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Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
Senate Committee on
Commerce and Consumer Protection

February 25, 2026
9:45 a.m.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Members of the Committee:

Measure: S.B. No. 2400
Title: RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

Position:

The Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) offers the following comments for consideration.

Comments:

The Commission supports the intent of this measure to exempt wing-in-ground craft from the Commission’s jurisdiction.

The Commission notes that wing-in-ground craft will likely be regulated by the U.S. Coast Guard for the purpose of safety. Additionally, the Commission believes that the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) may have regulatory authority over certain wing-in-ground operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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STERLING HIGA
CHAIRPERSON

CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Statement of
CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO
Executive Director
Hawai'i Community Development Authority
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
9:45 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SB 2400
RELATING TO COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION.

Chairperson Keohokalole, Vice Chairperson Fukunaga and members of the Committee.

The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) supports SB 2400, which exempts wing-in-ground craft from public utilities commission jurisdiction.

The HCDA supports such technology for resiliency, and alternative transportation, possibilities for the state, especially if a terminal and port is located at Kewalo Basin Harbor.

We are a member of the Hawaii Seaglider Initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.



Written Statement of
Trung Lam, Executive Director
before the
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Wednesday February 25, 9:45 AM

In consideration of

SB2400

Chair Keohokaole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Members of the Committees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of **SB2400**, which would exempt wing-in-ground (WIG) craft—commonly known as *Seaglid*ers—from regulation under the Hawai'i Water Carriers Act (HRS 271G). This legislation is timely, necessary, and aligned with Hawai'i's climate, transportation, economic development, and resilience priorities.

This bill correctly highlights several statewide benefits of Seaglid

ers which include zero operational emissions, additional rapid interisland travel opportunities for healthcare, essential services, and employment. This is especially critical for neighbor island residents who rely on Oahu's medical facilities. Seagliders also enhance resilience and emergency response operations by reaching communities isolated by disasters, support humanitarian missions, and strengthen food and medical supply continuity.

Workforce & Economic Development

The growth of a Seaglid

er industry in Hawai'i aligns with Hawai'i's and HTDC broader economic diversification goals of strengthening Hawai'i's innovation economy, creating high-skilled jobs, attracting sustainable infrastructure investment, and positioning the state as a global leader in clean maritime-aviation technologies

PUC Regulation Is Not Necessary and Would Slow Deployment

HRS 271G was devised to regulate traditional maritime shipping, ensuring continuity of service, preventing monopolistic practices, and overseeing tariffs and rates. It is not designed or intended for federally regulated craft like Seaglid

ers. Further no other state imposes PUC type regulations for water transportation this way. They rely upon:

- U.S. Coast Guard to provide consumer protection oversight for WIG craft.
- Federal maritime laws for vessel classification
- State boating laws for basic operational rules (navigation, speed limits, environmental rules)
- Seagliders are intended to complement air travel, not compete as water carriers as was the purpose of HRS 271G.



Applying HRS 271G would impose duplicative and costly regulation without improving safety, environmental, or consumer protection. Exempting WIG craft aligns Hawai'i's regulatory framework with federal jurisdiction and with how WIG and other aviation-adjacent technologies are treated nationwide. This legislation is not about favoring one company or technology—it is about removing structural barriers which prevent Hawai'i from adopting zero-emission transportation solutions.

SB2400 is a forward-looking, climate-aligned, and economically beneficial measure that modernizes Hawai'i's regulatory landscape to support clean, efficient, and resilient interisland transportation. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass this legislation.

Mahalo for your leadership and for the opportunity to provide testimony.



SB-2400

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 8:40:06 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/25/2026 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Ishikawa	Testifying for Aero X Ventures	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Aero X Ventures
In Support of SB2400
Relating to Transportation

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection,

Aero X Ventures submits testimony in support of SB2400.

Aero X Ventures is a venture capital firm focused on emerging aerospace and advanced transportation technologies. From this perspective, we view wing-in-ground craft, commonly referred to as seaglidors, as a promising innovation with the potential to enhance interisland mobility while supporting Hawai‘i’s long-term decarbonization and economic diversification goals.

SB2400 appropriately recognizes that existing water carrier regulations were developed for traditional maritime operations and were not designed for this new category of technology. As described in the measure, wing-in-ground craft operate using ground-effect technology and are subject to existing federal safety oversight. Exempting these operators from regulation under the Hawai‘i Water Carriers Act helps avoid duplicative regulatory treatment that could slow responsible innovation without improving public safety or consumer protection.

Clear and modern regulatory frameworks play an important role in determining where emerging transportation technologies are deployed and where private investment follows. Passage of SB2400 would support Hawai‘i’s efforts to position itself as an early leader in advanced, low-emission interisland transportation while supporting workforce development, economic activity, and improved connectivity across the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB2400.

Sincerely,
Aero X Ventures



February 25, 2026

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair; Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair; and Committee Members
Public Hearing, February 25, 2026, 9:45 a.m. – Conference Room 229, State Capitol

Testimony of William F. Anonsen, Managing Partner/Principal of The Maritime Group
In Support of S.B. 2400, Relating to Wing-In-Ground Craft

My name is William F. Anonsen, Managing Partner and Principal of The Maritime Group. We respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of S.B. 2400, which enables the introduction of wing-in-ground craft, or seaglidors, as a sustainable and environmentally responsible supplement to Hawai'i's interisland transportation network.

As an island state, Hawai'i depends on reliable and efficient transportation to support its economy, public safety, and community well-being. This measure represents an important step toward diversifying and strengthening our transportation system by enabling the deployment of zero-emission, energy-efficient technology that complements existing air and maritime services. Wing-in-ground craft operate efficiently above the water's surface and support Hawai'i's statutory decarbonization goals and transition toward clean transportation solutions.

In addition to environmental benefits, this technology offers meaningful transportation and resiliency advantages. Seaglidors have the potential to improve access to healthcare and essential services for neighbor island residents, enhance emergency response capabilities, and expand affordable interisland mobility. They also support economic diversification by attracting sustainable infrastructure investment, fostering innovation, and creating new workforce opportunities in Hawai'i's emerging green economy.

S.B. 2400 appropriately provides regulatory clarity while maintaining public safety oversight through existing federal authorities, including the United States Coast Guard, and avoiding unnecessary regulatory barriers that could delay deployment of this beneficial transportation option. Hawai'i has an opportunity to lead in adopting sustainable transportation technologies that improve connectivity, strengthen resiliency, and reduce environmental impacts. This measure represents a thoughtful and forward-looking step in advancing a more sustainable and resilient interisland transportation system.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support for S.B. 2400. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

William F. Anonsen

William F. Anonsen
Managing Partner/Principal
THE MARITIME GROUP

1000 Auahi Street, Suite 1509 Honolulu, Hawai'i, 96814
Tel: (808) 232-1831 www.The-Maritime-Group.com



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Time: 9:45 a.m.

Date: February 25, 2026

Where: Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY

Kā'eo Duarte

Vice President, 'Āina Pauahi

RE: SB2400, Relating to Transportation

Aloha e ka Luna Ho'omalu Keohokalole, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalu Fukunaga a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike.

Kamehameha Schools appreciates this opportunity to **support SB2400**.

Kamehameha Schools appreciates innovative technologies that mālama our keiki, kūpuna, and lāhui. Seaglidors can provide an affordable interisland transportation option that strengthens connectivity across the pae 'āina. This innovation can help address transportation barriers that affect our island communities by improving access to healthcare, other essential services, 'ohana, and employment opportunities.

Founded in 1887 through the Will of Ke Ali'i Bernice Pauahi Pākī Bishop, Ke Kula 'o Kamehameha is a private, educational, charitable trust committed to empowering Native Hawaiians in perpetuity by improving the well-being of our people through education. We envision our haumāna, strong in E Ola!, grounded in Hawaiian and Christian values, succeeding in post-secondary education and contributing through 'ōiwi leadership to a thriving and self-determined lāhui.



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL UNION NO. 1186 • Affiliated with AFL-CIO

1935 HAU STREET, 5th Floor • HONOLULU, HI 96819-5003
TELEPHONE (808) 847-5341 • FAX (808) 847-2224

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
Hearing on Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 9:45 a.m., Conference Room 229

RE: TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF SB 2400

Honorable Chair Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair Carol Fukunaga, and Members of the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186 (IBEW 1186), is comprised of over 2,700 men and women working in electrical construction, telecommunications, civil service employees, and educator and faculty associations.

As a union dedicated to the advancement of Hawaii's workforce and the pursuit of the State's 100% renewable energy goals, we recognize that Seaglidors represent the future in clean, zero-emission interisland transportation. We **support SB 2400** as it provides the necessary regulatory clarity to allow this innovative industry to take flight without the redundant oversight of the Public Utilities Commission, which is better suited for traditional water carriers.

The deployment of Seaglidors will create high-quality, high-paying jobs for technicians, electricians, and systems specialists. Our members are ready to provide the skilled labor needed to build and maintain the electrical infrastructure and charging systems required for these vessels.

With public safety already overseen at the federal level, exempting these crafts from the Hawaii Water Carriers Act prevents unnecessary costs that would otherwise discourage investment in our State, and slow potential job creation. We believe that by passing SB 2400, the Legislature will stimulate investment in our green economy and ensure our workforce is prepared for the next generation of transportation.

We respectfully urge your committee to pass SB 2400. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



February 25, 2026

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
The Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Re: SB 2400 – RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to support SB 2400, which exempts persons operating wing-in-ground craft from the application of the Hawai'i Water Carriers Act. Defines "wing-in-ground craft."

HMSA appreciates the legislature exploring new means and technologies, to increase access for our residents. Hawaii's unique geographic nature can exacerbate challenges in cost and timeliness for especially our neighbor island residents who require care on Oahu. We hope that sea gliders can be one of many solutions to address this need in our State.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this measure.

Sincerely,

Walden Au
Director of Government Relations

Feb. 25, 2026, 9:45 a.m.

Hawaii State Capitol

Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2400 — RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

Aloha chair, vice chair and other committee members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [SB2400](#), which would exempt operators of wing-in-ground craft, or “seaglidors,” from the state Public Utility Commission’s water carrier regulations.

Seaglidors have the potential to revolutionize transportation in Hawaii by providing a low-cost, low-carbon and high-speed way to get between islands. They could fill an important niche in Hawaii’s transportation network and make it easier for residents to access healthcare, education and economic opportunities.

Seaglidors are vessels that can operate on water while in harbors and fly above the water while in transit. They glide at extremely low altitudes over the water to take advantage of the ground effect.

The ground effect is a phenomenon in which an aircraft’s wings generate less drag when the aircraft is close to a surface, such as water. This makes seaglidors more efficient than conventional planes.

Unfortunately, current law makes it unnecessarily difficult to operate seaglidors in Hawaii. Because seaglidors can operate on water while in harbors, they are regulated as water carriers, even though they operate more like aircraft.

Under the state’s water carrier law, most seaglider operators would have to receive a certificate of public convenience and necessity from the state Public Utilities Commission before operating in Hawaii. Receiving a

certificate from the commission is a long and difficult process that would act as a significant barrier to entry for seaglider operators.¹

Additionally, seaglider operators would have to receive the commission's approval before modifying their routes or changing the rates that they charge customers. This would make it difficult for seaglider operators to keep up with the rapid pace of change in an emerging market.

Furthermore, this measure would not cause safety risks for Hawaii residents who might use seagliders in the future. As the bill notes, the U.S. Coast Guard already has regulations in place to ensure the safe operation of seagliders, making further regulation by the state Public Utilities Commission unnecessary.

Seagliders could elevate the quality of life in Hawaii, but if we want them to take off, we need to give them enough room to extend their wings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ ["PUC Case 2004-0180,"](#) Hawaii Public Utilities Commission, accessed February 10, 2026.



Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee.

My name is Michael Proulx, and I am here today to testify in **strong support of SB2400**. I am the Regional Director for North America at REGENT Craft. REGENT is the developer and manufacturer of all-electric Wing-in-Ground craft, known as Seagliders, which are a new mode of transportation that combines sea and air travel to create a high-speed, efficient, accessible transportation solution to move passengers and cargo between coastal communities.

In my role at REGENT, I've had the unique opportunity to join a collection of local community stakeholders right here in Hawai'i to form an organization called The Hawai'i Seaglider Initiative, or HSI. HSI membership spans across multiple sectors, from large transportation giants like Hawaiian and Southwest Airlines, to prominent community leaders like Kamehameha Schools and the Hawaiian Council, to agriculture and energy, and hospitality and healthcare. Over the past two years, this coalition has met regularly to discuss the fundamental transportation and logistics challenges facing the islands. It's clear that Hawai'i's reliance on limited, inefficient, carbon-intensive inter-island transportation networks hampers equitable economic growth in all communities.

HSI has identified three main pillars, or benefits, that Seagliders bring to the state:

1. **The first is Decarbonization:** Seagliders directly support the state goal of 100% clean energy by 2045 by fostering a zero-emission alternative to fossil-fuel-burning flights.
2. **The second is Access & Equity:** Seagliders provide a new, high-speed lifeline for underserved communities, improving access to critical healthcare on O'ahu and lowering the cost of travel for local families.
3. **The third is Resiliency:** In times of emergency, Seagliders can provide rapid response to areas that are currently difficult to reach.

SB2400 represents an important step in achieving these milestones identified by the Hawai'i community. The bill recognizes that Seagliders are not massive cargo ships, or slow-moving ferries, but their own class of innovative vessels. Subjecting them to the same Public Utilities Commission regulations as heavy water carriers would create unnecessary red tape, stifle innovation, drive-up costs for a service meant to be affordable for all residents, and subject the PUC to divert attention and resources away from their current mandate of responsibilities, which is to set just and reasonable rates so a monopoly doesn't over charge. Considering



Seagliders' unique modes of travel, the vessels will function within a market ripe with competition in the transportation space where price competition is essential to success.

Hawai'i has a unique opportunity to lead the world in sustainable maritime technology while making life easier for local communities. I urge this committee to pass SB2400. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

February 21, 2026

Senator Jarrett Keohokalelo
Chair, Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
State Capitol, Room 205
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha e Chair Keohokalelo, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Our islands must continue to seek innovative and sustainable alternatives for inter-island transportation, which is why I am in strong support of SB2400.

Regent Craft's seaglider technology directly addresses critical environmental concerns. It is fully electric, capable of utilizing renewable energy sources, and is projected to operate at approximately one-third the cost of conventional aviation and marine transportation options. This represents a significant opportunity to reduce emissions while improving affordability and efficiency.

Seagliders will also allow us to better serve underserved communities by expanding access through our harbor system, helping to alleviate congestion at our airports and providing more centralized points of access on each island. This flexibility enables the development of route structures that more effectively connect our islands to essential services such as healthcare, as well as supporting food sustainability and the delivery of fresher local products.

Allowing seagliders to operate exempt from Public Utilities Commission jurisdiction will foster a more competitive inter-island transportation environment—one that ultimately benefits the people of Hawai'i through increased options, improved access, and lower costs.

For these reasons, I strongly support SB2400 and respectfully ask for your leadership in advancing this measure so that our communities may benefit from this innovative alternative form of inter island transportation.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Uchiyama
Former President & CEO
Island Air



Hawai'i State Senate
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
SB2400 – Relating to Transportation

RE: Support of SB2400

February 25, 2026

Hawaiian Council writes in **support of SB2400**, which expands sustainable transportation options that will better connect our pae 'āina and support Hawai'i's long-term community needs.

For many residents across Hawai'i, interisland transportation can be daunting and often acts as a barrier between our communities. Factors such as cost and travel time can limit access to essential resources and reduce overall efficiency. Seaglidors present a potential solution by introducing an all-electric, ocean-based transportation option that bridges the gap between traditional air and marine travel and offers a faster, more cost-effective, and economically accessible approach to interisland mobility.

This proposal also carries meaningful benefits for Hawai'i's workforce and essential services. Faster movement of people and supplies during natural disasters could strengthen emergency response efforts and improve the ability to address urgent needs across islands. In addition, new opportunities for education, workforce development, and higher-paying technical careers may emerge through the operation and maintenance of these services. Equally important, this initiative emphasizes a community-informed process that allows Hawai'i to signal innovation investment while ensuring that local communities have a voice in how these initiatives move forward.

As we prioritize the well-being of our people, we must also prioritize the well-being of our 'āina. Transportation remains one of Hawai'i's most challenging sectors to decarbonize, and electrified interisland mobility offers a promising tool to help reduce emissions while diversifying how residents travel. If even a portion of short-haul flights or cargo trips can shift to cleaner alternatives, Hawai'i can move closer to achieving its broader climate and sustainability goals.

For these reasons, Hawaiian Council respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS SB2400**. Mahalo for your commitment to responsible, innovative solutions that benefit both our people and our land.

Mālama pono,

Madelyn McKeague

Director of Advocacy

Hawaiian Council

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