a just transition to clean energy.

I am in strong support of HB1415 HD1 to create a low-interest loan program for the installation of home charging stations for low-income households.

As an older, retired owner of an EV who was able to install a home charger I appreciate the convenience of home charging. I am also reducing the number of drivers who must use public chargers.

It's important that the benefits of EV ownership are available to as many people as possible.

- EVs are less expensive to operate.
- There are no emissions that could affect the health of the driver and passengers.
- Currently there are a few models which are more affordable to purchase new or used than gas powered vehicles and the number and variety of low price EV models are increasingly available.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Virginia Tincher

Honolulu, Oahu

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 9:30:07 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steve Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Trusted Hawaii Lawmakers,

We strongly support this bill, as Hawaii needs to electrify EVERYTHING ASAP and providing adequate EV Charging infrastructure is crucial to that endeavor. Loan prigrams can help! This also slows the deadly onslaught from Climate change for the next generation!. Sales of ICE, (Internal Combustion Engines) cars and trucks continue to decrease and Sales of EVs continue to Skyrocket. Hertz is leading the Rental company adoption of EV and keep increasing their share. EVs are already cheaper when Total cost of ownership is considered and some are already cheaper that ICE. Like the Bolt that after tax credit is close to 20K. Tesla is launching a next generation platform that will be significantly cheaper than their current line that has also had significant price reductions recently. So. the EV rEVolution is here and I'm sure 90% of car sales will be EV within 6 years! Conversions of current ICE vehicles to EVs is also starting to happen and is expected to accelerate quickly. Please ACT Boldly to do everything in your POWER to Electrify EVERYTHING in Hawaii ASAP, Imagine, NO SMOG, NO POISON going into the lungs of our most vulnerable Keiki and Kapuna or destroying native pants and species, NOT contributing to SEA LEVEL RISE AND Acidification of the Ocean that Killing our coral reefs. Imagine, then ACT and pass this and any other Legislation that accelerates us OFF Fossil Fuels! IMUA>>>>

Mahalo,

Steve Parsons, Hanapepe Kauai, Kauai Climate Action Coalition, Kauai EV, Uber Driver, Tesla Owners Club Kauai Director, Surfrider Foundation, Realtor with NAR's Green Designation



**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 8:03:02 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephanie Hall Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As we move away from gas vehicles, we need to ensure that low-moderate-income households can afford to charge at home or in public. We must be sensitive to their economic concerns, specifically their capacity to purchase EVs and charging equipment.

Mahalo for your service,

Stephanie Hall Morin

**LATE**

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 10:17:13 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carter Barto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*"I support HB1415 HD1.*

*The transition to clean transportation must be equitable for us to achieve our decarbonization goals. Measures to reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.*

*HB1415 HD1 is such a measure. It will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing."*

**LATE**

**HB-1415-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 10:59:09 AM

Testimony for CPN on 3/17/2023 9:55:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Lieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB1415 HD1.

The transition to clean transportation must be equitable for us to achieve our decarbonization goals. Measures to reduce the cost burden of installing home charging equipment will help make the transition to a clean energy future possible for everyone.

HB1415 HD1 is such a measure. It will help low-income households install residential charging stations by offering low-cost financing.