

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

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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.2, Relating to Energy

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment, and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

DATE: Wednesday, March 18, 2026

TIME: 3:10 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice-Chairs Richards, III and Chang, and Members of the Committees:

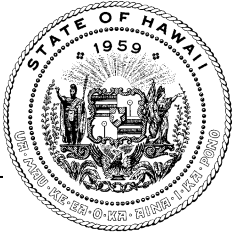
The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding H.B. 1620, H.D.2, for your consideration.

H.B. 1620, H.D.2, 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 changes to the barrel tax rate with an effective date of January 1, 2027. This will allow time to update systems, and make the necessary administrative adjustments, while also giving taxpayers adequate notice and time to prepare for the change.

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



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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MARK B. GLICK
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
AND
ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Wednesday, March 18, 2026
3:10 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
HOUSE BILL NO. 1620 HD2

RELATING TO ENERGY.

Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chair Richards and Chang, and Members of the Committees, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers the following comments on HB 1620 HD2, 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,¹ 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,² putting Hawai'i second to the bottom in the nation.

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

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

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 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.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



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

NAOMI U. KUWAYE
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Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
Senate Committees on
Agriculture & Environment
and
Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs

Wednesday, March 18, 2026
3:10 p.m.

Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Members of the Committees:

Measure: H.B. No. 1620, H.D. 2
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 470 new and upgraded EVCS installations across all four counties in Hawaii, which includes 438 Level 2 and 32

DC Fast Chargers¹. 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 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.²

The Commission supports the proposed near-term step as stated in Section 3 of H.B. 1620 HD2 to transfer funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the EVCS subaccount on July 1, 2026.

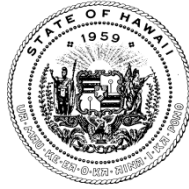
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹ See Hawaii Energy's EVCS Rebate webpage for more information and data:

<https://hawaiienergy.com/for-business/rebates-for-business/electric-vehicle-charging-stations/>

² 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/>

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
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ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

Wednesday, March 18, 2026
3:10 PM
State Capitol, 224

**HB1620, HD2
RELATING TO ENERGY**

Senate Committees on Agriculture & Environment and
Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports House Bill 1620 H.D. 2, relating to the increase of the environmental response, energy, and food security tax, and the allocation of additional funds to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

This bill directly lessens one of the main barriers to electric vehicle (EV) adoption, – the availability of public EV charging stations. Additional funding in the electric vehicle charging system subaccount will lead to timely development of additional public EV charging stations, which will encourage more residents and visitors to choose EVs. A greater share of EVs on the road will reduce Hawaii's dependence on imported fuel, reduce emissions, and improve air quality.

The DOT's Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan published in October 2025, explains how the transportation sector (including everyone who uses transportation) could meet the state's emission reduction targets established in state law. Without immediate additional investments and implementation of emission reduction strategies, Hawaii will not meet its targets. This bill proposes increased funding for a tangible and proven emissions reduction strategy that will move the state closer to achieving its targets. Electrification is the leading emissions reduction strategy for ground transportation, and expeditious development of public EV charging stations is critical to equitably electrify. The DOT is continuing to build public EV charging stations under its National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Hawaii State Plan. We have developed public charging stations at Kahului Park and Ride, Aloha Tower, and Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. Construction of another station is underway at Kapalua Airport, and we will install additional stations in 2026 and 2027 on Kauai, Molokai, Hawaii Island, Lanai and Oahu. Even with DOT's continued investments, many more public EV charging stations are needed statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1620 HD2
RELATING TO ENERGY**

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka ‘Oihana Mahi‘ai a me ke Ao Kūlohelohe
(Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment)

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Ikehu, a me ka Pilina O Nā Aupuni
(Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i
(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Malaki 18, 2026

3:10pm

Lumi 224

Aloha e Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Members of the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS HB1620 HD2** which expands the electrical vehicle (EV) charging system rebate program and facilitates needed progress for the build-out of necessary electrical vehicle charging infrastructure.

Transportation is a particularly important, and often among the largest household expense for Native Hawaiian ‘ohana. Many Native Hawaiian ‘ohana live in rural communities and disproportionately experience longest commute times that not only takes a toll on their ‘ohana financial budget, but also added stress to overall health and wellbeing.

This bill will address one of the main barriers to further EV adoption, particularly for Native Hawaiian ‘ohana who could benefit the most: more EV charging stations. Hawai‘i leads the nation in the rate of EV adoption, but is among the last in the availability of charging infrastructure. Especially as many Native Hawaiian ‘ohana live in communities with the longest commute times, this needed EV infrastructure will support achieving increased EV adoption that also benefits ‘ohana in terms of EV affordability in

total lifetime costs. Not only will this bill help 'ohana and their cost of living expenses, but also is better for the environment, and revenue-neutral for the state's budget.

Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** HB1620 HD2.
Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



MARCH 18, 2026

HOUSE BILL 1620 HD2

CURRENT REFERRAL: AEN/EIG

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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

Imua Alliance supports HB 1620 HD2, 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.

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

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

March 18, 2026, 3:10 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Sen. Mike Gabbard, Chair

Sen. Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair

Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB1620 HD2 — RELATING TO TAXATION

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and other Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **opposes** [HB1620 HD2](#), 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,¹ 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.²

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

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

² 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.



Testimony in Support of HB1620 HD2
Hearing on March 18, 2026 at 3:10pm
House Committees on AEN / EIG

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Doorae Shin, and I am the Navahine Settlement Coordinator, submitting this testimony on behalf of Our Children's Trust in strong support of HB1620 HD2, 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 HD2 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, HB1620 directly supports household affordability while advancing Hawai'i's clean energy and climate goals.

HB1620 HD2 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 HD2 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 HD2 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 HD2 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. HB1620 HD2 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 HD2 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.

Our Children’s Trust strongly urges your support for HB1620 HD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your leadership on this critical issue.

With aloha,



Doorae Shin
Our Children’s Trust

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

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

BILL NUMBER: HB 1620 HD 2

INTRODUCED BY: TRN

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. Requires the Public Utilities Commission to transfer funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

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) on July 1, 2026.

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.

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: 3/16/2026

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and Committee Members,

Kauai Climate Action Coalition, a group of more than 150 Kauai residents, strongly supports HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of the much-needed electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation. On Kauai there are currently far too few public charging stations,

The State's electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Helen Cox, Kalaheo

Chair, Kauai Climate Action Coalition



Carbon Cashback

March 16, 2026

Re: AEN/EIG hearing of HB1620 HD2 on March 18, 2026

Position: Support

Aloha e Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and members of the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs:

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 HD2, 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 committees.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF HOUSE BILL 1620, HD2

Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 3:10 p.m.
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Committee Members:

Earthjustice strongly **supports House Bill 1620, HD2**, 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 this bill 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, 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



To: The Honorable Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs Committees.

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

Re: **Hearing HB1620 HD2 RELATING TO ENERGY** Wednesday

March 18, 2026 3:10 p.m.

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs Committees!

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 HD2!

Electric vehicles will be less expensive than internal combustion vehicles, especially when considering much lower electric vehicle maintenance costs, even without federal subsidies. With ample sun, warm temperatures, and shorter driving distances, electric vehicles will save vehicle owners money and just 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 and requiring the Public Utilities Commission to transfer funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount.

The Electric Vehicle Charging System Rebate Program, funded through a small portion of the Environmental Response, Energy, and Food Security Tax, also known as the "barrel tax", has seen success in facilitating the expansion of green transportation infrastructure throughout the State. Recent Department of Transportation projects show that without immediate additional investments and implementation of emission reduction strategies, the State will not meet its legislated emissions targets. By providing further funding for the continued expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, this measure will support the State's commitment to promoting zero-emissions transportation.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 5:25:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support HB1620. For Hawaii to achieve its renewable energy goals, a large increase in the rate of ev adoption is required. The lack of charging infrastructure is a major hindrance to ev adoption. Therefore to achieve our goals we must encourage the rapid growth of ev charging infrastructure. Please pass HB1620.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 7:53:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill. Mahalo.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 1:53:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Calley ONeill | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I have been driving an electric car on the big island, living in Waimea for 14 years. I own a Leaf and now I own a Tesla. Everything that we can possibly do to support EV infrastructure expanding is critically important to our sustainable future and to reaching the goal in 2045 of having zero pollution from the transportation sector, thank you and we strongly support HP 1620

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 1:10:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| TOM DIGRAZIA | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strong support.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 2:11:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1620, HD2

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Committee Members:

I am a long-time electric vehicle (EV) driver. I am also president of Hawaii EV Association, a clean transportation advocacy nonprofit. **I strongly support HB1620, HD2.**

Hawai'i 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 Hawai'i 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 barrel barrel tax increase would have a negligible impact on gasoline prices but would be sufficient to meaningfully expand our charging network. HD2 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, HD2, with funding levels sufficient to close Hawai'i's charging infrastructure gap.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

[Noel Morin](#)

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate
Hilo, Hawai'i

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 4:04:01 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Steven Howell | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is Steven Howell, I live in St Louis Heights, and I am writing in support of HB1620 HD2, which strengthens Hawai'i's electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

I own an electric car and greatly appreciate the minimal operating costs; excellent acceleration on those absurdly short H-1 on ramps; the lack of dangerous, flammable, and environmentally destructive fuel; and the lack of noxious exhaust fumes. I am in the fortunate position of owning my house, so "refilling" the car just means plugging it in while in the driveway. It's more convenient than a trip to a gas station as well as being much cheaper.

While I'm sure a lot more people in Hawai'i would like to enjoy the benefits of an EV, many, if not most, do not have such easy access to a charger, and fear that publically available chargers are too sparse and in inconvenient locations, so EVs are not practical. I undertand that the present EV charger rebate system, while quite limited, works reasonable well, so strengthening it with more money and an emphasis on public charging stations and chargers for condominiums and apartment buildings would make EVs practical for many more people. THis would have several benefits:

- 1) People in Hawai'i would save money, since EVs are cheaper to operate.
- 2) Operating costs would be more predictable--electricity prices are much less volatile than gasoline, particularly as we move to a renewable-supplied electrical grid.
- 3) More of the money spent to power vehicles would stay in Hawai'i, paying people to generate electricity and maintain the electrical grid, rather than being sent off to oil producers.
- 4) As a bicyclist, I'd appreciate not smelling each car as it passes.
- 5) And of course, reducing the carbon dioxide emissions of Hawai'i's transportation sector is vital for reducing climate change, and is required by the *Navahine v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation* settlement. Making EV's more practical for most Hawaiians is a critical part of that.

Thank you for your attention,
Steven Howell

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 3:30:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mary Lu Kelley | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Mary Lu Kelley, I live in Koloa, Kauai, and I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD2, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

I have owned an all electric, zero emission car since 2017. Luckily I can charge at my apartment which is excellent because there are so few charging stations on Kauai and charging can take hours. I love my EV and recommend them to everyone. If my landlord pays for electricity, my fuel is free. I feel proud of driving an EV, as it represents my environmental consciousness and my concerns for the low income people. And as a retired 75 year old, living on Social Security, with gas prices rising, I am not worried about gas prices.

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 HD2 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 HD2 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 HD2 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 4:52:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

EV adoption will accelerate equitably with charging access, making this bill essential to meeting both climate targets and constitutional duties: More convenient and reliable access to charging.

Lower transportation costs for households that switch to electric vehicles.

Improved access for renters and residents without home charging.

Reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Greater energy security by reducing reliance on imported oil.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 3:54:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Honorable Members,

Please support the electric vehicle charging infrastructure bill HB1620 HD2.

Thank you,

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Committee Members,

I'm writing in support of HB1620 HD2.

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 HD2 out of your committees as an important step in diverting funds to where they make the most sense and making our transportation sector cleaner.

Mahalo nui,
Paul Bernstein
Honolulu

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:49:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| William Caron | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am writing in **strong support** of HB1620, which increases the environmental response, energy, and food security tax—commonly known as the "barrel tax"—and directs additional revenues to the electric vehicle charging system rebate program. This bill will accelerate the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and help break down one of the most significant barriers to clean transportation adoption in Hawai‘i.

The Problem: Demand Far Outstrips Funding

The electric vehicle charging system rebate program, established pursuant to Act 142, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2019, provides rebates for the installation of EV charging systems in priority locations, including multi-unit dwellings, workplaces, commercial areas, and fleet facilities. After initial funding was depleted, the Legislature dedicated a small portion of the barrel tax to create a sustainable funding stream through an electric vehicle charging system subaccount.

This program has proven remarkably successful for its initial limited size and scale, facilitating the installation of **over 450 new charging systems** in the State. But success has revealed the scale of unmet need. The demand for charging infrastructure continues to grow rapidly, widening the shortfall between available funding and the infrastructure required to meet it. Public incentives must dramatically increase to fill this growing gap.

Hawai‘i's EV Paradox

Hawai‘i faces a stark contradiction: we are **among the leading states in the nation in the rate of electric vehicle adoption** but **among the last in the availability of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure**. This infrastructure gap is not just an inconvenience—it is a major barrier to widespread EV adoption, particularly for:

- **Renters** who cannot install chargers at home;
- **Condominium residents** who lack access to private charging;
- **Rural communities** where charging stations are sparse; and
- **Lower-income households** who cannot afford the higher upfront costs of EVs without assurance that charging will be available and affordable .

As the Hawai'i Electric Vehicle Association has noted, electrifying transportation is one of the most impactful steps we can take to reduce costs, cut emissions, and build energy independence in a state that imports over **90% of its energy and fuel**.

What HB1620 Does

This bill takes three critical actions:

1. **Increases the barrel tax** on petroleum products sold in Hawai'i.
2. **Increases the amount collected from the tax that is deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount**, providing a dedicated, sustainable funding stream for the rebate program.
3. **Requires the Public Utilities Commission to transfer funds from the hydrogen fueling system subaccount to the electric vehicle charging system subaccount**, ensuring that resources are directed to the technology with the most immediate impact.

The 2025 energy security and waste reduction plan developed by the Hawai'i Department of Transportation under the landmark *Navahine* settlement recognizes the need to dramatically scale up transportation electrification to meet legal mandates to decarbonize the statewide transportation system. Building out EV charging infrastructure is an integral part of the recommended "multifaceted approach" to drive progress.

Why This Matters for Hawai'i Families

The shift from fossil fuel vehicles to electric vehicles enables families to save on their cost of living by giving them more affordable transportation options without onerous gas bills. It also benefits the local economy by reducing the massive drain of funds out of the State to pay for imported fossil fuels.

But without a robust and comprehensive EV charging network, these benefits remain out of reach for too many residents. A lack of charging availability is a major barrier for consumers to shift to electric vehicles, and bringing equity to the market requires making EVs a viable choice for everyone, regardless of housing type or income level.

HB1620 is a targeted, evidence-based response to a clear and growing need. It builds on a successful program, addresses a documented infrastructure gap, and advances Hawai'i's legal mandates to decarbonize our transportation system. Most importantly, it will help ensure that the benefits of clean transportation—lower costs, energy independence, and a healthier environment—are accessible to all Hawai'i residents, not just those who can afford single-family homes with private garages.

I urge this committee to pass HB1620.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 11:58:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 12:22:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Stephanie Hall Morin | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Committee Members,

My name is Stephanie Hall-Morin EV driver for 15 years. We need more charging stations to increase adoption to electric vehicles.

This legislation will expand EV charging infrastructure statewide by increasing rebate funding for public, workplace, and multi-unit residential chargers. Accessible charging is critical to equitable electric vehicle adoption in Hawaii.

Please pass this measure.

Stephanie Hall-Morin, Hilo, Hawaii

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 5:39:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

The State’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Virginia Tincher

Honolulu

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:02:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

The State’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Benjamin Narwold, Kapaa, HI

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 8:34:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Thomas Graham | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB 1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

The State's electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

Mahalo!

Thomas Graham, Honolulu

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:13:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John Kawamoto | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB1620 HD2

My name is John Kawamoto, and I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD2, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

Hawaii has set a statewide goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 so that we can do our part to combat climate change and mitigate its associated disasters. Transportation accounts for more than half of our statewide greenhouse gas emissions. Our state spends billions of dollars each year importing gasoline and diesel that emits greenhouse gases and drains our local economy. Electric vehicles reduce emissions and offer meaningful savings on fuel and maintenance. However, 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. However, the current level of adoption means that the target will not be met. Expanding charging infrastructure is a foundational step to closing the gap.

HB1620 HD2 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 that do not have the ability to charge at home. By directing additional barrel tax revenue to charging infrastructure, HB1620 HD2 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 HD2 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Wakai and members of the committees.

I strongly support HB1620_HD2

Scarce electric vehicle charging infrastructure is a significant barrier to wide adoption of electric vehicles, particularly for those of us on the more rural neighbor islands. This bill will help break down that barrier, benefiting local families, encouraging visitor rentals, and helping the state in its clean energy and energy security goals.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Neal
Waimea

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:30:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bobbie Best | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I'm anxious to get an EV but need a nearby charging station. Please pass this bill

mahalo

Bobbie Best

Wailuku

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:50:21 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Susan Douglas | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

The State’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Susan Douglas, Kihei

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:42:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ronald "Ron" Reilly | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Richards, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the AEN and EIG Committees,

My name is Ron Reilly, I live in Volcano Village and I am in strong support of HB1620 HD2 which will increase electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

Personally I am fortunate to charge my EV primarily via roof top solar with battery storage. This results in minimal use of grid power and provides the satisfaction knowing my driving miles are essentially sun-powered. **However, for condo dwellers and renters who do not own their roof and therefore cannot install solar PV with battery storage, access to convenient EV charging is a essential component of clean, affordable, electric vehicle ownership.**

By directing additional barrel tax revenue to charging infrastructure HB1620 HD2 uses an existing funding source to deliver long-term cost savings, cleaner air, energy security, and makes EV transportation a more realistic option for families across all our islands.

Please pass HB1620 HD2.

Thank you, Ron Reilly

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 8:54:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

The State’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

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

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 1:15:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jason Wakeham | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai‘i’s shift to clean transportation.

The State’s electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Jason Wakeham
Haiku, Maui, Hawaii

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 1:55:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Richards and Chang, and Committee Members,

My name is ALan Lennard and I drive an EV. I am watching as the state loses EV Charging Capacity [EV CHARGER DESERTIFICATION] and The timing is critical as more EV usage is coming rapidly.

This legislation will expand EV charging infrastructure statewide by increasing rebate funding for public, workplace, and multi-unit residential chargers. Accessible charging is critical to equitable electric vehicle adoption in Hawaii.

Please pass this measure.

Thank you

Alan Lennard

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 1:17:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Eric Lindborg | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

The State's electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 4:58:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Seuta'atia Cochran | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

I support HB1620 HD2 because it will help the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accelerate Hawai'i's shift to clean transportation.

The State's electric vehicle charging system rebate program has been successful, but funding for the program has not been able to meet the demand for new charging systems. Raising the barrel tax and directing the new revenues to the program will help satisfy that demand.

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 while helping the State achieve energy independence.

Mahalo!

Seuta'atia Cochran

Ewa Beach, 'Iolani Schools

HB-1620-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 6:57:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/18/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Leo Cohen | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Leo Cohen, I live in Washington DC, I am an intern for Our Children’s Trust, and I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD2, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

My commitment to our climate has been lifelong. I grew up helping maintain my grandparents' off-grid home in rural California, where I learned to value simple things I took for granted back in the city, like the energy required for a warm shower. As I grew older, those memories were eclipsed by the reality of the climate crisis: witnessing ash fall from wildfires, enduring unbearable heat waves, drought, and seeing the mounting threats of sea level rise. While I fear losing my home to a wildfire, that loss is already a reality for Navahine plaintiff, whose home was destroyed by a climate-induced mudslide

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 HD2 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 HD2 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 HD2 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Leo Cohen

Testimony in Support of HB1620 HD2
Hearing with the Senate AEN / EIG Committees
Wednesday March 18, 2026 @ 3:10pm in Room 224 or via Videoconference

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Molly Cochran, I live in Eugene, OR, and I am writing in strong support of HB1620 HD2, which strengthens Hawai'i's electric vehicle charging infrastructure through expanded and dedicated funding.

I am currently a law student at the University of Oregon, School of Law, where I just helped to host PIELC, the 44th annual Public Interest and Environmental Law Conference. The University of Oregon's Environmental Law program has allowed me to dive into the climate movement from the standpoint of an activist with the tools to advocate for accessible clean energy and sustainability. One of the most prevalent conversations at PIELC this year was making greener transportation a reality for everyone, not just those with the resources to have their own charging infrastructure at home. The only way to make green transportation a reality for all is to make it accessible for all.

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For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB1620 HD2 and make clean transportation a realistic option for families across all islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.