

**JOSH GREEN M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION**

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

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**GARY S. SUGANUMA**  
DIRECTOR

**KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

**TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. No. 1620, H.D.1, Relating to Energy

**BEFORE THE:**

House Committee on Transportation

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 17, 2026

**TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 430

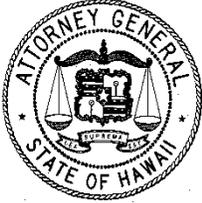
Chair Kila, Vice-Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding H.B. 1620, H.D.1, for your consideration.

H.B. 1620, H.D.1, amends Section 243-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, by increasing the Environmental Response, Energy, and Food Security Tax, commonly referred to as "the barrel tax," from \$1.05 to an unspecified amount on each barrel of petroleum product that is not aviation fuel. The bill also amends the allocation of the tax deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount from 3 cents to an unspecified amount per barrel. This bill has a defective effective date of July 1, 3000.

DOTAX notes that it can administer the bill with an effective date of January 1, 2027. This will allow sufficient time to notify the public, update systems, and make the necessary administrative adjustments, while also giving taxpayers adequate time to prepare for the change.

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



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**  
H.B. NO. 1620, H.D. 1, RELATING TO ENERGY.

**BEFORE THE:**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 17, 2026      **TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 430

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Janine R. Udui, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Kila and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments regarding this bill.

Section 3 of the bill provides for the transfer of an undetermined sum from the Hydrogen Fueling System Subaccount to the Electric Vehicle Charging System Subaccount of the Public Utilities Commission Special Fund established pursuant to section 269-33, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Because these are separate subaccounts within the same special fund, the Department recommends that the bill expressly authorize the Public Utilities Commission to effectuate the transfer. Additionally, the bill should specify the date of the fiscal year on which the transfer is to occur.

Accordingly, the Department recommends that the Committee amend section 3, page 5, lines 13-17, as follows:

**SECTION 3.** ~~[There is transferred]~~ The public utilities commission shall transfer from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount of the public utilities commission special fund, established pursuant to section 269-33, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the sum of \$      ~~[-],~~ on July 1, 2026.

Thank you for considering our comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



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

JON S. ITOMURA  
CHAIR

NAOMI U. KUWAYE  
COMMISSIONER

COLIN A. YOST  
COMMISSIONER

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## Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the  
House Committee on  
Transportation

Tuesday, February 17, 2026  
9:30 a.m.

Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee:

**Measure:** H.B. No. 1620, H.D. 1  
**Title:** RELATING TO ENERGY

### Position:

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

### Comments:

The Commission supports the intent of this measure to increase the environmental response, energy, and food security tax and direct the amount collected from the tax to be deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

The Commission currently manages the state's Electric Vehicle Charging Station ("EVCS") Rebate Program as established in sections 269-72 and 269-73, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS"), in consultation with Electric Vehicle stakeholders and in cooperation with the program's administrator, Hawaii Energy.

The EVCS Rebate Program has been a successful program for our state, beginning with the pilot program in 2019 to present. From January 2020 through June 2025, Hawaii Energy deployed over \$2.5 million in rebates supporting over 450 new and upgraded EVCS installations across all four counties in Hawaii, which includes both Level 2 and DC Fast Chargers<sup>1</sup>. Hawaii Energy has been able to fully subscribe the program with the current annual appropriation level of \$750,000 per year, and any funding increase supported by this measure would allow for continued expansion of this successful

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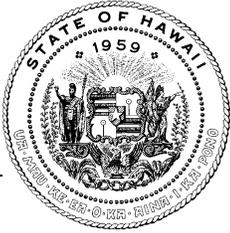
<sup>1</sup> See Hawaii Energy's EVCS Rebate webpage for more information and data:  
<https://hawaiienergy.com/for-business/rebates-for-business/electric-vehicle-charging-stations/>

program, ensure more substantial deployment of EV charging infrastructure throughout the state to meet the evolving demand from Hawaii's electric vehicle drivers, while also supporting the Zero Emission Vehicles strategy to achieve Hawaii's Decarbonization goals.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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<sup>2</sup> See Hawaii State Energy Office's Pathways to Decarbonization Report (submitted to the Legislature December 2023): <https://energy.hawaii.gov/clean-energy-vision/decarbonization-strategy/>



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone:  
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JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR

MARK B. GLICK  
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 451-6648  
energy.hawaii.gov

Testimony of  
**MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer**

before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

Tuesday, February 17, 2026  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on  
**HOUSE BILL NO 1620 HD1**

**RELATING TO ENERGY.**

Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers the following comments on HB 1620 HD1, which increases the environmental response, energy, and food security tax and the amount collected from the tax that is deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

There is no dispute that meeting Hawai'i's decarbonization goals will require significant emissions reductions from ground transportation. HSEO found zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) and expanding access to reliable electric vehicle (EV) charging to be the primary strategies to achieve those goals in its 2023 *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization* report,<sup>1</sup> presented to the Legislature pursuant to Act 238 (2022). But, Hawai'i's progress is lagging on public EV charging, with a ratio of about 44 registered EVs per public charging port statewide,<sup>2</sup> putting Hawai'i second to the bottom in the nation.

To achieve the State's decarbonization law, all three mitigation scenarios in the *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization* report assume that by 2035 all sales of light-duty

<sup>1</sup> <https://energy.hawaii.gov/what-we-do/clean-energy-vision/decarbonization-strategy/>

<sup>2</sup> Alliance for Automotive Innovation: Get Connected Electric Vehicle Quarterly Report, Second Quarter 2025

vehicles in Hawai'i will be ZEVs. The report also assumes 21% of registered light-duty passenger vehicles will need to be ZEVs by 2030.

While achieving these goals requires policies that remove barriers to EV adoption, HSEO defers to the Department of Budget and Finance on whether imposing a tax at this time is an appropriate means of removing such barriers, as well as the fiscal impacts of this measure to the State budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

# TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

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735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

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SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS; FUEL, Hike Barrel Tax to Feed EV Charging System Fund

BILL NUMBER: HB 1620 HD 1

INTRODUCED BY: EEP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Increases the environmental response, energy, and food security tax and the amount collected from the tax that is deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount. Transfers funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 243-3.5, HRS, to change the barrel tax from \$1.05 to \$\_\_\_ per barrel, and to raise the earmark to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount from 3 cents to \_\_\_\_.

Transfers \$\_\_\_\_\_ from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount of the public utilities commission special fund (section 269-33, HRS).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 3000.

STAFF COMMENTS: The barrel tax, HRS section 243-3.5, now imposes a tax of \$1.05 on each barrel of petroleum product sold to an end user. It also imposes a tax on 19 cents per million BTU on a fossil fuel other than a petroleum product that is sold to an end user.

If it is proposed to raise the barrel tax on petroleum products, we question why there is no comparable increase to the barrel tax on non-petroleum fossil fuels.

In addition, the proposed measure would perpetuate the earmarking of tax revenues. Incentives for electric vehicle charging systems may be a worthy expense if considered alone. But does that justify bypassing the normal appropriation and budgeting process that also considers invasive species, risks to the social safety net, and the aging infrastructure in our educational system?

Earmarking revenues from any tax type for a particular purpose decreases transparency and accountability.

Next, it should be remembered that revenues diverted for a special purpose, in this case to fund electric bicycle charging systems, will not be counted against the state's spending ceiling or debt limit and will obscure the state's true financial condition.

The bill includes unspecified credit amounts and otherwise contains blanks for important information. The bill cannot be scored for revenue gain/loss in its current form, and cannot be vetted properly unless numbers are inserted. We note that the EEP committee report recommends numbers to fill in at least some of the blanks.

Re: HB 1620 HD1

Page 2

The Rules of the House and of the Senate specify that proceedings are to follow Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure published by the National Conference of State Legislatures. Mason's Manual specifies, in section 416-8 of its 2020 edition, that "When proposals containing blanks are introduced, these must be filled before other motions to amend are entertained."

Digested: 2/12/2026



## Carbon Cashback

February 13, 2026

Re: TRN hearing of HB1620 HD1 on February 17, 2026, at 9:30 am

Position: Support

Aloha e Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

*Carbon Cashback Hawai'i advocates for legislation that reduces carbon emissions and strengthens Hawai'i's energy independence while protecting vulnerable kama'aiana families.*

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i supports HB1620 HD1, which increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues – as well as funds transferred from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount – to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program. We understand that this program is successful but is severely funding-constrained.

Ground transportation is one of Hawai'i's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and a major contributor to high household energy costs. This bill directly addresses both challenges by helping residents transition to clean and cost-efficient electric vehicles.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

We urge you to pass this bill out of your committee.

Mahalo nui loa.

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

**Kauai Climate Action Coalition strongly supports HB1620 HD1** because it will help expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

Many of our members own electric vehicles. Those who have in-home chargers experience both the economic and environmental impact of owning electric vehicles. However, many other members, who live in condos or are renters, are either frustrated by limited access to chargers or have not purchased electric vehicles because of that limited access. But we are not only concerned about ourselves but about the greater island community. A majority of Kauai residents do not have easy access to chargers.

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure is a significant barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for those of us on the more rural neighbor islands. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefiting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Helen Cox, Kalaheo

Chair, Kauai Climate Action Coalition



REPRESENTATIVE DARIUS K. KILA, CHAIR  
REPRESENTATIVE TYSON K. MIYAKE, VICE CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1620, HD1

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 430 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Dear Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Committee Members:

Earthjustice strongly **supports House Bill 1620, HD1**, Relating to Energy. This bill provides for an increase to the barrel tax, as well as an increase of the allocation of barrel tax revenues to the existing electric vehicle (EV) charging system rebate program. It also provides for a transfer of funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the EV charging system subaccount that funds the EV charging system rebate program. This proposed funding increase is an essential step to help expand the EV charging infrastructure that Hawai'i needs to enable consumer savings and pollution reductions for everyone. The EV charging system rebate program is an established program with a successful track record over numerous years, and this bill would build on this program's success and broaden its reach.

As HB 1620, HD1 recognizes, Hawai'i is currently among the leading states in the nation in the rate of EV adoption, but among the *last* in the availability of charging infrastructure. According to testimony by the State Energy Office, in contrast to California's recommended ratio of one public charger per seven EVs in operation, Hawai'i had only one public charger per 47 EVs in 2025—which was actually a step backward from the previous year's ratio of one public charger per 38 EVs. In other words, Hawai'i is falling further behind, and the gap between available and necessary infrastructure is widening.

As the legislature has also recognized, EVs are already cheaper than fossil fuel vehicles in total lifetime costs. A recent study by Ulupono Initiative indicated that households with the highest reliance on gasoline spend almost \$14,000 on average per year, or 14 percent of their incomes. Switching to EVs could save these households \$5,300 dollars annually on fuel costs alone, or up to 38 percent savings on their gas bills.

The dearth of charging infrastructure, however, is a major barrier to EV adoption,

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particularly for renters, apartment and condominium residents, and lower-income households and communities. Increasing public funding for EV charging infrastructure is a fundamental priority for affordability and equity, ensuring that everyone has access to essential facilities and no one is left behind in the transition to a clean transportation system.

Given the budget challenges the State is currently facing, this modest increase in the overall barrel tax to increase funding for this essential program would be revenue-neutral in its impact on the state budget. In the alternative, the legislature could simply increase the allocation of barrel tax revenues to the EV charging system rebate program. Currently, a total of *only 20 cents* of the \$1.05 collected on each barrel—or only 19% of the total tax—is allocated to the purposes for which it was established. The proposed transfer of funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the EV charging system subaccount is also a helpful step to redirect available funds where they are urgently needed and can be productively used today.

Particularly given the problems with the federal government rescinding critical funding support, the State must do what it can to show leadership and provide the beneficial investments today that will enable savings going forward. Now is the time to make bold investments for affordability and safety for Hawai'i's people and not ignore or abandon that responsibility.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need further information.

Isaac H. Moriwake, Esq.  
Managing Attorney  
Earthjustice, Mid-Pacific Office



**Testimony in Support of HB1620 HD1**  
**Hearing on February 17, 2026 at 9:30am**  
House Committee on Transportation | Room 430

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Doorae Shin, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Our Children's Trust in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which increases the environmental response, energy, and food security tax on imported petroleum and directs additional revenue to Hawai'i's electric vehicle charging system rebate program.

HB1620 HD1 addresses one of the most significant barriers to electric vehicle adoption in Hawai'i: the lack of accessible, affordable, and reliable charging infrastructure. While electric vehicle ownership in Hawai'i continues to grow, the state's charging network has not kept pace. As a result, Hawai'i now ranks among the lowest states in the nation for charging availability and continues to fall further behind. This gap disproportionately impacts renters, residents of multi-unit dwellings, rural communities, and lower-income households, many of whom lack access to home charging and are therefore excluded from the benefits of electric transportation.

Transportation is one of the largest household expenses in Hawai'i. Electric vehicles offer substantial savings on fuel and maintenance, but those savings are only attainable if residents can reliably charge where they live, work, and travel. By expanding funding for charging infrastructure, this bill directly supports household affordability while advancing Hawai'i's clean energy and climate goals.

HB1620 HD1 builds on an existing and proven program. The electric vehicle charging system rebate program was established in 2019 and, despite its modest scale, has already supported the installation of hundreds of charging systems statewide. Demand for this program has consistently exceeded available funding. This bill responds to that demand by increasing the portion of the barrel tax dedicated to charging infrastructure from three cents to thirteen cents per barrel, while increasing the overall barrel tax by ten cents. Importantly, this approach uses an existing tax on imported petroleum to fund solutions that reduce dependence on that very fuel.

The expanded funding enabled by HB1620 HD1 will support rebates for the installation of electric vehicle charging systems in multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, and publicly accessible locations. It prioritizes broader geographic coverage and more equitable access across the islands, ensuring that the transition to clean transportation is not limited to single-family homeowners. By focusing on shared and community-based charging, the bill helps ensure that renters and condo residents are not left behind.

HB1620 HD1 also strengthens Hawai'i's energy security. The state remains heavily dependent on imported petroleum, leaving our communities vulnerable to volatile global fuel prices and supply disruptions. Investing in electric vehicle charging infrastructure helps keep energy dollars

in Hawai‘i, supports the use of locally generated renewable energy, and reduces exposure to external economic shocks.

In addition to its economic and equity benefits, HB1620 HD1 is directly aligned with Hawai‘i’s legal and policy obligations to reduce transportation emissions. In 2022, thirteen youth plaintiffs filed *Navahine v. Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT)*, resulting in a settlement that requires HDOT to “take any actions necessary” to achieve zero emissions from ground, marine, and inter-island aviation by no later than 2045. The settlement was agreed to as a means to protect children’s constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system and to preserve Hawai‘i’s public trust resources for present and future generations. In 2025, HDOT released its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, which identifies the critical near-, mid-, and long-term policies needed to comply with the settlement agreement, including expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support widespread adoption of zero-emission vehicles. This bill is a concrete and necessary step toward fulfilling these obligations.

Reducing emissions from the transportation sector also delivers immediate public health benefits. Increased electric vehicle adoption lowers air pollution, particularly in communities located near high-traffic corridors, ports, and industrial areas. These reductions improve respiratory and cardiovascular health outcomes and reduce healthcare costs, benefits that are especially important for children and other vulnerable populations.

HB1620 HD1 represents a pragmatic, equitable, and forward-looking investment in Hawai‘i’s future. It strengthens a successful program, addresses a clear infrastructure gap, reduces household transportation costs, and advances the state’s climate, energy security, and public health goals. By expanding access to electric vehicle charging, this bill ensures that the benefits of clean transportation are shared broadly and fairly across Hawai‘i.

For these reasons, Our Children’s Trust strongly urges your support for HB1620 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your leadership on this critical issue.

Dooraë Shin



Our Children’s Trust



To: The House Committee on Transportation (TRN)  
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 9:30am

**In support of HB1620 HD1**

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Committee members,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **support of HB1620 HD1** that would expand the electric vehicle charging system rebate program and accelerate the build-out of necessary electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Accessibility to EV charging remains a significant barrier to the wider adoption of electric vehicles in Hawai'i. Adequate public charging is critical for the democratization of transportation. HB1620 HD1 addresses the need to dramatically scale up the electrification of transportation to meet legal mandates to decarbonize the statewide transportation system. Importantly, HB1620 HD1 prioritizes charging in multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, and commercial areas, improving access for renters, condo residents, and other households that lack the ability to charge at home.

To protect our climate and future, we need ambitious efforts like HB1620 HD1. We urge you to PASS this important legislation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



To: The Honorable Representative Darius Kila, Chair, the Honorable Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair, and Members of the Transportation Committee.

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

Re: **Hearing HB1620 HD1 RELATING TO ENERGY**

Hearing: Thursday February 17, 2026 9:30 a.m.

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Transportation Committee!

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

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** HB1620 HD1!

Even without federal subsidies, electric vehicles will be less expensive than internal combustion vehicles, especially when considering much lower electric vehicle maintenance costs. With ample sun, warm temperatures, and shorter driving distances, electric vehicles will save money and make sense for Hawaii. **Many Hawaii drivers will want the more affordable option of electric vehicles supported by charging infrastructure.** To serve the current and future markets for electric vehicles, Hawaii needs

to develop its electric vehicle charging infrastructure now. This should be a very high priority for Hawai'i.

This bill will help development of electric vehicle charging and serve the public interest by appropriating additional funding for the electric vehicle charging system account in the environmental response, energy, and food security tax.

**Please pass this bill!**

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

## Hawaii Electric Vehicle Association

hawaiiev.org  
info@hawaiieva.com



Feb. 16, 2026

Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii EV Association **strongly supports** HB 1620, HD1, which would increase the environmental response, energy, and food security tax (barrel tax) and expand the amount deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount. HD1 also adds a critical provision transferring existing funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the EV charging subaccount, redirecting resources to where they will have the greatest immediate and long-term impact.

**Electric vehicles deliver transformative benefits for Hawaii’s drivers, economy, and environment.** EVs are simply superior vehicles on nearly every dimension that matters to consumers: they are faster, quieter, require far less maintenance (no oil changes, no transmission, fewer brake replacements, simpler drivetrains), and offer dramatically lower fuel costs.

An EV owner in Hawaii who charges at home with rooftop solar can drive very cheaply on sunshine. Even without solar, the per-mile cost of electricity is substantially lower than gasoline, especially at Hawaii’s gas prices of nearly \$5 per gallon. Research summarized by HDOT shows that the total cost of ownership for a gasoline sedan like a Toyota Corolla is approximately \$11,000 more over seven years than a comparable electric vehicle like the Chevrolet Bolt.

Battery costs have fallen dramatically over the past decade, making EVs increasingly affordable. EVs can also help significantly with grid balancing and emergency power due to their large batteries, with policies known as “vehicle to grid” that are now becoming available.

Beyond personal savings, EVs strengthen Hawaii’s economy by keeping energy dollars local rather than shipping \$hundreds of millions annually to foreign oil producers. Hawaii imports roughly 90 percent of its energy; every EV powered by locally generated renewable electricity is a step toward genuine energy independence and resilience.

EVs also eliminate tailpipe emissions, improving air quality and advancing Hawaii’s legally mandated climate goals. With 40,000 EVs already on Hawaii’s roads and registrations doubling every three years, the market has spoken clearly: EVs work for Hawaii.

The question is whether our charging infrastructure can keep pace.

**Hawaii faces a growing EV charging infrastructure crisis.** As the bill itself recognizes, Hawaii is among the leading states in EV adoption but among the last in the availability of public charging infrastructure. This widening gap between surging EV registrations and inadequate charging availability is the single greatest barrier to continued progress on transportation electrification. The current EV charging system rebate program, funded by a modest 3 cents per barrel, has proven its value by facilitating the installation of over 450 new charging systems statewide. But this level of investment is far from sufficient to meet the accelerating need.

**Expanding EV infrastructure is an economic imperative for Hawaii.** With gas prices regularly exceeding \$5 per gallon for premium, Hawaii families pay some of the highest transportation fuel costs in the nation. Every dollar spent on imported petroleum is a dollar drained from our local economy. EVs offer families a path to significantly lower their cost of living, but only if charging is convenient and accessible. This is especially critical for renters, condominium residents, and lower-income households who cannot install home chargers and depend on public infrastructure. Expanding the charging network is therefore both an economic development strategy and an equity measure.

**This bill directly supports Hawaii's legal obligations under the Navahine settlement.** The 2025 Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan developed by the Hawaii Department of Transportation under the Navahine settlement agreement identifies building out EV charging infrastructure as integral to decarbonizing the statewide transportation system. HDOT's plan calls for passing key legislation in the 2026 session to meet the legally mandated 2030 emissions reduction target of 50 percent below 2005 levels. HB 1620, HD1 is precisely the type of legislation HDOT has identified as essential. Hawaii EV's public charging expansion priority is in strong alignment with HDOT's HWY-E-1 strategy to build additional public EV charging infrastructure.

**The hydrogen subaccount transfer is a pragmatic reallocation of resources.** The HD1's addition of Section 3, transferring funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the EV charging subaccount, reflects sound policy. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure for passenger vehicles has not materialized in Hawaii in any meaningful way, while demand for EV charging is immediate and growing rapidly. Reallocating these underutilized funds to the proven EV charging rebate program ensures taxpayer resources are deployed where they will generate the greatest return in reduced emissions, consumer savings, and energy security.

**State investment is more critical than ever following the elimination of federal EV incentives.** The federal \$7,500 EV tax credit was eliminated in September 2025, and the future of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program remains uncertain after its current funding is exhausted. Hawaii can no longer rely on federal support to drive transportation electrification. State-level action through mechanisms like the barrel tax is now the primary lever available to maintain momentum on EV adoption and infrastructure buildout. Without increased state investment, Hawaii risks falling further

behind on its charging infrastructure needs and jeopardizing its ability to meet its 2030 and 2045 emissions reduction targets.

**The cost to consumers is minimal.** The original bill proposed increasing the barrel tax from \$1.05 to \$1.15, a 10-cent increase. Spread across the approximately 42 gallons in a barrel, this translates to roughly one-quarter of one cent per gallon of fuel – a negligible impact on consumers that generates meaningful funding for charging infrastructure. We encourage the committee to set the dollar amounts in the HD1 at levels that will make a real difference in closing Hawaii’s charging gap.

As the Hawaii State Energy Office has recognized, investing in EV charging infrastructure is the most effective strategy for supporting continued EV adoption. The evidence is clear: more accessible charging leads to more EV purchases, which reduces our dependence on imported fossil fuels and keeps transportation dollars circulating in Hawaii’s economy.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 1620 HD1 and to set the blank dollar amounts at levels sufficient to meaningfully expand Hawaii’s EV charging network. This legislation represents a critical step toward meeting our state’s legal and moral obligations to reduce transportation emissions while making electric mobility accessible to all Hawaii residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TH".

Tam Hunt  
Board Member and Policy Director  
Hawaii EV Association

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**Hawaii EV Association** is a grassroots non-profit group representing electric vehicle owners in Hawaii. Our mission is to accelerate the electrification of transportation through consumer education, policy advocacy, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure expansion. For more information, please visit [hawaiiev.org](http://hawaiiev.org).

### Hawaii EV Board

Noel Morin, President  
Nanette Vinton, Secretary, and Treasurer  
Jenn Lieu – Director  
Tam Hunt – Director

### Hawaii EV Clubs

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



Michael Albatrosov – Director  
Rob Weltman – Director

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 4:23:24 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ramona Hussey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD1 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.**

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 4:55:09 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Increased funding for the state’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program builds on a proven program that has already supported hundreds of charging installations statewide. This bill prioritizes charging in multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, and publicly accessible locations, improving access for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and households without the ability to charge at home.

Date: February 13, 2026  
Re: **SUPPORT for HB1620** RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION  
Hearing Date: February 17, 2026 @ 9:30AM

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice-Chair Miyake, and members of the TRN Committee:

I'm writing in **support of HB1620**.

This bill does two things that need to happen for us to transition away from fossil fuels: 1) it adds more money into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount; and 2) it reduces the amount of money that is put into the hydrogen fueling system subaccount.

Today, EVs complete quite favorably with ICEVs on a lifecycle cost basis. One of the major barriers preventing greater displacement of EVs with ICEVs is charging infrastructure. Therefore, to hasten the transition away from ICEVs to reduce our fossil fuel imports and environmental impacts, it makes sense to spend some moneys to improve the EV charging infrastructure.

Hydrogen is far from being commercially cost competitive as opposed to electric vehicles; therefore, it makes great sense to divert moneys away from hydrogen and into infrastructure to support EVs.

Please pass HB1620 out of your committee as an important step in diverting funds to where they make the most sense and making our transportation sector cleaner.

Mahalo nui loa,



Paul Bernstein  
Honolulu, O'ahu

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 3:06:14 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thomas Graham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

The electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful in spurring the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerating Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation. However, judging from the no-funds-available notice on Hawaii Energy's web page for the program, it appears to be funding-constrained -- that is, it's not meeting the demand for rebates.

I support raising the barrel tax, as well as transferring funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount, to increase funding for the EV charging rebate program, as provided in HB1620 HD1.

Thank you,

Thomas Graham, Honolulu

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:04:57 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eric Lindborg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1620 HD1. Enhancing electric vehicle charging infrastructure should make it more likely that folks will consider keeping and purchasing electric vehicles supporting Hawaii's shift to clean transportation.

I support the corresponding increase in the barrel tax. It will provide revenues for the electric vehicle charging system rebate program and at the same time incentivize consumers to make choices that decrease the use of fossil fuels that generate greenhouse gases.

Mahalo!

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:05:15 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Virginia Tincher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Virginia Tincher

Honolulu

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:14:43 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Kawamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:18:48 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bobbie Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals. Personally, I have no charging station near me which is why I don't have an EV. Please help

Mahalo!

Bobbie Best, Wailuku

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:50:42 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Douglas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

**I support HB1620 HD1** because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Susan Douglas, Kihei, HI

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 9:46:12 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeanne Dennis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Jeanne Dennis

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 11:44:38 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

Transportation accounts for more than half of our statewide greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, our state spends billions of dollars each year importing gasoline and diesel, draining our local economy and contributing to air pollution and negative public health impacts. Electric vehicles offer meaningful savings on fuel and maintenance, but without accessible and reliable charging infrastructure, many residents are effectively locked out of these benefits.

In 2022, thirteen youth plaintiffs filed *Navahine v. Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT)*, resulting in a landmark settlement that requires HDOT to take all actions necessary to achieve zero emissions from ground, marine, and inter-island aviation transportation by no later than 2045. This agreement protects children’s constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system and preserves Hawai‘i’s public trust resources for present and future generations. In response, HDOT released its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, which identifies widespread EV adoption and charging access as essential to meeting these legal obligations. HDOT has made clear that approximately 81 percent of new vehicle sales must be electric by 2030 to stay on track, while current adoption remains far below that level. Expanding charging infrastructure is a foundational step to closing this gap.

HB1620 HD1 addresses this challenge by increasing funding for the state’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program, building on a proven program that has already supported hundreds of charging installations statewide. The bill prioritizes charging in multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, and publicly accessible locations, improving access for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and households without the ability to charge at home. By directing additional barrel tax revenue to charging infrastructure, HB1620 HD1 uses an existing funding source to deliver long-term cost savings, cleaner air, and greater energy security for Hawai‘i residents.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD1 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 6:08:01 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jaymen Laupola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefitting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Jaymen Laupola, Honolulu

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 2:55:20 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Member,

Please support HB1630 which would increase investment in public EV charging infrastructure.

Thank you,

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 5:29:45 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanette Vinton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

I’m testifying because I want to see our community transition to cleaner, cheaper transportation, but right now, our infrastructure is sending the wrong message to my friends and family. I have several friends who are ready to make the jump to an electric vehicle. They are tired of volatile gas prices and want to do their part for our local air quality. But every time we talk about it, the conversation hits a dead end: they live in apartments.

Without a dedicated plug at their apartments or workplace, they would have to spend time on the weekends or weeknights searching for an available charger at a shopping center or other public place just to make sure they can make it to work for the week. EV ownership should not be viewed as just a single-family home owners’ luxury.

While transportation drives over half of our statewide emissions, it also drives billions of dollars out of our local economy through imported fossil fuels. Transitioning to electric vehicles keeps those dollars at home and cleans our air, yet a lack of reliable charging infrastructure creates a 'lockout' effect for potential EV owners.

HB1620 HD1 is a vital step toward leveling the playing field for Hawai‘i’s renters and condo dwellers. By expanding a rebate program that has already proven its success across the state, this bill brings charging directly to where people live and work. It uses our state’s barrel tax exactly as intended: turning the cost of imported oil into an investment in local infrastructure. This ensures that every resident—regardless of whether they live in a high-rise or a rural community—can finally access the cost savings and clean air that EVs provide.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Nanette Vinton

Mililani resident



**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 8:59:53 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1620, HD1**

Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support HB1620, HD1.

Hawaii has over 40,000 EVs on the road, but ranks near the bottom in public charging infrastructure. This gap is a barrier to continued progress on transportation electrification and meeting our legally mandated 2030 emissions targets under the Navahine settlement.

EVs offer Hawaii families dramatically lower transportation "fuel" costs than gasoline, reduce our millions of dollars in annual drain on imported oil, and reduce local air pollution. But these benefits only materialize if charging is convenient and accessible, especially for renters and condo residents who cannot install home chargers.

The proposed 10-cent-per-barrel barrel tax increase would have a negligible impact on gasoline prices but would be sufficient to meaningfully expand our charging network. HD1 also reallocates underutilized hydrogen funds to EV charging, a sound policy that redirects resources to where demand is immediate and growing.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB1620, HD1, with funding levels sufficient to close Hawaii's charging infrastructure gap.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.  
Noel Morin  
Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate  
Hilo, Hawai'i



FEBRUARY 17, 2026

## HOUSE BILL 1620 HD1

CURRENT REFERRAL: TRN

808-679-7454  
kris@imuaalliance.org  
www.imuaalliance.org  
@imuaalliance

Kris Coffield,  
*President*

David Negaard,  
*Director*

Mireille Ellsworth,  
*Director*

Justin Salisbury,  
*Director*

Eileen Roco,  
*Director*

Beatrice DeRego,  
*Director*

Corey Rosenlee,  
*Director*

Amy Zhao,  
*Policy and Partnerships  
Strategist*

### POSITION: SUPPORT

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Imua Alliance supports HB 1620 HD1, relating to energy, which increases the environmental response, energy, and food security tax and the amount collected from the tax that is deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount; and transfers funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending exploitation of both people and our planet. Accordingly, as the link between gender violence and the climate crisis is becoming clearer and more urgent, we support measures that drive climate action, including this proposal, which strengthens Hawai'i's electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and helps accelerate a just transition away from fossil fuels.

Electric vehicle adoption is growing, but Hawai'i still lags its potential. Hawai'i is a national leader in EV adoption, but still far from where we need to be. As of December 2025, more than 40,000 electric passenger vehicles were registered in the state, according to the Hawai'i Electric Vehicle Association, representing about 3.8% of all passenger vehicles, with year-over-year growth exceeding 15%.

Yet over 93% of passenger vehicles in Hawai'i still run on gasoline or diesel, and ground transportation remains a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and imported fuel dependence. To meet Hawai'i's climate goals and reduce the state's reliance on imported fossil fuels, EV adoption must accelerate dramatically.

Moreover, charging infrastructure remains a primary barrier to EV adoption for both the public and private sector. The Legislature has already recognized that Hawai'i is among the leading states in EV adoption, but among the last in the availability of public charging infrastructure, creating a widening infrastructure gap.

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This problem has become more acute over the past year, as federal officials have targeted numerous programs that stimulate the adoption of clean energy and electric vehicles, heightening the need to enact state policies to safeguard these programs at the local level. According to a white paper published by Harvard University's Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability in March of 2025, federal efforts to cut electric vehicle tax credits will likely reduce zero-emissions vehicle adoption rates by at least 6%, while increasing carbon emissions by 20.3 million metric tons over baseline projections for 2030.

Transitioning public sector transportation fleets to zero-emissions vehicles is critical in achieving Hawai'i's statutory commitment to achieving a 100% renewable portfolio standard. Under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation created the Ride and Drive funding opportunity for states, which set aside \$51 million in grants for projects to improve the performance, reliability, and resiliency of electric vehicle charging, while strengthening the electric vehicle workforce.

The Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO), in collaboration with other state agencies, applied for funding through the Ride and Drive program. Such funding was intended to address the infrastructure needs of Hawaii's government fleets to meet state mandates that require public agencies procuring new light-duty passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, or multi-purpose passenger vehicles to prioritize the purchase of zero-emission vehicles, with the goal of attaining 100% fleet conversion by 2035.

In October of 2025, however, the United States Department of Energy terminated more than \$7.5 billion in funding for state-level energy projects, including approximately a million dollars that had been awarded to HSEO for the development of resilient charging infrastructure through the Ride and Drive program. The department had approved the grant just four weeks before announcing its cancellation, undermining the financial stability of the state's efforts to expand access to resilient charging infrastructure.

Charging access is especially critical for renters, condominium residents, and low-income households, who often cannot install home chargers and therefore cannot benefit from the cost savings of EV ownership. A robust charging network is necessary to make EVs a viable option for everyone, not just homeowners. Research and policy experience consistently show that charging availability is one of the strongest predictors of EV adoption, as it reduces range anxiety and increases consumer confidence.

Fossil fuel dependence is not just an environmental issue. It is an economic security issue for working families and our state economy. Hawai'i imports most of its petroleum, sending billions of dollars out of the state and exposing residents to volatile global energy prices. Transportation electrification keeps money in the local economy and lowers household transportation costs.

Climate change disproportionately harms Native Hawaiian, low-income, and coastal communities through sea-level rise, extreme weather, and ecosystem

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degradation. The exploitation of people and the exploitation of the climate are interconnected: extractive industries profit, while frontline communities bear the health and financial burdens, which exacerbate the social determinants of gender violence and exploitation. Investing in EV infrastructure is thus a public health, economic equity, and climate justice strategy, not merely a technology upgrade.

Finally, the Legislature should view this measure in the broader context of Hawai'i's barrel tax on imported petroleum, which was designed to internalize the public costs of fossil fuel dependence and fund the transition to clean energy. The barrel tax recognizes that oil extraction and combustion impose significant costs on communities through climate change, air pollution, public health impacts, and economic volatility, while profits flow to multinational corporations.

Directing barrel tax revenues toward EV charging infrastructure is a concrete way to shift resources from extractive industries to community benefit, accelerate decarbonization, and ensure that the transition away from fossil fuels is financed by those who have historically contributed most to climate and human exploitation.

This bill recognizes that previous funding for EV charging incentives must dramatically increase to meet growing infrastructure needs. It supports affordability, livability, and economic resilience by reducing fossil fuel imports and expanding access to clean transportation. Expanding EV charging infrastructure is one of the most effective actions we can take to reduce emissions, lower the cost of living, and break the cycle of climate and economic exploitation.

With aloha,

*Kris Coffield*

President, Imua Alliance

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:14:44 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald "Ron" Reilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I support HB1620 HD1 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

This bill increases the barrel tax and directs the additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program, a successful but funding-constrained program.

Limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the State is an important barrier to widespread adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and lower-income households. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefiting families and helping the State achieve its clean energy and energy security goals.

Mahalo!

Ron Reilly, Volcano Village

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:32:45 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Browne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill which will build out electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Hawai'i and accelerate our shift to clean transportation.

Susan Browne

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:59:33 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Victoria Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which strengthens Hawai'i's electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding. I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD1 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Mahalo,

Victoria Anderson, Palolo

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:50:09 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steve Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

My name is Steve Parsons, I live in Hanapepe, HI and I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which strengthens Hawai'i's electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

Personally I've saved tens of Thousands in transportation costs driving EVs. EV's cost about half and maint. is about half. So, for the Millions/Billions Hawaii is spending to make Air Pollution Climate Change worst, we could cut that number in half while simultaneously Shifting 100% of that money to fight climate change and stimulate the local economy and give our most vulnerable clean air to breathe and stop poisoning our oceans and killing our reefs cuz that's what we're doing today.

Steve Parsons, Kauai EV, KBR Green Committee Chair

Feb 17, 2026, 9:30 a.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

**To: House Committee on Transportation**  
**Rep. Darius K. Kila, Chair**  
**Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair**

**From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**  
**Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB1620 HD1 — RELATING TO TAXATION

Aloha chair, vice chair and other committee members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **opposes** [HB1620 HD1](#), which would increase the environmental response, energy and food security tax from \$1.05 per barrel of petroleum to an undetermined amount.

Hawaii's residents and businesses cannot afford new taxes, tax increases, fees or surcharges. Any increase in the tax rates for petroleum products will only contribute to the high cost of living, especially the state's high energy and gas prices.

Hawaii residents already pay the highest electricity prices in the country,<sup>1</sup> and the islands that depend heavily on petroleum to provide grid-scale electricity — especially Lanai, Molokai and Oahu — would be hit hardest by the increase proposed in this legislation.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

<sup>1</sup> "[Hawaii](#)," U.S. Energy Information Administration, May 15, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Leon R. Roose, Marc Matsuura and Damon Schmidt, "[Fundamentals of Energy Transition in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories](#)," GridSTART, Oct. 24, 2025, pp. 8-9.

Aloha Chair Lowen and Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the committee.

I strongly support HB1620

Benefits of HB1620 are water regulation, higher crop yield, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, biodiversity support, pollutant filtration, and erosion prevention. To help Hawaii make better use of its resources and better protect the environment as well as strengthen its economy.

By consolidating various agricultural conservation programs under CCMAC, this policy removes administrative barriers for farmers to obtain financial incentives and technical assistance and improves statewide conservation efforts.

Respectfully submitted,  
Keith Neal  
Waimea

**HB-1620-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 5:07:10 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/17/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Lennard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB1620 HD1

Hearing with the House Committee on Transportation

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 @ 9:30 a.m. in Room 430 or via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

My name is Alan Lennard. I live in Hale‘iwa, Hawai‘i, drive an electric vehicle, and I write in strong support of HB1620 HD1, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

Transportation accounts for more than half of Hawai‘i’s statewide greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, our state spends billions annually importing gasoline and diesel, draining our local economy while contributing to air pollution and public health harms.

Electric vehicles deliver significant savings on fuel and maintenance, but without accessible, reliable charging infrastructure, many residents remain excluded from these benefits.

In 2022, thirteen youth plaintiffs filed Navahine v. Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT), leading to a landmark settlement that requires HDOT to take all necessary actions to achieve zero emissions from ground, marine, and inter-island aviation transportation by no later than 2045.

This agreement upholds children’s constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system and protects Hawai‘i’s public trust resources for present and future generations. In response,

HDOT released its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, which identifies widespread EV adoption and charging access as essential to meeting these legal obligations. HDOT has stated that approximately 81 percent of new vehicle sales must be electric by 2030 to stay on track, yet current adoption lags far behind.

Expanding charging infrastructure is a critical step to close this gap. HB1620 HD1 addresses this by increasing funding for the state's proven electric vehicle charging system rebate program, which has already supported hundreds of charging installations statewide.

The bill prioritizes charging in multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, and publicly accessible locations—improving access for renters, condo residents, rural communities, and households unable to charge at home.

By directing additional barrel tax revenue to charging infrastructure, HB1620 HD1 leverages an existing funding source to deliver long-term cost savings, cleaner air, and greater energy security for Hawai'i residents.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD1 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Thank you,  
Alan Lennard