

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the House Committee on
HEALTH**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 3254, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

Senate Bill 3254, Senate Draft 2 proposes to appropriate funds to be expended by the Department of Health as a grant for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association to support solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation at community health centers in medically underserved communities and to provide programmatic services, project management, contract management, reporting and fiscal stewardship responsibilities, and develop future scalable plans for the development and deployment of solar-plus-storage microgrids at nonprofit community health centers. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) Supports this measure.**

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

The 2025 Hawai'i Climate Action Pathways (CAP) recommended establishing a resilience grant program to support programs that build community resilience to climate hazards, threats, risks and impacts including microgrids. The CAP also states, "Energy infrastructure mitigation measures such as vegetation management, pole hardening, undergrounding, and microgrids that benefit disadvantaged communities, and protect community lifelines, and have a high likelihood of implementation are increasingly needed as wildfire risk increases." The actions proposed in this bill support resilient community health centers. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Council Chair
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Vice-Chair
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Councilmembers
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Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
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Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
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March 16, 2026

TO: The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
House Committee on Health

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 18, 2026; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3254, SD2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

I **support** this measure to appropriate funds to be expended by the Department of Health as a grant for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association to support solar-energy infrastructure at community health centers in medically underserved communities.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This measure would benefit Maui County communities, as Hāna Health and Molokai Community Health Center are among the nonprofit community health centers identified for solar-plus-storage microgrid projects under the grant program.
2. Residents in geographically isolated areas of Maui County depend heavily on these community health centers for primary medical, dental, and behavioral health services, making it especially important that these facilities remain operational during power outages or emergencies.
3. Solar-plus-storage microgrids could reduce electricity costs for participating health centers by an estimated \$30,000 to \$100,000 annually, allowing facilities such as those serving Hāna and Molokai to stretch limited resources and reinvest savings into patient care and essential services.

Thank you for your consideration.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health
Wednesday, March 18, 2026; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 3254, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 3254, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate:

- (1) An unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2026-2027, to be expended by the Department of Health (DOH) as a grant-in-aid (GIA) pursuant to Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to support the development and deployment of solar-plus-storage microgrids at nonprofit community health centers located in medically underserved communities across the State; and
- (2) An unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2026-2027, to be expended by DOH as a GIA to provide programmatic, project management, contract management, reporting and fiscal stewardship responsibilities, and developing future scalable plans for the project.

The bill would take effect on January 30, 2050.

I. The Project

The HPCA, in partnership with Collective Energy, a mission-driven social benefit company specializing in clean energy and resilience solutions for community health centers, seeks to establish and deploy solar and storage microgrids at nonprofit community health centers across the State. These systems will strengthen energy reliance, reduce operational disruptions, and ensure that essential health services remain available to the public during grid failures.

FQHCs serve as frontline hubs for health, safety, and recovery during emergencies. We are trusted, community-based sites that provide services, dispense medications, offer safe gathering points, and protect vulnerable populations when other infrastructure is compromised.

Hawaii's geographic isolation, heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels, and exposure to hurricanes, wildfires, tsunamis, and extreme weather events significantly heighten the risks of prolonged power disruptions. The implementation of public safety power shutoffs by Hawaiian Electric in July 2024 further underscores the urgent need for reliable, decentralized, and clean energy sources for public-serving facilities.

Traditional diesel generators -- used by many FQHCs today -- are expensive to operate, require frequent maintenance, rely on fragile fuel supply chains, and contribute to harmful emissions. The proposed project directly addresses these challenges by enabling resilient, sustainable, and cost-effective energy infrastructure that ensures that FQHCs can continue providing essential public services before, during, and after emergencies.

The project seeks a total of \$2.5 million in Capital Improvement Project (CIP) GIA, and \$196,000 in a separate Operational GIA. The CIP GIA funding, leveraged with federal and State solar and energy storage incentives, will enable the development of up to nine solar plus storage microgrid systems, totaling approximately \$6.2 million in capital improvement. The Operational GIA funding represents programmatic, project management, contract management, reporting and fiscal stewardship responsibilities, as well as developing future scalability plans.

If approved, this project will:

- Save participating FQHCs an estimated \$16 million in electricity costs over twenty-five years, allowing them to repurpose scarce funds into patient care, delivery, staffing, and essential community health services;

- Add battery energy storage to increase resiliency during outages and reduce service disruptions, materially improving project return on investment by avoiding an estimated \$11.9 million in power-outage losses across all sites over the system life;
- Ensure continuity of critical health center services during disasters and grid outages;
- Advance energy equity for medically underserved, low-income, and rural communities;
- Enable FQHCs to function as community resilience hubs;
- Support local workforce development and clean energy development by collaborating with Hawaii-based partners; and
- Establish a replicable and scalable model for future cohorts.

II. The Need

This project is vital for the financial stability of participating FQHCs. The enactment of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act has fundamentally changed our Medicaid system. We anticipate that in the worst-case scenario, Hawaii's uninsured population will at least double within the next three years. Most of the new uninsured will be former Medicaid enrollees who will lose their coverage.

FQHCs are required by law to provide services to all patients regardless of their ability to pay. For the uninsured, federal law prescribes a sliding fee schedule we can charge based on patient income. Most of the time, the amount received does not cover the cost of the services provided.

When there is no insurance reimbursement, the FQHC must rely on their operational funds to offset the losses. Under the worst-case scenario, if availability and level of services are kept at what we provide today, FQHCs will have less than three months of resources before we'd have to shut down.

This project will allow funds that would pay for electricity to go to patient services. This will provide the participating FQHCs with greater flexibility to meet the demands of their patients. Since most of these patients are Medicaid enrollees situated in the most geographically isolated communities throughout the State, support for this bill directly boosts our social safety net.

For these reasons, we urge your favorable consideration of this measure.

For your information and files, attached please find the transmittal receipt confirming submission of HPCA's CIP and Operational GIA applications to the Legislature on January 23, 2026, in accordance with Chapter 42F, HRS,

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 3254, Senate Draft 2
Wednesday, March 18, 2026; 9:00 a.m.
Page 4

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.

attachment



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health
Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Via Videoconference**

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu Lee-Loy and Members of the Committee:

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB 3254 SD2**, Relating to the State Budget, which would appropriate funds to be expended by the Department of Health as a grant for the Hawaii Primary Care Association to support solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation at community health centers in medically underserved communities, and provide programmatic, project management, contract management, reporting and fiscal stewardship responsibilities, and developing future scalable plans for the project specified in this Act.

Waimānalo Health Center (WHC) is one of those health centers that would tremendously benefit from these resources. WHC is a federally qualified health center, serving the Koʻolaupoko community since 1992, with comprehensive health services. Serving 6,451 patients through 32,469 visits in 2025, WHC provided primary care, behavioral health, vision, dental, pharmacy, health promotion disease prevention, Native Hawaiian healing, transportation, care management, WIC, mobile medicine, school health, and youth mentoring services. WHC serves 53% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, 54% Medicaid, 8% uninsured, and 52% at 100% and below the Federal Poverty Level.

WHC has been working with Collective Energy to plan for the installation of solar panels at two sites in Waimānalo. Currently paying about \$15,000/month for electricity for both sites, this project will reduce our annual electricity costs by 28% at one site, and 45% at our second site, with a combined average annual energy savings of \$200,000. Thereby, reducing operating costs and directing more dollars back to core health services. Currently relying on diesel generators during power outages, the solar installation will strengthen energy reliance, reduce operational disruptions, and above all, help us to remain available/open to the public during grid failures to ensure continuity of care for patients.

With support through the Federal Rebates, Hawaii State Incentive, and funding received from Direct Relief, Collective Energy has calculated WHC's request from State GIA to be a total of \$463,754 (for both sites). We respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 3254 SD 2 to support solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation.

Thank you for your support, consideration and the opportunity to offer testimony. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary Frances Oneha, APRN, PhD, FAAN
Chief Executive Officer
(808)954-7107

moneha@waimanalohealth.org

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 9:31:45 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohakapu-Lee Loy, and Honorable members of committee.

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, and on behalf of our members, we are in Very Strong Support of SB3254 SD2. **SB3254 SD2** appropriates funds to be expended by the Department of Health as a grant for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association to support solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation at community health centers in medically underserved communities.

This measure would allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical. By serving the underserved communities it will also SAVE LIVES. Let's do this, it is time of great loss and we really need a WIN in Hawai'i ! Green Party of Hawai'i, urges you to pass SB3254 SD2.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 12:00:00 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Kauai Climate Action Coalition, a group of more than 150 Kauai residents, supports SB3254 SD2. Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters.

This measure will also allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. KCAC urges you to pass SB3254 SD2.

Mahalo!

Helen Cox, Kalaheo

Chair, Kauai Climate Action Coalition



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health
Wednesday, March 18, 2026; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 3254, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bev Harbin, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Wahiawa Center for Community Health (WCHC), a look-alike federally qualified health center (FQHC) situated in Central Oahu. WCHC strongly **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 3254, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

This bill would appropriate funds to facilitate two (2) grant in aid applications -- one for capitol improvements, the other for operations -- in accordance with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the Hawaii Primary Care Association to support the development and deployment of solar-plus-storage microgrids at non-profit FQHCs located in medically underserved communities across the State.

This bill would take effect on January 30, 2050.

Wahiawa and Waialua was heavily impacted by the most recent Kona storm. For instance Foodland 2 blocks from our health center suffered 36 hours without electricity and had to destroy all their perishables. Wahiawa Health which is 2 blocks away did not lose power which was fortunate as we have thousands of dollars of vaccines and other perishable medicines in stock. We have 5 hours worth of back up batteries but had the power outage also impact Wahiawa Health, **this unfunded health center may not be able to recover its losses.**

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-343-4509.



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Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Wednesday March 18, 2026; 9 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Via Videoconference

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 3254, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

My name is Terry Radi, Project Manager, for Molokai Ohana Health Care, Inc., dba Molokai Community Health Center, and I am presenting written testimony in strong support of Senate Bill No. 3254, Senate Draft 2.

Molokai Community Health Center (MCHC), is the only Federally Qualified Health Center on the island of Molokai. For more than 20 years, MCHC has served as a vital access point and classic safety net for the island's uninsured and underinsured populations.

The proposed cuts to Medicaid, coupled with rising utility costs, directly threaten our ability to invest in patient care. We already operate on thin margins while serving the island's vulnerable patients who rely on Medicaid, Medicare and sliding fee services. ***If approved, this investment will save Molokai Community Health Center up to \$87,000 annually in electricity costs; more than \$2.1 million in energy costs over a 25-year span.*** More importantly, this investment will strengthen continuity of care and ensure that MCHC can remain operational during emergencies and natural disasters.

While MCHC experienced only moderate flooding during the historic storm last week, even a brief power outage can have severe consequences. A loss of power for several hours could result in the loss of over \$90,000 in vaccine inventory and approximately \$50,000 per day in operating costs. More critically, any disruption in services places patients at risk by delaying access to essential care.

This project will fundamentally change that reality – enhancing resilience, protecting critical resources, and ensuring uninterrupted care for the Molokai community and other health centers facing similar vulnerabilities.

I respectfully urge your strong support for this critical investment.

Terry Radi, Project Manager
Molokai Ohana Health Care, Inc., dba Molokai Community Health Center

Mission: To provide and promote accessible comprehensive individual and community health care to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.

Visit us at <http://molokaichc.org/>

30 Oki Place, PO Box 2040 Kaunakakai, HI 96748 Phone: (808) 553-5038 Fax: (808) 553-3780

House Committee on Health

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 329

Via Videoconference

Re: SB 3254 – SD2, Relating to the State Budget

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cindy Kan. I am the Director of Programs + Strategic Partnerships, Hawai'i with Collective Energy, serving as the technical project implementation partner for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association (HPCA) on the proposed solar-powered microgrids initiative referenced in SB 3254, SD2.

I respectfully provide technical and financial context to assist the Committee in its fiscal evaluation of this measure.

Federal Leverage and Timing

SB 3254, SD2 represents a time-sensitive opportunity to leverage federal incentives and private funds already committed to support solar-powered microgrids for nonprofit community health centers located in medically underserved communities throughout Hawai'i.

Participating health centers have secured private philanthropic funding to safe harbor these projects and preserve eligibility for the federal 30% Direct Pay incentive under the Inflation Reduction Act.

If projects do not proceed within the allowable federal timeline, that **30% federal incentive for these projects will be permanently lost.**

The appropriation proposed in SD2 functions as gap-closing capital to enable implementation and ensure Hawai'i captures available federal dollars before expiration.

From a financing perspective, the structure includes:

- Federal Direct Pay incentive: 30% of eligible project costs
- Private philanthropic funds: already committed
- State appropriation to close the remaining financing gap

Without timely state participation, the participating health centers risk forfeiting federal eligibility, the benefit of private philanthropic funds already committed, and associated long-term cost reductions.

Operational Cost Impact

The financial impact is measurable. These solar-powered microgrids will significantly reduce electricity expenses, allowing the nonprofit health centers to redirect operating dollars toward patient care, staffing, and essential services.

The combined annual electricity cost across the nine sites is approximately \$683,000, with projected average annual savings of approximately \$640,000.

Across all sites identified in the bill — Hilo, Kea’au, Ka’ū, Hana, Moloka’i, Waimānalo, and Wahiawā — projected electricity savings total approximately \$16 million over 25 years.

Annual Electricity Cost & Estimated Average Annual Savings by Site

Health Center Site	Current Annual Electricity Cost	Average Annual Cost Savings (w/ Solar + Storage)*
Hawai’i Island Community Health Center – Hilo	\$89,000	\$109,000
HICHC – Ka’ū Family Health & Dental	\$30,000	\$37,000
HICHC – Kea’au Family Health & Dental	\$51,000	\$63,000
Hana Health (Main Clinic + Hale Ku’ola)	\$70,000	\$31,000
Moloka’i Community Health Center	\$92,000	\$87,000
Waimānalo Health Center – ‘Akahi	\$67,000	\$39,000
Waimānalo Health Center – ‘Alua	\$198,000	\$161,000
Wahiawā Center for Community Health	\$86,000	\$113,000
TOTAL	\$683,000	\$640,000

**Average annual savings reflect projected average annual electricity cost reductions over a 25-year system life, based on modeled system production and current utility rate assumptions. Actual savings may vary on future rates and system performance.*

Operational Grant Component (SD2)

The operational appropriation included in SD2 supports centralized program management, contract oversight, compliance reporting, and fiscal stewardship across five independent nonprofit

entities. Centralized coordination reduces implementation risk, supports accountability, and preserves economies of scale across the portfolio.

Health Center Ownership and Community Benefit

The proposed systems are structured so that the nonprofit community health centers own and directly benefit from the assets, ensuring long-term cost savings and resilience remain within the communities they serve.

Recent Storm and Outage Context

Over the past week, a major storm brought flooding and power outages across the state.

Preliminary feedback from health centers indicates:

- Temporary service disruptions and closures
- Missed appointments across medical, dental, and behavioral health services
- Loss of vaccines, medications, and food-as-medicine inventory
- Continued operations in limited capacity during outages

Examples from recent conditions include:

- One health center reported ~\$50,000 per day in combined operational and revenue impacts when services are disrupted
- A rural site maintains ~\$90,000 in vaccine inventory at risk during outages, requiring emergency transport under normal conditions
- A clinic reported loss of vaccine inventory and food-as-medicine supplies, along with two days of cancelled services
- Another site relied on diesel backup generation until fuel depletion, resulting in loss of critical IT and system functionality

These examples reflect the operational risks that outages pose to healthcare delivery, particularly in rural and medically underserved communities.

Estimated Outage Impact

Based on prior analysis of health center operations and county-level outage data — including experience across approximately 70 community health centers — estimated impacts from power outages are as follows:

- ~\$8,800 estimated loss from a 1-hour outage
- ~\$35,000 estimated loss from a 4-hour outage
- ~\$46,000+ estimated loss from a full-day outage

These estimates include impacts to clinical services, staffing, temperature-sensitive medicines and vaccines, and food-as-medicine programs. Actual impacts will vary by site and event severity, but they illustrate the scale of disruption associated with power outages.

Risk Mitigation and Service Continuity

Battery storage can support continuity of operations during grid failures and Public Safety Power Shutoffs by maintaining power for refrigeration, electronic medical records, and essential clinical services. These systems can also support community-level needs during regional outages and emergency events.

I offer this information to assist the Committee in its fiscal and implementation evaluation of SB 3254, SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide technical input. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-724-6010, or ckan@collectiveenergyco.com.

Cindy Kan
Director of Programs + Strategic Partnerships Hawai'i
Collective Energy (Technical Implementation Partner)



LATE

To: The House Committee on Health (HLT)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 9am

In strong support of SB3254 SD2

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and HLT Committee members;

I am Co-Founder of the Hawai'i chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support** of this measure that appropriates funds to be expended by the Department of Health as a grant for the Hawai'i Primary Care Association to support solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation at community health centers in medically underserved communities, and provide programmatic services, project management, contract management, reporting and fiscal stewardship responsibilities, and developing future scalable plans for the development and deployment of solar-plus-storage microgrids at nonprofit community health centers.

Community Health Centers are invaluable resources, especially in remote, rural areas where access to an alternative, like a hospital, can mean traveling very long distances. These facilities are a critical part of the healthcare safety net, serving low-income, uninsured, and underserved populations. It is essential that these centers be able to remain open and operational through a power outage.

Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters. This ensures continuity of care for patients most in need. Moreover, these systems allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution.

With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical. Let's ensure essential healthcare services continue even when the grid goes down.

We urge you to **PASS SB3254 SD2**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this very important bill.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



TESTIMONY OF RICHARD TAAFFE

Chief Executive Officer

Hawai'i Island Community Health Center (HICHC)

Date: 3/17/2026

In Strong Support of S.B. 3254

Relating to the State Budget

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Island Community Health Center (HICHC), I respectfully urge your strong support for S.B. 3254.

Community health centers are the healthcare safety net for Hawai'i's most rural, geographically isolated, and medically underserved communities. Nowhere is this more evident than on Hawai'i Island, where our Hilo, Kea'au, and Ka'u Family Health & Dental clinics serve some of the most rural and vulnerable regions in the entire state.

These three sites are in areas historically and consistently impacted by the most severe adverse weather conditions in Hawai'i. Hurricanes, heavy rain, volcanic activity, and severe storms regularly destabilize the power grid. As a result, our clinics experience frequent and prolonged power outages. When the power goes out, our ability to serve patients stops. Clinics must close. Appointments are cancelled. Patients with chronic conditions lose access to care. Our ability to respond during emergencies is compromised at the very moment our communities need us most.

Equally alarming is the direct impact on vaccine storage. As a federally qualified health center, we maintain strict refrigeration requirements to safeguard thousands of doses of life-saving vaccines. Power instability jeopardizes that responsibility. In 2023 alone, HICHC lost \$70,000 worth of vaccines due to power outages. In 2024, we lost an additional \$65,000. Beyond the financial loss, this represents disrupted immunization schedules, delayed protection for children and kūpuna, and unnecessary strain on our public health infrastructure.

Stabilizing power at our rural health centers is not a luxury - it is a necessity. Solar-plus-storage microgrids will allow us to keep our doors open during grid failures, protect vaccine integrity, and maintain continuity of care when disasters strike. This is about health security, disaster readiness, and protecting our most vulnerable residents.

The benefits extend well beyond resilience:

- **\$3.8 million in projected electric cost savings over 20 years**, allowing us to reinvest those dollars directly into patient care.
- **An estimated reduction of 288 metric tons of CO₂ emissions annually**, supporting Hawai'i's clean energy goals and strengthening our environmental stewardship.
- Enhanced sustainability and ESG leadership, demonstrating responsible use of public funds and long-term operational planning.

This initiative leverages private, philanthropic, and incentive-based funding. The State's investment closes a critical financing gap and ensures that these projects move forward before federal incentives are lost. Without timely support, this opportunity and the long-term savings it generates may disappear.

For Hilo, Kea'au, and Ka'u, this is not simply an energy project. It is a healthcare continuity project. It is a vaccine protection project. It is a rural equity project. It is a disaster preparedness project.

S.B. 3254 represents a strategic and fiscally responsible investment in the stability of Hawai'i's healthcare safety net. We respectfully ask for your support to ensure that our most rural and weather-impacted communities are not left vulnerable when the power grid fails.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued commitment to the health and resilience of Hawai'i's communities.

Respectfully,

Richard Taaffe
Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Community Health Center

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 10:43:17 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christel Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters.

-- This measure would allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical.

Mahalo,

Christel Thompson

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 11:43:58 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters.

-- This measure would allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 4:03:36 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SB3254 SD2 which would appropriate funds for solar plus storage for community health centers,

Thank you,

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 4:07:55 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samuel M Mitchell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a great bill I 100% support this.

Samuel Mitchell Makiki NB-10

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:32:14 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of solar + storage for Community Health Centers for resilience. Thank you.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 9:52:32 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 11:13:15 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen M Kimbrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Community health centers are vital, and must remain open during storms.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 12:01:54 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in strong support of SB 3254. As a former board member of Kalihi Palama Health Center, anything the state can do to support CHCs in this time where the federal government is trying to defund them, is very important.

Community Health Centers are invaluable resources, especially in remote, rural areas where access to an alternative, like a hospital, can mean traveling very long distances. These facilities are a critical part of the healthcare safety net, serving low-income, uninsured, and underserved populations. It is essential that these centers be able to remain open and operational through a power outage. This measure will help save lives!

Mahalo,

Jen Lum, 'Ewa Beach

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 12:48:06 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Thank you for accepting my testimony supporting SB3254 SD2.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:31:40 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters.

This measure would allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical.

Mahalo,

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 4:10:01 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB3254 SD2. Providing community health centers with solar-plus-storage microgrids would reduce their electricity costs and carbon emissions, while also ensuring a dependable power supply during grid outages and natural disasters.

Community Health Centers are invaluable resources, especially in remote areas where the nearest hospital may be many miles away, or where travel may be hazardous during severe weather. These facilities are a critical part of our healthcare safety net, serving low-income, uninsured, and underserved populations. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:03:49 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benjamin Narwold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure would allow health centers to reduce operating costs --directing more dollars back to core health services, while also decreasing harmful carbon pollution. With Hawai'i's frequent power outages, maintaining uninterrupted care is critical.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:10:31 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Implementing solar+storage systems for Community Health Centers gives them energy resilience for reliable health care in low-income rural communities and reduces their operating costs. Please support!

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 8:46:47 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Nanea Lo**, and I respectfully submit **strong support for SB3254 SD2**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Health as a grant to the Hawai‘i Primary Care Association to support **solar-plus-storage microgrid implementation at community health centers serving medically underserved communities**.

Community Health Centers are invaluable resources across Hawai‘i, especially in **remote and rural communities** where the nearest hospital may be many miles away. These facilities are a critical part of our healthcare safety net, providing essential services to **low-income, uninsured, and underserved residents** who rely on them for primary and preventative care.

It is vital that these centers remain **open and operational during power outages and emergencies**. In times of disaster or grid disruption, community health centers often serve as front-line providers of care. Solar-plus-storage microgrids can ensure that these facilities maintain electricity for **medical equipment, refrigeration for medications and vaccines, communications systems, and essential patient services**.

Investing in resilient, clean energy infrastructure for community health centers will strengthen our healthcare system, improve disaster preparedness, and protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. Ensuring these facilities can continue operating during outages can quite literally **save lives**.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to **PASS SB3254 SD2**.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Clean Elections Hawai‘i Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai'i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 12:41:06 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 11:32:10 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JON BRODZIAK	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jon Brodziak, and I strongly support S.B. 3254 S.D. 2 as a prudent and necessary investment in Hawai‘i’s health and resilience. The central fact is simple: a health center without reliable power is a health center that cannot fully serve its community. By funding solar-plus-storage microgrids at community health centers, this measure addresses that vulnerability directly and with practical foresight.

Energy resilience is not an abstract benefit, it is the difference between continuity of care and disruption when the lights go out. Community health centers serve some of our most vulnerable populations, often in rural or geographically isolated areas where outages are more frequent and recovery is slower. Solar-plus-storage systems ensure that critical medical equipment continues to function, vaccines and insulin remain properly refrigerated, and patients receive uninterrupted care during emergencies. In plain terms, this bill keeps the doors open when they would otherwise be forced shut.

The economic logic is equally sound and, frankly, hard to argue with. By reducing long-term energy costs, these systems allow health centers to redirect scarce resources back into patient care, staffing, and essential services. That is not merely efficient, it is just. Every dollar saved on electricity is a dollar that can be spent healing people instead of paying utility bills. At the same time, reducing reliance on fossil fuels lowers harmful emissions, aligning fiscal responsibility with environmental stewardship.

This measure also reflects good timing and good sense in leveraging outside funding. The proposed projects draw on private, philanthropic, and federal incentives, meaning the State’s contribution is not carrying the full burden but rather unlocking a larger pool of investment. To delay or withhold support risks losing those opportunities altogether, which would be the fiscal equivalent of leaving money on the table during a time of clear need.

In summary, S.B. 3254 S.D. 2 is a practical, cost-effective, and forward-looking response to well-established risks facing Hawai‘i’s health care infrastructure. It strengthens resilience, reduces costs, protects vulnerable communities, and does so by making wise use of available resources. I respectfully urge you to support this measure as a reasonable and necessary action given the facts before us.

Sincerely,
Jon Brodziak

LATE

SB-3254-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:45:25 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Bayless	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Implementing solar+storage systems builds energy resilience in Community Health Centers, allowing them to improve access to reliable health care in low-income, rural communities. Clean, resilient solar+storage systems ensure energy reliability for critical medical equipment, refrigeration of insulin and vaccines, and continuity of care during grid outages and natural disasters.