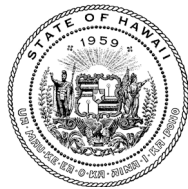


JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. No. 2608, Relating to Water Heating Systems

BEFORE THE:

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

DATE: Thursday, February 5, 2026

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

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

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding H.B. 2608 for your consideration.

H.B. 2608 Section 2 amends section 196-6.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to delete demand water heaters as an alternative to the solar water heater requirement for single family dwelling building permits, and inserts as an alternative a "high-efficiency electric water heating system utilizing heat pump technology" (as defined in section 235-12.5, HRS) when installed in conjunction with a photovoltaic system.

H.B. 2608 Section 3 amends section 235-12.5, HRS, to insert a renewable energy tax credit for the installation of each high-efficiency electric water heating system utilizing heat pump technology installed concurrently with, or in a dwelling already served by, a photovoltaic system of one kilowatt or greater, for individual and corporate taxpayers.

The percentage of the actual costs incurred that will be allowed to be claimed for the credit and its cap is undetermined. For high-efficiency electric water heating systems utilizing heat pump technology that are installed concurrently with, or in a dwelling already utilizing an existing photovoltaic system of one kilowatt or greater, an

unspecified dollar amount cap per system is to be reduced by an unspecified percentage amount. An unspecified dollar amount cap is also applicable for multi-family residential properties.

The definition of “renewable energy technology system” is expanded to include a “high-efficiency electric water heating system utilizing heat pump technology,” which is in turn defined as an electric water heating system that:

- uses vapor-compression heat pump technology as the primary means of heating water;
- meets or exceeds minimum efficiency standards, as established or recognized by the department of taxation in consultation with the Hawaii state energy office;
- is ENERGY STAR certified or certified by a successor recognized by the department of taxation;
- is installed in a residential dwelling located in the State; and
- is installed by a contractor licensed pursuant to chapter 444.

The act takes effect upon its approval.

DOTAX notes that it does not have the subject matter expertise to determine whether a high-efficiency electric water heating system will qualify for the credit or to establish minimum efficiency standards, including uniform energy factor requirements.

DOTAX recommends that the bill be amended to apply taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026, to allow sufficient time to make necessary form and instruction changes and promulgate administrative rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

February 5, 2026

Representatives Lowen and Peruso
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

RE: HB2608
Hearing: Thursday February 5, 2026
Position: **COMMENTS**

Chairs Lowen and Peruso and members of the committee:

My name is Will Giese. I am the Senior Director of Government Affairs for Solaray Corporation. Solaray was founded in 1975 in Hawai'i and does business in Hawai'i as Inter-Island Solar Supply. Solaray also wholly owns Pacific Panel Cleaners ("PPC"), Generator & Power Systems ("GPS"), both Hawai'i Corporations, SunEarth, Inc., a California Corporation, and Alternate Energy Technologies (AET), a Florida Corporation. SunEarth & AET are domestic manufacturing companies producing American made clean energy products, much of which is installed and operated throughout Hawaii for 50 years. GPS is the Generac Industrial generator distributor for Hawai'i. Solaray Corp., and its wholly owned subsidiaries, are proudly 100% employee owned.

Solaray is offering **COMMENTS** to HB2608 relating to water heating systems, but are generally in support of the intent of this legislation.

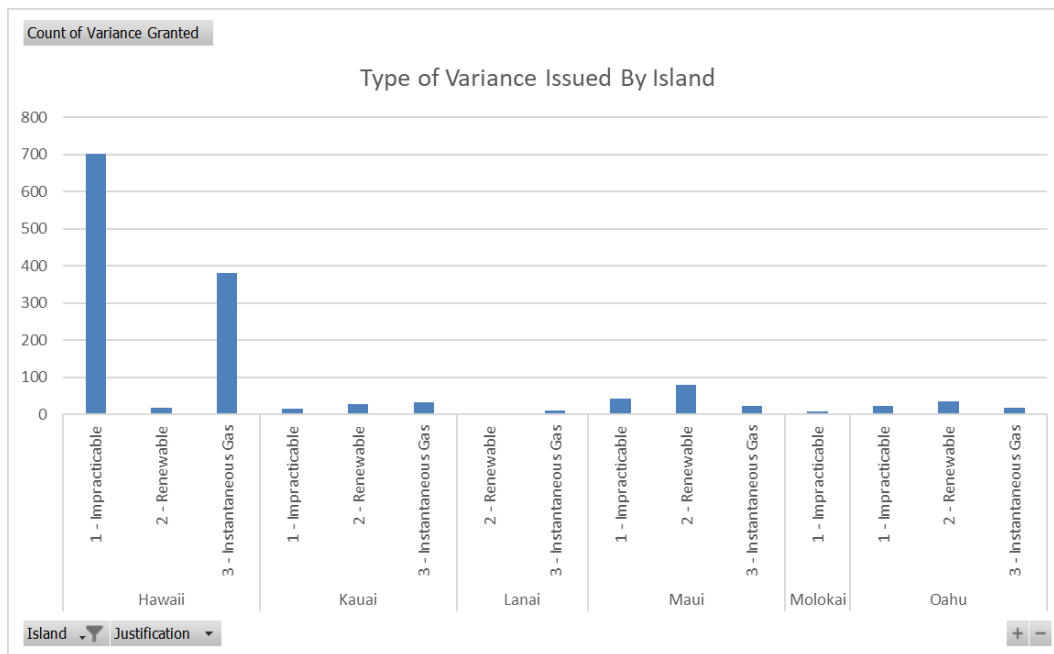
This bill authorizes building permit variances for certain high-efficiency electric water heating systems utilizing heat pump technology, rather than solar water heater systems. It expands the renewable energy technologies income tax credit to include high-efficiency electric water heating systems.

COMMENTS

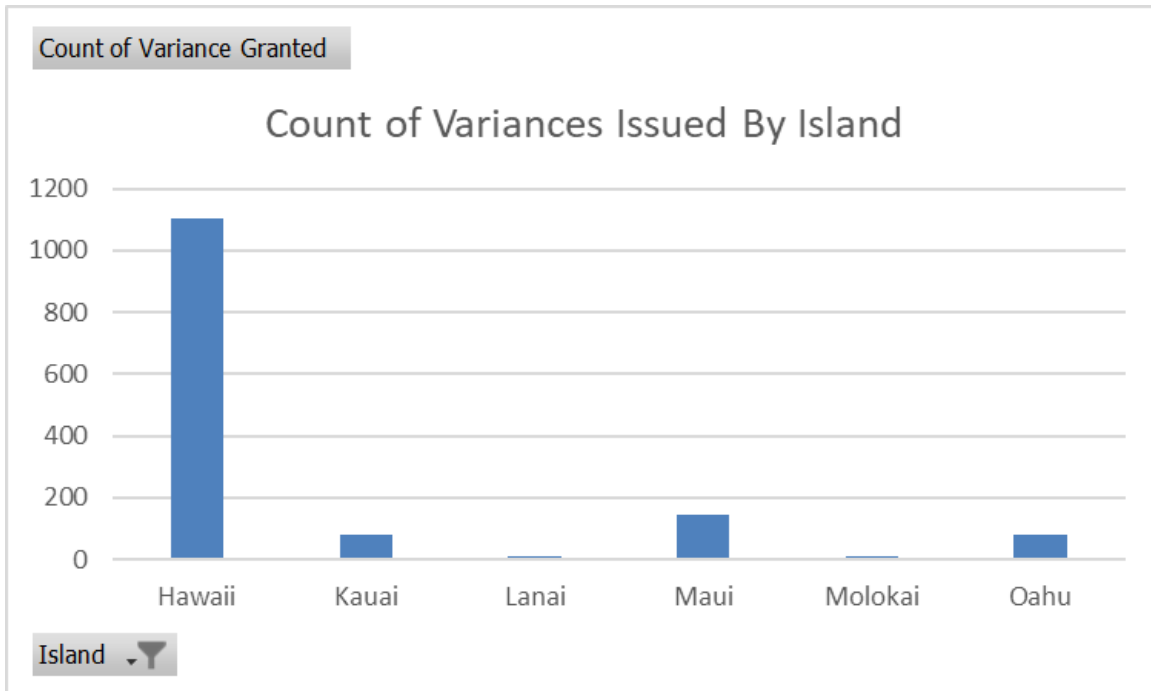
Solar water heaters are an essential part of Hawaii's energy landscape and provide millions of gallons of hot water heated by the sun to thousands of homes and businesses throughout Hawaii each year, while supporting a diverse local installer network. In fact, Hawaii has one of the most successful solar water heating industries in the United States, with almost 1 in 3 single family homes having installed solar water heaters for over 40 years. Because of the abundant solar resources available in the state, Hawaii rightly recognized over 15 years ago that the most cost effective and efficient way to heat water *and* reduce or almost entirely eliminate one of the largest single energy loads in a home was to require solar water heaters as part of all new home construction.

Solar water heaters are highly effective at heating water for residences throughout the state, because the state mandates that solar water heaters provide 90% or greater thermal energy to heat water directly from the sun. Current guidelines regarding the variance process requires that a majority of the energy used to heat water is offset by a renewable source, unless there are specific reasons that the home is incapable of installing a solar water heater, such as poor solar resources. In fact, the current variance process allows for heat pumps and solar PV water heaters to be selected as an alternative. Over half of all variances applied for and approved by the Hawaii State Energy Office were either PV or heat pumps.¹

As written, the amendments to HRS 196-6.5 do eliminate the demand gas variance, which is often used to circumnavigate the SHW variance, but it adds a variance that is functionally already being used. In 2025, of the 1436 variance request received by the HSEO 1225 of them were approved (85%). 370 of these approvals were for instantaneous gas (30%) and 707 were for heat pumps due to impractical solar resource (57%). If we assume similar construction rates for new single-family homes in 2025 as in 2024 (around 2500 homes), this is a little under 50% of all homes having approved variances for SHW, and around 26% have heat pumps. Interestingly, as has been the case for many years, half of all variances applied for and approved are by one architect/engineer on the Big Island.



¹ See HSEA SHW Variance Data here: <https://energy.hawaii.gov/what-we-do/energy-efficiency/solar-water-heat-variance/>



If the intent of the legislature and the state is for this variance process and mandate to actually work as intended, it is failing to do so. The original intent of the solar water heating mandate was to issue variances “rarely, if ever” in lieu of solar water heating technology. This is in addition to a 2019 ruling that requires the HSEO to “rarely, if ever” issue variances and to exercise discretion on each variance that is submitted. In 2025, only 68 variances were issued that required the applicant to submit a life-cycle cost comparison analysis that requires the applicant to justify the cost of an alternative water heating method. For variances to be issued for over half of all new single-family homes in Hawaii almost certainly does not meet the standard of “rarely, if ever”.

We are not opposed to heat pumps installed with solar being considered as a path to a variance. Although this is already being done through the existing process, by eliminating the gas “loophole” this eliminates the ability of applicants to skirt the intent of the original law entirely. Notably, an applicant would *still* be able to install instantaneous gas if they are able to prove that the technology is cost-effective using the LCCC process.

We also suggest that, as an amendment to this bill, the legislature consider directing the Public Utilities Commission to update the standard by which solar water heating is adopted in this state. Solar water heating technology has changed significantly since 2009, yet the standards surrounding their installation in Hawaii have remained the same. For instance, the average life of a solar water heater is at least 20-25 years yet Section 195-6.5 only allows the comparison of a solar water heater at 15 years. Updating the standards allows the state to account for these technological innovations and gives the state an opportunity to amend existing standards to lower the cost of solar water heating compared to other technology. That

standard exists in HRS Section 269-44 (which is referenced in Section 196-6.5). We recommend the following amendments in red, at page 4, line 7 and as a new section:

PAGE 4, LINE 7 of HB2608

- (1) Installation is impracticable due to poor solar resource;
- (2) Installation is cost-prohibitive based upon a life cycle cost-benefit analysis that incorporates the average residential utility bill and the cost of the new solar water heater system with a life cycle that does not exceed ~~fifteen~~ **thirty** years;
- (3) A renewable energy technology system, as defined in section 235-12.5, is substituted for use as the primary energy source for heating water; or
- [(4) A demand water heater device approved by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., is installed; provided that at least one other gas appliance is installed in the dwelling. For the purposes of this paragraph, "demand water heater" means a gas-tankless instantaneous water heater that provides hot water only as it is needed.]
- (4) A high-efficiency electric water heating system utilizing heat pump technology, as defined in section 235-12.5, when installed in conjunction with a photovoltaic system, is substituted as the primary energy source for heating water."

NEW SECTION AMENDMENTS

[\$269-44] Solar water heater system standards. Not later than July 1, 2009, or as soon as reasonably practicable, the public utilities commission shall adopt or establish by rule, tariff, or order, standards for solar water heater systems to include, but not be limited to, specifications for the performance, materials, components, durability, longevity, proper sizing, installation, and quality to promote the objectives of section 269-124. **The commission shall update these rules, tariffs, or standards on or before July 1, 2027 and every five years after that date to account for advances and innovations in solar water heating technology.** [L 2008, c 204, §3]

Finally, we are agnostic on including in the Renewable Energy Investment Tax credit a new provision to account for heat pumps installed with photovoltaics. Notably, any system installed under the existing solar water heating mandate is exempt from receiving a tax credit (as the technology is mandated by the state), so heat pumps installed in this way would not receive a benefit from the REITC. However, HR1 2025, commonly known as the Big Beautiful Bill, eliminated the federal investment tax credit for heat pumps under IRC Section 25C, meaning that retrofit heat pumps no longer enjoy a federal investment tax credit.

While there are limited cases in which solar water heaters do not make sense for the average new home build, in most cases solar water heating is the most cost-effective and resilient way for the average home in Hawaii to heat water. This is why there is a variance process, and also why variances should "rarely, if ever" be granted. The variance process, if

properly implemented by HSEO, works as intended and residents are able to enjoy the most efficient water heating technology available to them on the market.

As a local, employee-owned solar business owned and operated in Hawaii for over 50 years, we **OFFER COMMENTS FOR HB2608** and urge the committee to consider our suggested amendments to this measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Will Giese
Senior Director, Government Affairs
Solaray Corporation



**Testimony to The Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Thursday, February 5, 2026
9:00 AM
Conference Room 325 & VIA videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol
HB 2608**

Chari Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2608. Hawaii Gas appreciates the Legislature’s ongoing commitment to Hawai’i’s clean energy goals and respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to removing gas water heaters from the existing solar water heater variance framework.

While we have no opinion on the inclusion of heat pump water heaters in HRS §196-6.5, this choice cannot be included at the expense of solar water heater systems (as delineated in the purpose of this ACT: (1) Authorize building permit variances for certain high-efficiency electric water heating systems utilizing heat pump technology, *rather* than solar water heater systems; nor at the expense of completely eliminating subsection (a) (4) [~~(4) A demand water heater device approved by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., is installed; provided that at least one other gas appliance is installed in the dwelling. For the purposes of this paragraph, "demand water heater" means a gas tankless instantaneous water heater that provides hot water only as it is needed.~~]. Additionally, we take exception to the preamble that incorrectly states that the current statute variance has resulted in “widespread approval of fossil fuel-based water heating systems...” Upon review of the actual data from the State Energy Office, one will determine that this is not the case.

House Bill 2608 raises serious federal preemption concerns under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA). EPCA prohibits state and local governments from restricting the use of federally regulated appliances, including gas water heaters. In *California Restaurant Association v. City of Berkeley*, the Ninth Circuit made clear that a law does not need to directly ban an appliance to be preempted. If a regulation effectively prevents consumers from using a covered appliance, it can still violate federal law. By eliminating the existing variance process, HB 2608 could leave homeowners without a realistic option to install a gas water heater when solar or heat pump systems are not feasible. In practice, this could operate as a prohibition on gas water heaters, in violation of federal law.

That is why HRS §196-6.5 establishes a clear policy preference for solar water heating in new single-family homes while recognizing that a limited, carefully administered variance process is necessary when solar systems are not feasible, not cost effective, or not appropriate for a specific property. It advances renewable energy adoption while ensuring that homeowners are not forced into systems that cannot perform reliably or safely under real world conditions.



The variance process is narrow and rigorous. As a result of hours conversations which included diverse stakeholders including solar water heating advocates, engineers, housing developers and the State Energy Office variance requests were agreed upon with two very high hurdles to prove. 1) It must be prepared and submitted by licensed professionals and 2) it must be reviewed by the State Energy Office using standardized criteria, including life cycle cost analysis. Approval is granted only on a case-by-case basis where site conditions, structural limitations, shading, roof orientation, or cost effectiveness make solar water heating impractical. This process is not a loophole. It is a safeguard designed to address the realities of Hawai'i's diverse housing stock and geography.

Gas water heaters continue to play a critical role in providing reliable hot water, particularly during power outages. Hawai'i's electric grid is subject to disruptions from severe weather events, wildfires, equipment failures, and planned maintenance outages. During these periods, gas water heaters remain operational and provide essential hot water for sanitation, cooking, and basic household needs. This reliability supports public health and safety and is especially important for vulnerable populations.

Certain housing types depend on gas water heating because no other option is feasible within existing physical and electrical constraints. Many homes in Hawaii, do not have electrical infrastructure to rely on. Eliminating gas water heaters from the variance would eliminate the only workable solution for these properties and could delay housing delivery, increase construction costs, or force installations that do not function as intended.

The current variance structure ensures that gas water heaters are used only when necessary and only after other options have been evaluated and determined to be infeasible. Eliminating this flexibility would undermine the alternatives that already have rigorous processes to justify and would impose unintended burdens on homeowners without advancing meaningful additional energy benefits.

For these reasons, Hawaii Gas respectfully urges the Committee to retain the existing variance for gas water heaters in House Bill 2608 by removing the deletion in (a) (4). Gas water heaters are not a matter of preference. They are a necessary and reliable option for many Hawai'i residents whose homes cannot reasonably accommodate solar or heat pump water heating systems.

Thank you for your consideration.



Hawai'i State House of Representatives
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
HB2608 – Relating to Water Heating Systems

RE: Strong support of HB2608

February 5, 2026

Hawaiian Council writes in **strong support of HB2608** to encourage utility bill savings, increase household energy independence, and advance energy sovereignty for our islands.

Hawaiian Council is a 501(c)3 member-based non-profit committed to advancing the cultural, economic, and community development of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiians, with a focus on sustainability and economic resilience by advancing self-sufficiency. HB2608, which encourages the use of high-efficiency electric water heating systems, is a strong step forward for household affordability and supports the transition to renewable energy across our islands.

Recently, the federal government rescinded the 30% tax credit (up to \$2000) for heat pump water heaters previously available to Hawai'i residents. HB2608 helps fill that gap by expanding the state income tax credit to help lower upfront installation costs for local families, providing years of savings on monthly utility bills. This bill recognizes recent technological and cost improvements that provide more flexible and cost-effective options for local homeowners, including allowing heat pump water heaters paired with solar PV panels to be installed on new build homes in lieu of a solar water heater. Hawaiian Council strongly supports these changes that provide more choice and equitable access to sustainable technologies.

In regards to concerns about cost, we believe that the impact to current tax credit expenditures is likely negligible. First, with the loss of the federal solar tax credit, fewer systems are likely to be installed overall which will likely lower the amount of state credits awarded. Second, the inclusion of a high-efficiency heat pump water heater in a home retrofit can actually reduce the size of the PV system required in the overall installation, reducing the amount of PV credits required. In many cases, the tax credit "cost" of a low-cost heat pump water heater will actually displace more expensive solar PV credits for the same amount of energy displacement.

For these reasons, Hawaiian Council respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS HB2608**. Mahalo for your commitment to Native Hawaiian culture, economic development, and local energy sovereignty.

Mālama pono,

Madelyn McKeague

Director of Advocacy

Hawaiian Council

HAWAIIANS ADVANCING HAWAI'I

91-1270 Kinoiki Street, Building 1, Kapolei, HI 96707

info@hawaiiancouncil.org

www.hawaiiancouncil.org

February 2, 2026

The Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Subject: Testimony: HB 2608, Relating to Water Heating Systems
Hearing: February 5, 2026, at 9:00 AM, Conference Room 325

Dear Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Committee Members:

Stanford Carr Development opposes HB 2608 which proposes to eliminate gas-powered demand (tankless) water heaters as an allowable alternative under Hawaii solar water heating statute.

We acknowledge that the State's solar water heating statute continues to allow limited exceptions. However, we respectfully object to the bill's decision to categorically delete Underwriters Laboratories-approved gas-fired demand water heaters as a permissible option, while substituting a preferred electric technology.

While high-efficiency electric heat pump water heaters can be an appropriate solution in some circumstances, they are not universally suitable. Requiring a photovoltaic system to serve the heat pump water heaters further raises upfront costs and complexity, particularly for homeowners, landlords, and small housing providers.

Hawaii's clean energy goals are best served by encouraging innovation and allowing multiple compliant pathways, rather than eliminating technologies by statute. Demand gas water heaters already represent a significant improvement over traditional storage systems and can coexist with renewable strategies as part of a balanced and resilient energy portfolio.

In a state already facing a severe housing affordability crisis, policies that increase construction costs or limit practical design choices risk slowing housing production and increasing costs passed on to residents. Preserving flexibility in water heating systems helps developers, homeowners, and property managers manage costs while still meeting statutory requirements.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose the deletion of gas-powered demand water heaters from the statute and urge the Committee to retain consumer choice among compliant, efficient water heating technologies while continuing to support Hawaii's clean energy objectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,



Stanford S. Carr

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair

Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

February 5, 2026

9:00 am

Conference Room 325

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

Castle & Cooke Homes Hawai'i, Inc. respectfully submits testimony **in opposition to HB2608**.

As one of Hawai'i's longstanding homebuilders, Castle & Cooke is committed to delivering high-quality housing that meets the needs of local families while supporting the State's clean energy goals. However, HB2608, as currently drafted, raises serious concerns regarding housing affordability, project feasibility, and infrastructure readiness.

While the bill is intended to expand clean energy options for water heating, it effectively narrows flexibility by steering new residential construction toward a single technology pathway. In practice, this approach does not adequately account for the wide range of site conditions, building types, and infrastructure limitations faced by housing developments across the state, particularly for townhome, multifamily, and higher-density projects.

This specifically eliminates the option of using gas water heaters, despite the well-known benefits of these heaters, which include reliability during outages, faster recovery rates, low operating costs and high efficiency. Heat pump water heaters are more expensive and add to the cost of a new home further impacting affordability.

These constraints have real consequences. Prescriptive requirements increase construction complexity, add upfront costs, and introduce additional permitting and coordination challenges. Builders are already contending with rising labor, material, and financing costs. Adding further uncertainty and expense will slow housing production and place additional pressure on affordability for local families.

Castle & Cooke strongly believes that Hawai'i's energy and housing policies must be aligned. Advancing clean energy goals should not come at the expense of housing delivery or affordability. Policies that reduce flexibility and impose one-size-fits-all mandates risk undermining the very communities they are intended to serve.

For these reasons, Castle & Cooke respectfully urges to committee to defer HB2608.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.



**HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
9:00 AM**

February 5, 2026

Subject: HB 2608 - RELATING TO WATER HEATING SYSTEMS

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee:

My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii offers the following testimony in opposition to HB 2608, Relating to Water Heating Systems. This bill would remove gas water heaters as an eligible option under the solar water heater variance.

While we strongly support renewable energy goals and the continued expansion of solar technologies in Hawai'i, this measure removes a critical and practical consumer option at a time when housing affordability and construction feasibility are already under significant pressure.

Rather than eliminating gas water heaters from the variance entirely, the Legislature should instead consider maintaining multiple compliance pathways that still prioritize renewable energy, and allow for case-by-case determinations where solar is not technically or economically feasible. This balanced approach would better align environmental goals with housing production, affordability, and practical construction.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter.

February 5, 2026

LATE

House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Representative Nicole E. Lowen, Chair
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair



Thursday, February 5, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room #325 and via video conference

RE: HB 2608 Relating to Water Heating Systems

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

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Nānakūli, Wai'anae and Mākaha. We work on behalf of our members and the broader business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and to help West O'ahu businesses thrive.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce submits this testimony in **opposition of HB 2608 as drafted, specifically regarding the removal of the existing variance that allows for gas water heaters.**

While we support the continued expansion of clean energy technologies, gas water heaters remain a necessary option for many Hawai'i homes and families because electric heat pump and solar water heating systems cannot meet all housing needs.

In West O'ahu, which is the fastest growing region in the State and home to significant residential development activity, policies that limit flexibility can unintentionally create permitting and construction challenges. For many properties, installation of solar water heaters or electric heat pump systems is impracticable due to poor or inconsistent solar resource, roof limitations, site conditions, or electrical capacity constraints. In other cases, installation is cost-prohibitive, particularly for older homes and housing developments requiring substantial upgrades.

Gas water heaters also provide reliable access to hot water during power outages. Unlike electric systems, gas water heaters can continue operating when electricity is unavailable, allowing households to maintain basic sanitation, cooking, and hygiene. This reliability is especially important for growing communities and higher-density housing areas where service disruptions can affect many residents at once.

Additionally, entire categories of housing rely on gas water heaters because no feasible alternative exists. Removing the variance effectively eliminates the only workable option for certain housing types, including older single-family homes and multi-family properties with shared infrastructure constraints. In a region experiencing rapid growth and ongoing development, this change would introduce new barriers to permitting, replacement, and maintenance, placing unnecessary burdens on homeowners, housing providers, and developers who are already navigating complex regulatory requirements.

Gas water heaters are not a preference for many residents; they are a necessity. **Removing the variance does not reflect real-world housing conditions or the practical needs of fast-growing communities. For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges the Committee to retain the variance for gas water heaters in HB 2608 and preserve flexibility where heat pump and solar systems are not feasible.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Best,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 5:08:18 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB2608 is a commonsense bill to keep up with current technology in home energy systems and should be passed without controversy.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:39:51 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jared Pasalo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jared Pasalo, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, HI, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Thanks,

Jared Pasalo

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:51:38 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:52:22 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lavaun Lei	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Lavaun Lei, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kapolei, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

As someone who rents and intends to build a new home for my family i see the true value of having gas as an option and would definetly install gas appliances in my new home.

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Lavaun Lei

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:03:56 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colin Chikamoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Colin Chikamoto, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Colin

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:13:21 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Hall	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is CHRIS, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Chris

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:20:14 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence ching	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Lawrence, and as a Hawai'i resident from (enter town where you live) , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Thank you,

Lawrence

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:34:46 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Huong Nguyen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Huong Nguyen and as a Hawai'i resident from Ewa Beach , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live in, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real world needs of Hawai'i families.

Huong Nguyen

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:52:17 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Steve Chang, as a resident for over 20 years in Hawaii, I strongly encourage the legislature to include gas water heating systems to receive a variance. Variance would apply when it is not financially practical due to factors such as shading and costs (operating, initial and maintenance). As an island community, it is important to have safe, affordable and reliable energy options.

Thank you for your consideration on this Bill.

Mahalos & Kina'ole -

SC

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:53:13 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pekelo Agader	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Pekelo, and as a Hawai'i resident from Wailuku, HI), I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties. Our Islands are full of rural areas
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Pekelo

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:54:27 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan-Denae Juncker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jordan, and I am a resident of ‘Ewa Beach on O‘ahu. I am writing in strong opposition to removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

Hawai‘i is already one of the most expensive places in the country to live. Many families are struggling just to afford housing, groceries, and utilities. Eliminating gas water heaters as an option would create additional financial burden for homeowners and renters who may not be able to afford the upfront costs of electric heat pumps or solar systems.

Not every home or building in Hawai‘i is suited for solar water heating or electric heat pump systems. Older buildings, apartments, and certain housing layouts simply do not have the space, electrical capacity, or structural setup required to make these systems feasible.

Gas water heaters also provide a reliable source of hot water during power outages, which is an important consideration in our island communities where outages still occur. Having multiple energy options helps ensure resilience and flexibility for residents.

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 so families can continue to choose what works best for their homes and budgets. Please consider the real-world impacts this decision will have on local residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jordan

‘Ewa Beach, Hawai‘i

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:27:28 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Felicida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

People should have a choice. Not sun means no hot water, or the use of electric. I believe the bigger issue is what will the disposal of PV panels and batteries look like in the future.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:30:43 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph E Bolton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Joseph Bolton, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Joseph Bolton

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:36:18 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anson Buchanan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. I live on Molokai and we have tons of residents that do not have access to electric and gas is the only option because we live in areas that electric poles can't reach. Also solar is too expensive and hard to get here on Molokai because of shipping.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:37:32 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Aki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

People needs options.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:57:27 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Lien-Fua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As recent as Lahaina wildfires and as historical as hurricanes Iwa and Iniki, the emergency responders, communities used PROPANE water heaters, stoves, generators while waiting for electricity to be restored. Kaanapali hotels that had propane water heaters & propane generators housed/fed/cared for the survivors fo the fires AND the emergency responders who helped during and after the wildfires. They used PROPANE boilers and PROPANE generators while they waited for electricity to be restored. The recovery tent cities were supplied by propane water heaters, generators etc. Hawaii needs energy redundancy, readiness, emergency preparedness and response - statewide. We cannot isolate our options by legislating out of existence proven resources for our communities and responders - especially at time of critical need and support. PLEASE do not restrict Hawaii residents' options and be shortsighted when it comes to proven safeguards for Hawaii. Please be mindful of our needs, our choices to be ready for any emergency. Please be mindful of ideas from "malihini" folks with little to no understanding of Hawaii and our communities have gone through. Please vote NO for our protection. Thank you very much.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:59:32 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dustin Kauhane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi,

My name is Dustin Kauhane and as a Hawai resident from Kapolei, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from variance in HB 2608 because Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages. I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Thanks,Dustin

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:06:10 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaira Wakamatsu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kaira Wakamatsu, and as a Hawai'i resident from Wailuku, Maui , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties especially the ones in Rainy overcast area like Haiku, Kailua, Hana
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Kaira Wakamatsu

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:06:39 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Yoshimura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please let us have emergency preparedness dont take it away

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:21:49 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Winkelman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Russell Winkelman, and as a Hawai'i resident from Lihue, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Russell Winkelman

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:26:58 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Remigio Dela Cruz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Remigio Dela Cruz, and as a Hawai'i resident from Hanapepe, Kauai, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Remigio Dela Cruz

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:44:55 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaelynn Caminos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jaelynn Caminos, and as a Hawai'i resident from (enter town where you live) , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Mahalo,

Jaelynn Caminos

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:47:53 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Darran, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kauai , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608.

Darran

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:59:37 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Matsunaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Glenn Matsunaga from Koloa, Kauai.

I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages

Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Glenn Matsunaga

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:00:01 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
starlene kelekoma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Starlene Kelekoma, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kalaheo, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Starlene Kelekoma

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:02:37 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Tsutsumi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony.

I am a gas water heater user for over thirty-five years and I oppose eliminating gas water heaters from the variance in House Bill 2608.

During the few periods of time when I rented temporarily, due to my house renovations, etc., I stayed in places where there were solar water heaters and found there many days without heated water.

Gas Water Heaters are dependable, consistent, lower in cost and safe.

Many of us do not have the financial resources to install Electric Heat Pumps even with the proposed income tax credits.

Mahalo for your time and I respectfully urge the committee to retain the variance for gas water heaters.

Michael Tsutsumi

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:12:25 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dean Russell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Dean Russell and as a Hawai'i resident from Lihue, Kauai , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608. The variance was established to give Hawaii residents options if they live in an area where solar is not a viable option or where it is not economically feasible. Also, gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages.

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Dean Russell

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:23:05 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Machaela Fernandez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Machaela Fernandez, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kekaha, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Machaela Fernandez

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:11:34 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Wong-Monette	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Taylor, and as a Hawai'i resident from Maui , I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608. Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages. Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options. Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties. I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

-Taylor Wong-Monette

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:14:11 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dianne Tabura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Dianne Tabura, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kapa'a, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar Water Heaters and Electric Heat Pumps Are Not Feasible for Many Properties
- Gas Water Heaters Provide Reliable Hot Water During Power Outages
- Gas Water Heaters Support Housing Types That Have No Other Option

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to protect the real-world needs of all Hawai'i families.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Dianne Tabure

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:34:14 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai‘i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai‘i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:36:11 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoë Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai‘i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai‘i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:45:48 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christa Jacinto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Christa Jacinto, and as a Hawai'i resident from Aiea, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:47:59 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Shinagawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii cannot afford to eliminate energy options. Hawaii is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed. Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties. Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages and gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:56:05 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Yamada	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is [Glenn Yamada, and as a Hawai'i resident from [enter town where you live], I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option
- Cost to repair house to acomodate solar in unaffordable

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 5:58:44 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
AUDREY OKANEKU	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Audrey Okaneku, and I am a Hawai'i resident from Nuuanu. I respectfully oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

Hawai'i already has a very high cost of living, and residents need to maintain practical and affordable energy options. For many properties, solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible due to space, structural limitations, or installation costs. Gas water heaters also provide reliable hot water during power outages and serve housing types that may not have viable alternatives.

I respectfully urge you to keep gas water heaters within the variance in HB 2608 to support the real-world needs of Hawai'i families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Audrey Okaneku

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:01:20 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julian Barradas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

My name is Julian Barradas, and as a Hawai'i resident from Punaluu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

VICTOR & ANITA LIM
1751 Laukahi St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

February 3, 2026

To: Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair
Rep. Amy A Perruso, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection.

Re: HB 2608 Relating to Water Heating Systems

We stand in opposition to HB 2608, which provides energy credits for all high-efficiency electric water-heating systems, solar energy systems, but not for gas-powered tankless instantaneous water heaters that provide hot water only as is needed.

At many of our business locations, we have utilized tankless gas-powered water heaters with tremendous success at a very affordable energy cost. It is my understanding that our Federal directive is that all energy is good and use what is available and most efficient and cost less to operate. The government should encourage choices and not pick winners and losers.

I believe that the government should assist and provide credit for all the different systems, and not just one or two.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share our view.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:39:20 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Yoshida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of Waipio Gentry, and mother and father live in Honolulu and Kaneohe respectively. I'm against eliminating gas water heating as an option for permitted construction. My family and I have noticed that power outages seem to be more frequent and their duration getting longer on average. While hot water isn't a necessity for my family now, when our children were younger, and we had elderly people to care for, we relied on hot water (or being able to heat water) for keeping laundry and other things clean and sanitary; thankfully, we had a gas water heater and stove. Now that my kids have grown, having an energy source I can rely on is still beneficial for staying on schedule and fulfilling my daily responsibilities - it's one less thing I need to worry about in a power outage, and I believe Hawaii residents have enough to stress about as is. I also think that eliminating options from water heating appliances for permitted installations reduces residents' freedom to choose the appliance that best fits their specific situation and needs. To restrict choices (generally) to solar water heater or heat pump seems to me to be unnecessary and short-sighted when there are efficient and affordable alternatives. In summary, when considering all the benefits of gas water heating for the overall well being of Hawaii residents, I'm in favor of keeping it a choice and against eliminating it as an option for Hawaii homes. Thank you for your consideration, sincerely, Ryan Yoshida

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 7:32:00 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jocelyn Demirbag	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jocelyn Demirbag, and as a Hawai'i resident from Pukalani, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

Water options are frequently the best option for many areas within Hawai'i, and especially within rural areas. It is also more affordable than other options. Gas water heaters do not use oil; they use propane--an energy form rated by the EPA as 99% clean energy. Hawai'i homes and properties are all different and sometimes gas water heaters may be the best option. Please do not take away options from Hawai'i residents; we are all working hard enough as it is to make it here.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn R. Demirbag

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 7:36:39 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mustafa Demirbag	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Mustafa Demirbag and as a Hawaii resident from Pukalani, Maui, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608. It is very expensive to live in Hawaii and the residents need more energy options. Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages. Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:00:39 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Kobayashi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Brent Kobayashi, and as a Hawai'i resident from [enter town where you live], I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:48:00 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Ng	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Brian Ng, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:40:40 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryland Kam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Section 2: Number (4) - strikethrough/eliminated from the current Bill – providing homeowners an option for their water heating system. The current Bill was tough enough, obtaining a variance to use on-demand gas water heater(s) in conjunction with a second gas appliance. e.g range, dryer, etc.

The proposed Number (4) does not provide an option for homeowners to choose their method of water heating. However, this proposal does now allow for electric water heating utilizing primary power – a derivative of oil to, produce hot water.

What happened with the principle of the homeowners’ right to choose how to live. To be able to make simple decisions, e.g. water heating, without government interference or mandates.

~~[(4) A demand water heater device approved by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., is installed; provided that at least one other gas appliance is installed in the dwelling. For the purposes of this paragraph, "demand water heater" means a gas tankless instantaneous water heater that provides hot water only as it is needed.]~~

(4) A high-efficiency electric water heating system utilizing heat pump technology, as defined in section 235-12.5, when installed in conjunction with a photovoltaic system, is substituted as the primary energy source for heating water."

Thank you, Ryland

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 5:23:31 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT FOR HB2608 (RELATING TO WATER HEATING SYSTEMS)

Dear Chair Lowen, Vice-Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee,

I support HB2608, which authorizes building permit variances for certain high-efficiency electric water heating systems using heat pump technology, rather than solar water heater systems. Expands the renewable energy technologies income tax credit to include high-efficiency electric water heating systems.

Solar hot water heaters work well in single-family homes with good roof access and solar exposure. Once installed, they offer low operating costs for up to two decades. However, they are not feasible for all situations.

New energy-efficient heat pump water heaters offer an option for families and property owners who cannot afford or benefit from solar hot water systems. Heat pump water heaters are lower-cost and deliver up to 70% energy savings compared to conventional electric water heaters. They allow for a more equitable adoption of clean, affordable water heating.

Please support this HB2608.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[Noel Morin](#)

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate

Hilo, Hawaii

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 6:43:02 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Russell Miller, and I am a resident of Waikiki. I don't think this is the right time to remove energy options such as gas water heaters as I believe this will negatively impact statewide affordability of energy.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 7:39:32 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brad Saito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm not confident that this bill is looking at the best interest for the people living in Hawaii. I feel the legislature should promote PV system installations in Hawaii and let the tax payer make their own decision on how they want to live and budget their money.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 7:47:50 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Okouchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Susan Okouchi and as a Hawaii resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB2608.

- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 7:52:18 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashlee Nakoa-Fraticelli	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ashlee Nakoa-Fraticelli, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kaneohe, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

In Kaneohe there are a lot of low-income housing that use gas water heaters because there are no other options for them. It's cheaper for the State of Hawai'i to provide and support these low-income housings with gas heaters instead of electric heat pumps. Hawai'i is already expensive to live and with taking gas heaters away the cost of living will go up to just to sustain the expense of these low-income housing.

When there is a power outage, the customers will still have hot water with having gas unlike electric customers. Especially with families who have multiple children and sometimes only one parent in the household. Please take this into consideration and thank you for your time.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:03:39 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mari Sekiya	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Mari Sekiya, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

My name is Lindsay and as a Hawai'i resident from Waipio, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

The use of heat pumps causes a reliance on the power grid. Gas water heaters serve as a reliable source of hot water during outages, which is essential especially during the current rainy season. The state cannot afford to eliminate energy options when the power grid is unpredictable, and weather conditions are ever-changing.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:09:55 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zachary Tokushima	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Zachary Tokushima, and as a Hawai'i resident from Pukalani, Maui, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:17:17 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Ota	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Debra Ota and I'm a Hawai'i resident from Hilo, Hawai'i. I was born and raised here, raised our family here, and continue to work and contribute to our Hawai'i community. I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance options in HB 2608. I oppose deleting subsection (a)(4) of HRS Section 196-6.5 regarding the availability of gas tankless instantaneous water heaters for the following reasons:

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options. We should be evaluating energy options for multiple criteria, not just based on renewables.
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed. We want to make Hawai'i affordable for our children and future generations.
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties. They may not be technically or geographically feasible.
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages. Gas provides a more resilient option for emergency incidents.
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:27:17 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandi Yamashita	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Brandi Yamashita, and as a Hawai'i resident from Mililani, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option
- Solar Water heaters are not reliable in areas such as Kaneohe where it rains frequently

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:33:17 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:47:09 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Chun	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Residents should have ALL energy options available to us. Energy Diversity is the key. One or Two options is not enough. If Heco has a power outage, shuts down to PSPS, performs rolling blackouts (planned or unplanned), high winds topples electric lines, storm damage, fires, the list goes on & on. Solar only works effectively in sunny communities, and best during the summer & only when there is sunny weather the rest of the year. We need more energy choices not less. We need the power to stay on so we can live comfortably and care for our families. Dont take away our choices.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:48:19 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ryan grau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ryan, and as a Hawai'i resident from Kihei, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:53:29 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maggie Anne Engebretson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Maggie Engebretson, and as a Hawai'i resident from Honolulu who cares deeply about affordability, I strongly oppose removing gas water heaters from the variance in HB 2608.

Reasons:

- Hawai'i cannot afford to eliminate energy options
- Hawai'i is already too expensive to live, do not take away gas water heaters as an option if needed
- Solar water heaters and electric heat pumps are not feasible for many type of properties
- Gas water heaters provide reliable hot water during power outages
- Gas water heaters support housing types that have no other option

Mahalo,

Maggie Engebretson

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:40:33 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel C. Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a homeowner with PV solar, I support HB2608. With excess PV production in the daytime, use to power heat pumps for water heating makes sense. It is an alternative to circulating water thru a thermal collector panel.

Daniel C. Smith

Pearl City

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:02:35 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alis Rasmussen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii is particularly well suited to clean energy technologies like solar power and, in the case of this bill, heat pump water heaters. It is both possible and vital to push Hawaii toward energy independence with the use of clean energy, and this bill would help that expand that.

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:54:07 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia Tincher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen and members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection:

Strong support for HB2608

HB2608 bill gives Hawai'i residents another path to clean water heating by adding high-efficiency heat pump water heaters as an approved, affordable option alongside solar. It creates a state tax credit to help families cover costs and eliminates the gas water heater variance that has undermined our clean energy goals.

I support the goals of the bill. Heat pump water heaters are efficient and help Hawaii residents get off of polluting and dangerous gas.

Mahalo,

Virginia Tincher

Honolulu

HB-2608

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:13:18 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/5/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Himeda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Eliminating alternative energy options such as natural gas for water heaters would not help us to bridge the gap to zero carbon. Natural gas is a much cleaner fuel than most people think simply because it has the term "gas" in it. We're in a difficult situation with an island economy and solar may not always be the right solution given all surrounding circumstances.