

MAR 08 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION TO RESPOND TO HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC'S REQUEST TO SUSPEND, DEPRIORITIZE, AND DELAY THE COMMENCEMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS THROUGH PHASE 2, TRANCHE 2 OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAM AND ORDER HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC TO CONTINUE TO DEPLOY AND PURSUE COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS BASED UPON THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION'S FINDINGS.

1 WHEREAS, section 269-27.4, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
2 requires each electric utility to file a proposed community-
3 based renewable energy tariff or tariffs with the Public
4 Utilities Commission by October 1, 2015, and establish a
5 community-based renewable energy tariff or tariffs, provided
6 that the tariff or tariffs are found to be in the public
7 interest; and

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9 WHEREAS, community-based renewable energy projects are
10 allowed to utilize public utilities' transmission infrastructure
11 to provide energy to subscribers that may live in a different
12 area from where the renewable energy is being produced; and

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14 WHEREAS, community-based renewable energy projects allow
15 those who are unable to install solar energy systems because of
16 cost restraints, because they do not own their residence, or
17 because they reside in condominiums or other properties that
18 cannot accommodate the systems; and

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20 WHEREAS, community-based renewable energy, or "shared
21 solar", can help the State decrease its reliance on fossil fuels
22 and move toward energy independence and make the transition to
23 renewable energy more equitable regardless of income; and

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25 WHEREAS, community-based renewable energy projects can also
26 allow subscribers to lower their electric bills without making
27 large, upfront investments of financial resources and can
28 benefit underserved groups, specifically seniors and low- to
29 moderate-income families; and



1 WHEREAS, approximately five community-based renewable
2 energy projects have been installed since 2015, and thirteen
3 community-based renewable energy projects in Phase 2, Tranche 1
4 were to be installed from 2024 to 2026; and

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6 WHEREAS, in October 2023, the Public Utilities Commission
7 directed Hawaiian Electric to provide a status update regarding
8 the impact of the August 2023 Maui wildfires on its Community-
9 Based Renewable Energy Program; and

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11 WHEREAS, in the November 15, 2023 status update, Hawaiian
12 Electric notes that although the Community-Based Renewable
13 Energy Program was not directly impacted by the August 2023 Maui
14 wildfires, the customer management aspect of the Program
15 requires additional time to develop after commercial operations
16 in order to draw and apply lessons from it to Phase 2, Tranche 2
17 of the Program, which would establish additional community-based
18 renewable energy projects; Hawaiian Electric therefore
19 recommends that Phase 2, Tranche 2 of the Program be paused,
20 deprioritized, and delayed to allow for completion of existing
21 projects to commercial operation and to continue to identify and
22 evaluate lessons learned from Phase 1 and Phase 2, Tranche 1 of
23 the Program; and

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25 WHEREAS, the Public Utilities Commission has not yet
26 responded to Hawaiian Electric's recommendation as set forth in
27 its November 15, 2023 update; and

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29 WHEREAS, this body believes that Hawaiian Electric has had
30 more than eight years to prepare for the implementation of its
31 Community-Based Renewable Energy Program, has taken best
32 practices for implementation from numerous other states, and
33 does not require any additional time to continue deployment of
34 shared solar to those communities in great need; now, therefore,

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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
37 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024,
38 that the Public Utilities Commission is requested to respond to
39 Hawaiian Electric's request to suspend, deprioritize, and delay
40 the commencement of community-based renewable energy projects
41 through Phase 2, Tranche 2 of the Community-Based Renewable
42 Energy Program; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Utilities Commission is requested to issue informational requests to Hawaiian Electric for further details and clarification as to the specific reasons and timing for its request to suspend, deprioritize, and delay this important program that can help communities that need it the most; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Utilities Commission is requested to issue informational requests to Hawaiian Electric to determine a reasonable date for recommencing the continued procurement of community-based renewable energy projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Utilities Commission is requested to order Hawaiian Electric to continue the deployment of community-based renewable energy projects through Phase 2, Tranche 2 of the Community-Based Renewable Energy Program based upon the Public Utilities Commission's determination of a reasonable date; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Utilities Commission is requested to order Hawaiian Electric to revoke the suspension of procurement and continue to issue requests for proposals for the Community-Based Renewable Energy Program based upon its findings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission and President and Chief Executive Officer of Hawaiian Electric.

OFFERED BY: 