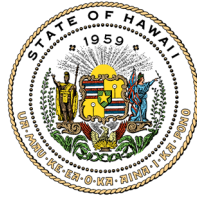


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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
LEAH LARAMEE
Climate Change Coordinator on behalf of
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission
Co-Chair Ryan K. P. Kanaka'ole**

**Before the Senate Committees on
ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
and
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Thursday, March 19, 2026
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1619, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

House Bill 1619, House Draft 2 proposes to exclude from the definition of "development", as it applies to special management areas, the installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of an electric vehicle (EV) charging system and include the Public Utilities Commission in the development and implementation of plans to meet the long-term goals for zero-emissions transportation in the State. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

The Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 departments, committees, and counties with the purpose of promoting ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Transition to EVs is a key action identified by the State's climate plans including the Climate Action Pathways (2025), Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan (2025) and the Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization (2023). A significant barrier is the lack of EV charging infrastructure. Streamlining the installation of charging infrastructure will support the transition of our ground transportation to EVs thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality and protecting public health.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
Senate Committees on
Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs
and
Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Thursday, March 19, 2026
3:00 p.m.

Chairs Wakai and Lee, Vice Chairs Chang and Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

Measure: H.B. No. 1619, H.D.2
Title: RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE.

Position:

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

Comments:

The Commission supports the intent of this measure to exclude the installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of an electric vehicle charging system as defined in section 269-72, Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”), from the definition of “development” in section 205A-22 (regarding Coastal Zone Management definitions) as it applies to special management areas.

This bill also includes the Public Utilities Commission in the development and implementation of plans to meet the long-term goals for zero-emissions transportation in the state, as identified in HRS § 225P-8 (Climate Adaptation: zero emissions transportation), in coordination with the Department of Transportation, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, and the Hawaii State Energy Office.

The Commission currently manages the state’s Electric Vehicle Charging Station (“EVCS”) Rebate Program as established in HRS § 269-72 and § 269-73 in consultation with EV stakeholders and in cooperation with the program’s administrator, Hawaii Energy.

This measure would provide clarity in oversight of EVCS infrastructure development insofar as exemption from coastal zone management special controls. This bill also provides an opportunity for the Commission to be included in the state's collaborative planning processes for zero-emissions transportation initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



To: The Honorable Chairs Glenn Wakai and Chris Lee, the Honorable Vice Chairs Stanley Chang and Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs and Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts Committees.

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

Re: **Hearing HB1619 HD2 RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Hearing: Thursday March 19, 2026 3:00 p.m. CR224

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Lee, Vice Chairs Chang and Inouye, and Members of the Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs and Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts Committees!

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** HB1619 HD2!

Even without federal subsidies, electric vehicles are becoming less expensive than internal combustion vehicles, especially when considering their much lower fuel and maintenance costs. With ample sun, warm temperatures, and shorter driving distances, and less fuel volatility, electric vehicles will make sense for Hawaii. Many more Hawaii drivers will want electric vehicles. To serve the future market for electric vehicles, **Hawaii needs to develop**

its charging infrastructure. This bill will help that development by streamlining approvals in the special management area (SMA, shoreline). Including the Public Utilities Commission in plans for meeting zero emissions goals may make sense where electricity rates are at issue with electric vehicle charging.

Increasing demand for zero emissions transportation in the State will require, according to estimates conducted by the Department of Transportation, approximately four thousand additional public electric vehicle charging systems by 2030 to support electric vehicle adoption. Unfortunately, the State's geography means that many prime locations for public charging infrastructure, including beaches, harbors, and tourism corridors, fall within **special management areas that are subject to stringent permitting requirements.** By clarifying certain definitions to exempt these charging systems from special management area permit requirements, this measure will expand electric vehicle charging system deployment to further the State's green energy transportation goals.

This bill addresses two critical bottlenecks impeding Hawai'i's transition to zero-emissions transportation.

1. Unnecessary Permitting delays: Current SMA permitting treats EV chargers as "development," which triggers **long review processes for what are minor electrical upgrades.** This bill's exemption treats EV charging systems as minor structures while maintaining environmental oversight through cumulative impact reviews.
2. Grid Planning: This measure will help us avoid the issue of chargers without adequate grid capacity.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



**Hawaiian
Electric**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS & WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**HB 1619, HD2
Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure**

Thursday, March 19, 2026
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Wakai and Chair Lee, Vice Chair Chang and Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

Hawaiian Electric is submitting written testimony in **support** of HB 1619 HD2, Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

Hawaiian Electric supports HB 1619, HD2, which excludes from the definition of "development", as it applies to special management areas, the construction, installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of an electric vehicle (EV) charging system as a minor structure.

HB 1619, HD2 represents a positive step towards an equitable and sustainable transportation future for Hawaii. Hawaiian Electric currently operates the largest electric vehicle charging network in Hawaii and supports the construction of "make ready" electric vehicle charging infrastructure through our make ready pilots for commercial properties and electric buses. Through this experience, Special Management Area permitting has been an important factor, among many, in determining the feasibility of projects. This permitting requirement has required more time and attention from our teams to ensure requirements are met and move projects forward. If electric vehicle projects were exempt from SMA permitting, it would enable us to consider more sites. As noted in the Hawaii Department of Transportation Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, State's 2045 Clean Energy goals, "The growing EV population will necessitate a large increase in public EV charging stations."¹ This bill will support the

¹ See page 52 of the Hawaii Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan FINAL at [FINAL-ESWRP-2025-10-15.pdf](#)

effective and efficient installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging throughout the state.

As part of Hawaiian Electric's Electrification of Transportation Strategic Roadmap 2.0, our goal to enhance charging availability and reliability for personal mobility is crucial. A key action in this plan is to "continue to reduce Hawaiian Electric's charger installation and energization timelines and coordinate with state and county agencies to support simplified, accelerated charger installations."² Supporting this bill will directly contribute to achieving this objective, helping us and third-party electric vehicle charging infrastructure installers, build a more comprehensive and reliable charging infrastructure.

Hawaiian Electric notes that its grid has adequate capacity to accommodate continued growth of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. We have developed the EV Charging Siting Tool³ to equip electric vehicle charging installers with information that provides the estimated capacity available on our primary distribution lines. The EV Charger Siting Tool demonstrates that adequate capacity remains within Hawaiian Electric's service territory to accommodate continued growth of electric vehicle charging infrastructure; and specifically, locations most suitable for this growth.

Further, Hawaiian Electric has worked with stakeholders to develop an Integrated Grid Plan⁴ that provides the data needed to identify optimal locations and capacity for future infrastructure. The Integrated Grid Plan balances a transition to renewable energy with maintaining reliable power to meet the needs of Hawaiian Electric customers up to and beyond 2045 to achieve net zero carbon emissions and 100% renewable resources. This includes the continued growth of the electric vehicle market, the increased electric vehicle charging infrastructure necessary to support this transition, and the increased load necessary to fuel these vehicles.

Accordingly, Hawaiian Electric supports HB 1619, HD2. Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony.

² See page 59 of the EoT Strategic Roadmap 2.0 at https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/documents/products_and_services/electric_vehicles/electrification_of_transportation_roadmap/20240531_eot_roadmap_2.pdf

³ [Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Charger Siting Tool | Hawaiian Electric](#)

⁴ [IGP: Preferred Plans and Next Steps](#)