

STATE OF HAWA'I OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov>

Statement of **MARY ALICE EVANS, Director**

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Thursday, January 29, 2026, 9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 1619

RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE.

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

HB 1619 proposes to exclude the construction, installation, and replacement of an electric vehicle charging system from the definition of “development” within the Special Management Areas and therefore exempt such action from SMA permitting.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) is the lead agency of the Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management Program, codified in Chapter 205A, HRS.

OPSD supports HB1619 with amendments. The proposed amendments are intended to preserve consistency in the language of this HRS section. Our amendments are shown using strikethrough for deletion and underline for addition, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 205A-22, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted as subsection (2)(X) and to read as follows:

“Development”:

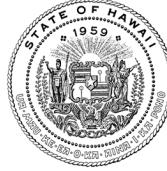
(2) Does not include the following:

(X) Construction, installation Installation, maintenance, repair and replacement of electric vehicle charging ~~system~~ stations, including their electrical infrastructure and underground utility lines ~~that service the system, as a minor structure;~~

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



JON S. ITOMURA
CHAIR

NAOMI U. KUWAYE
COMMISSIONER

COLIN A. YOST
COMMISSIONER

Telephone: (808) 586-2020
Facsimile: (808) 586-2066

STATE OF HAWAII
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
465 S. KING STREET, #103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Website: puc.hawaii.gov
E-mail: puc@hawaii.gov

Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
House Committee on
Energy & Environmental Protection

Thursday, January 29, 2026
9:30 a.m.

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

Measure: H.B. No. 1619

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 from the definition of “development” in section 205A-22, Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”), (regarding Coastal Zone Management definitions) as it applies to special management areas, the construction, installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of an electric vehicle charging system as a minor structure.

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 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

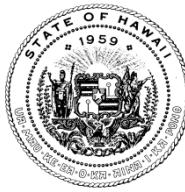
provides an opportunity for the Commission to be included in the state's collaborative planning processes for zero-emissions transportation initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

LATE



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Thursday, January 29, 2026
9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, 325

HB1619
RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports House Bill 1619, which seeks to accelerate the building of electric vehicle charging stations, and therefore directly lessen one of the main barriers to electric vehicle (EV) adoption – the availability of EV charging stations.

House Bill 1619 excludes the construction, installation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of electric vehicle charging systems as minor structures from the definition of "development" in special management areas and 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.

The DOT recognizes the critical role that EV charging infrastructure plays in achieving the State's energy security and clean transportation goals. The DOT's Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan published in October 2025, explains how the transportation sector (including everyone who uses transportation) could meet the state's emission reduction targets established in state law. Without immediate additional investments and implementation of emission reduction strategies, including policy changes, Hawaii will not meet its targets. Electrification is the leading emissions reduction strategy for ground transportation, and expeditious development of EV charging infrastructure is necessary to electrify. The DOT has installed EV chargers at our facilities and is

continuing to build public EV charging stations under our National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Hawaii State Plan. We have developed public charging stations at Kahului Park and Ride, Aloha Tower, and Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. Construction of another station is underway at Kapalua Airport, and we will install additional public EV charging stations in 2026 and 2027 on Kauai, Molokai, Hawaii Island, Lanai and Oahu. Even with DOT's continued investments, numerous EV charging stations are needed statewide to be developed by both the public and private sectors.

By streamlining the process for installing EV charging systems in special management areas, this bill can accelerate the deployment of EV charging infrastructure across Hawaii. The DOT is pleased to see that the proposed amendment to Section 205A-22, Hawaii Revised Statutes, maintains the following conditional language that allows discretion on the part of the relevant County, and provides an important oversight mechanism to protect the environment:

“... provided that whenever the authority finds that any excluded use, activity, or operation may have a cumulative impact, or a significant environmental or ecological effect on a special management area, that use, activity, or operation shall be defined as “development” for the purpose of this part.”

The DOT also supports the inclusion of the Public Utilities Commission in the planning and implementation of the state’s clean transportation goals. A collaborative approach is critical to coordinate development of EV charging infrastructure with the broader energy grid planning, and multimodal transportation maintenance and improvements.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



To: The Honorable Representative Nicole Lowen, Chair, the Honorable Amy Perruso, Vice Chair, and Members of the Energy and Environmental Protection Committee.

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

Re: Hearing HB1619 RELATING TO ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Hearing: Thursday January 29, 2026 9:30 a.m.

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Energy and Environmental Protection Committee!

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate.

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

Transitioning to electric vehicles from fossil fuels is critical to Hawaii achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 per the State's legal target (statewide sequestering more atmospheric carbon than emitted within the State as quickly as practicable, but no later than 2045, HRS Sec. 225P-5).

Achieving that target is critical to the future safety and welfare of Hawaii. Climate heating is especially dangerous for a tropical island state subject to stronger storms (hurricanes, rainbombs), wildfires, drought, and sea level rise.

Even without federal subsidies, electric vehicles are becoming less expensive than internal combustion vehicles, especially when considering their much lower maintenance costs. With ample sun, warm temperatures, and shorter driving distances, 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.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

HB 1619 Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Thursday, January 29, 2026

9:30 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee,

Hawaiian Electric is providing written testimony in **support** of HB 1619, Relating to Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, 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 charging system as a minor structure.

HB 1619 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 requires 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, switching from Internal Combustion Engine vehicles will be the most effective strategy for reducing overall ground transportation greenhouse gas emissions to reach the

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 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.

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

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

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

Hawaii Electric Vehicle Association

hawaiiev.org

info@hawaiieva.com



Jan. 27, 2026

Distinguished Members of the Legislature,

The Hawaii Electric Vehicle Association respectfully urges the 2026 Legislature to pass House Bill 1619, which streamlines the permitting process for electric vehicle charging infrastructure in special management areas (SMAs) and strengthens Hawaii's zero-emissions transportation planning.

HB 1619 addresses two critical barriers to EV adoption in Hawaii:

Permitting Delays in Coastal Areas. Hawaii's island geography means that many prime locations for public charging infrastructure—including beaches, harbors, and tourism corridors—fall within special management areas subject to stringent permitting requirements. The exemption of EV charging systems from SMA "development" definitions will reduce unnecessary delays while maintaining environmental safeguards through cumulative impact reviews.

Incomplete Zero-Emissions Planning. The addition of the Public Utilities Commission to Hawaii's zero-emissions transportation planning process ensures that grid capacity and electricity demand are properly coordinated with charger deployment. This prevents the deployment of stranded assets and creates infrastructure that supports both current demand and future growth.

The urgency is clear: Hawaii currently has approximately 900 public EV charging ports statewide. According to Hawaii Department of Transportation analysis, the state will need roughly 4,000 public charging ports by 2030 to support the EV population projected under baseline electrification scenarios. This requires a four-fold increase in charging infrastructure deployment in just four years. Removing bureaucratic friction from the permitting process is essential to closing this critical infrastructure gap.

HB 1619 is practical, targeted legislation that eliminates a specific regulatory obstacle without compromising environmental protection. We urge you to pass this bill in 2026.

Sincerely,

Tam Hunt



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Board Member and Policy Director
Hawaii EV Association

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.

Hawaii EV Board

Noel Morin, President
Nanette Vinton, Secretary, and Treasurer
Jenn Lieu – Director
Tam Hunt – Director
Michael Albatrosov – Director
Rob Weltman – Director

Hawaii EV Clubs

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

Commented [NM1]: Michael, not Sonja

HB-1619

Submitted on: 1/28/2026 8:45:39 AM
Testimony for EEP on 1/29/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Hamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support any measures that would move Hawaii towards its goal of reduced dependence on fossil fuels, zero emissions, and climate protection. Wider availability of well-maintained and working EV charging stations certainly is in line with those goals.

Thank you for accepting my testimony.