

HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone: (808) 451-6648
Web: energy.hawaii.gov

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARK B. GLICK
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

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

Monday, February 9, 2026
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
SB 2486

RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Chang and Richards, and Members of the Committees, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on SB 2486, which requires the Hawai'i State Energy Office to contract with a third-party consultant to develop a Climate Protection Plan for delivery to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of the Regular Session of 2029, and establishes a Climate Protection Advisory Committee to assist the third-party consultant.

HSEO shares the measure's underlying intent to advance Hawai'i's climate and energy objectives. However, HSEO is concerned that the planning effort contemplated by SB 2486 is largely redundant with significant statewide energy and climate planning work that has already been completed in recent years. In particular, the 2023 HSEO Pathways to Decarbonization¹ and the more recent 2025 Hawai'i Climate Action Pathways² report, both completed by the Climate Commission, provide comprehensive

¹ Hawai'i State Energy Office (2023). Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization, Report to the 2024 Hawai'i State Legislature. Available at: <https://energy.hawaii.gov/clean-energy-vision/decarbonization-strategy/>

² Hawai'i Climate Change, Mitigation, and Adaptation Commission (2025) Hawai'i Climate Action Pathways. Available at: <https://climate.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Hawai%E2%80%98i-Climate-Action-Pathway.pdf>

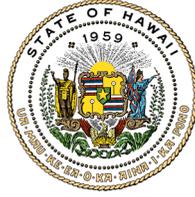
statewide analyses and recommendations to guide policy, investment, and implementation. Both reports identify and quantify specific strategies, policy implementation, and pathways needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition the State toward a clean energy economy. Both reports were also developed in partnership with state agencies, counties, technical experts, and community stakeholders to guide investments in policies, practices, and technologies that reduce emissions, increase resiliency, and support economic and public health outcomes.

From HSEO's perspective, the need for action has not changed since the publication of these plans and strategies. At this time, HSEO believes state resources would be better allocated towards deployment of recommended issue-specific work and implementation in priority areas already identified in existing plans and reports that are intended to advance Hawai'i's climate and energy objectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committees on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
AND
ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

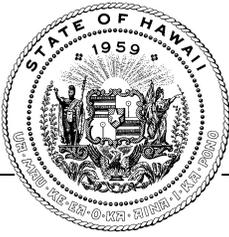
**Monday, February 9, 2026
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2486
RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Senate Bill 2486 requires the Hawaii State Energy Office to contract with a third-party consultant to develop a Climate Protection Plan for delivery to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2029. The bill establishes a Climate Protection Advisory Committee to assist the third-party consultant and appropriates funds. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) offers comments.**

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

The Commission just completed the State's *Climate Action Pathways (2025)* which coordinated with the *Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan (2025)* and built upon the *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization (2023)*. These plans provide extensive recommendations to mitigate the effects of climate change in Hawai'i. In addition, the Hawai'i Climate Advisory Team's report *Policy Recommendations on Climate Disaster Resilience, Recovery and Funding (2025)* provided recommendations for climate resilience and adaptation. In lieu of yet another statewide plan the Commission respectfully suggests that funding be provided to begin implementation of the actions identified in these plans. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

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

Thursday, February 12, 2026, 3:10 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of
SB 2486
RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **offers comments** on SB 2486, which would require the Hawai'i State Energy Office to develop a climate protection plan.

OPSD shares the Legislature's commitment to advancing climate resilience and reducing climate risk statewide. However, requiring the State Energy Office to develop a separate climate protection plan is duplicative to statutory responsibilities already assigned to OPSD, as well as the advisory functions of the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. Establishing parallel climate planning requirements in another agency risks fragmentation, inefficiency, and confusion regarding statewide leadership, coordination, and accountability.

Under statute, OPSD is charged with statewide planning, climate and sustainability coordination, and long-range policy alignment across sectors—including land use, climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, infrastructure, and sustainable development.

To ensure continuity and transparency, OPSD advanced the need for a comprehensive Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan through the Governor's 2024 Administrative Package (HB 2371 / SB 3060). This initiative is now a budgeted project within the Governor's Green Fee package, GM-2. Upon confirmation of the Governor's Green Fee project inclusion, OPSD collaborated with the Governor's Office to support the introduction of SB 2977 (2026) as a supplemental funding vehicle to address remaining needs, including dedicated staffing.

These actions establish a clear, phased, and fiscally responsible pathway to **develop Hawai'i's first statewide Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan**—aligning climate science, energy, land use, infrastructure, housing, agriculture, and natural resource policy within a unified framework. OPSD respectfully recommends avoiding duplicative planning responsibilities, and continuing to support the Governor's and OPSD's coordinated approach of establishing a Hawai'i Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan to ensure clarity in statewide leadership, efficiency, and ensure effective statewide implementation.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on SB 2486.

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) represents more than 7,000 governmental, private, academic, and uniformed services sector environmental health professionals in the U.S., its territories, and internationally. This workforce represents the second largest constituent of the existing public health workforce, second only to nursing. We are the profession's strongest advocate for excellence in the practice of environmental health as we deliver on our mission to build, sustain, and empower an effective environmental health workforce.

Policy Statement on Climate Change

Adopted: July 2023

Policy Sunset: July 2028

Climatic changes like rising temperatures, more extreme weather, and rising carbon dioxide (CO₂) and sea levels are influencing environmental exposures that affect human health. These environmental exposures include air pollution, changes in vectorborne disease, increases in allergens and seasons when allergens are prevalent, water quality impacts, water and food supply, population displacement and relocation, environmental degradation, and the frequency and intensity of extreme heat and weather events. Not everyone is equally at risk for climate change-related health impacts. Risk can be influenced by age, economic resources, and location (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022).

Furthermore, one of the most comprehensive reviews of climate change research worldwide—and the largest assessment exercise in history—is being conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which is made up of independent working groups that examine both peer-reviewed publications and gray literature. The 6th IPCC systematic review of the applicable published literature and the assessment reports for the public and policymakers is current and clear: “It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean, and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere, and biosphere have occurred” (IPCC, 2021, p. 4).

NEHA recognizes climate change as a global environmental health problem that has health and safety impacts on individuals and communities. Environmental health professionals improve and protect the public's health and create healthy and sustainable communities. NEHA supports building the capacity of environmental health professionals to address the health impacts of climate change with risk assessment, adaptation, and mitigation planning. Developing successful solutions to climate change has implications for the structure and viability of the U.S. economy, as well as global economic impacts that affect the health and welfare of people worldwide.

NEHA supports federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) jurisdictions in developing policies, using frameworks, and implementing plans to address climate and health, including

technical assistance and training, some through mini-grants and direct funding, to accomplish the following:

- Conduct risk assessments and establish plans to anticipate risks for adaptation and resilience building for future generations. Using the audience segmentation techniques identified by Maibach et al. (2008) can help professionals refine individual risk perceptions. Climate change and health equity are at the cutting edge of these assessments of risks to vulnerable populations.
- Incorporate green space, green roofs, energy conservation, and other technologies into the built environment to help reduce the effects of urban heat islands. Urban areas are warmer than adjacent rural areas due to the absorption of sunlight (Seto et al., 2012; U.S. Global Change Research Program [USGCRP], 2016). In the short-term, heat waves pose the greatest threat to the environment and human health due to impaired air quality and heat-related illnesses in vulnerable populations including older adults, individuals with chronic diseases, low-income populations, outdoor laborers, etc. (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [U.S. EPA], 2022; Watts et al., 2015).
- Conserve and replenish fresh water sources and support planning and implementation activities to mitigate climate change-related health impacts on water sources. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (n.d.), climate change poses increased risks of prolonged droughts, making them more frequent, more severe, and of longer duration. Droughts can have short- and long-term health implications, led by the devastating impacts of wildfires. Possible long-term public health impacts include drinking water scarcity and decreased water quality, poor air quality, increased wildfire impacts, degraded sanitation and hygiene, impacts on food supplies and nutrition, and an increase in vectorborne disease (CDC, 2022). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA, 2023a) estimates that more than one half of the U.S. population relies on groundwater for domestic use. Wildfires impact water quality, as shown by the devastating effect of the Colorado wildfires in Boulder and surrounding counties. Droughts—forecasted to worsen with climate change—can have a significant impact on existing groundwater supplies through decreased aquifer recharge and increased pumping (Taylor et al., 2013).
- Address the need for more funding and coordinated data bank repositories for state and local governments that are designed for collaborative use by jurisdictions. In the decades-long-term future, climate change poses an increased risk of changes in the extent and volume of sea ice; significant changes in sea levels, water temperatures, ocean acidification, and freshwater chemistry; increased coastal flooding and erosion and impacts on infrastructure; expansion of the range of disease vectors; and geographic spread of tropical diseases.

NEHA supports the following policies and actions for environmental health professionals:

- Adopt a multidisciplinary approach to address action on climate change. The Commission on Health and Climate Change has produced 10 policy recommendations



that can serve as a broad reference base for environmental health professionals to make incremental changes at their associated levels of community (Watts et al., 2015).

- Create a “whole community” engagement approach to engage and empower the entire community, all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and private sector industries established through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2011).
- Strengthen community resilience to climate-related events. Due to local culture and capacity, there is no single solution to climate change adaptation, but there are resiliency frameworks, such as the one developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that can be used by environmental health professionals (Chandra et al., 2011).
- Collect baseline disease rates and examine exposure-outcome associations to quantify the impacts of climate change on health and determine direct attribution (Marinucci et al., 2014). Climate change hazards might exacerbate existing health disparities over time due to the changing density and demography of populations. Support for surveillance activities will allow better monitoring for change over time. U.S. EPA (2023b) has developed more than 50 climate change indicators that can help environmental health professionals to better examine and assess these risks in their own communities.
- Reduce barriers, share best practices, and evaluate metrics through stakeholder engagement strategies similar to those activities proposed by Bierbaum et al. (2013).
- Work with the Climate and Health Program within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to assist health departments in developing states and cities that are climate ready. The five-step process framework from CDC—Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (BRACE)—anticipates impacts, assesses health vulnerabilities, and creates adaptive capacity to reduce exposures and disease (Managan et al., 2014).

Analysis

In 1997, NEHA adopted a climate change position statement that acknowledged the gravity of climate change, as well as the need for legislation and research, concerted action and cooperation, and the deployment of environmental and public health professionals to be resources (Radtke et al., 1997). Since then, additional evidence of climate change has documented the seriousness of regular, worldwide climate change impacts. This policy statement continues to address the fundamental objectives of NEHA.

This policy statement is updated and portrays current information on the status of the climate change crisis with particular emphasis on the implications for environmental and public health. It is intended to be used as a basis for environmental health professionals and their colleagues to initiate discussions within their communities regarding the potential impacts and vulnerabilities of climate change and develop solutions to issues and opportunities. Environmental health professionals are vital partners in developing climate change mitigation



and adaptation measures.

NEHA recognizes climate change as a worldwide environmental health crisis caused in part by human influences. Climate change has serious health and safety impacts on individuals and communities. While initially referred to as global warming, climate change is a more recent term that identifies significant changes in climate trends and measures lasting for an extended period of time, such as changes in temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns (U.S. EPA, 2023c). Greenhouse gases (i.e., CO₂ from burning coal, oil, and natural gas; nitrous oxide; methane) in the atmosphere absorb solar radiation and emit it back to the Earth's surface, which plays a significant role in triggering the climate changes observed in recent decades (U.S. EPA, 2023d). Therefore, energy policy, including the electric utility generation mix, has been at the leading edge of public policy. Progress has been slow, however, similar to the evolution of electric airplanes and cars becoming a dominant force in transportation. These changes can take decades, even though the market and our knowledge are always dynamic and in real time.

Justification

Weather-related disasters occur throughout the U.S. and abroad each year. Based on the latest data in 2022, extreme events are growing in intensity and cost, fueled in part by the Earth's changing climate. The sum of leading research across the globe continues to confirm that human activities contribute to increasing levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere. Shifting weather patterns are impacting food production, rising sea levels, and increased rainfall events, which increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, wildfires, droughts, intensified storm events, and other related consequences. These climatic fluctuations are also leading to significant disparities within the U.S. and internationally.

According to the World Health Organization, climate change adversely affects human health. One example is that federal healthcare expenditures are increasing due to climate-related impacts (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2015). Health effects include increased respiratory and cardiovascular disease, as well as injuries and premature death (CDC, 2022).

The U.S. average temperature has increased by 1.3–1.9 °F since 1895 with most of the increase (not geographically uniform) happening since 1970 (USGCRP, 2016). The percentage of people diagnosed with asthma has increased in the U.S. from 7.3% in 2001 to 8.4% in 2010 (CDC, 2022). In the U.S., an average of 702 heat-related deaths and 67,512 emergency department visits occur annually due to heat (CDC, 2023).

The benefits far outweigh the economic consequences of delaying the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. It will be costly either way, but the costs of delayed action are more costly as higher temperatures and higher CO₂ concentrations continue. Policies now can avoid more costly fixes in future years (Furman & Podesta, 2014).

Addressing climate change can be an overwhelming and daunting task, but when all individuals in a community engage, prepare, and collaborate on effective climate change strategies, partnerships and solutions arise that can lead the way in the design of solutions. Evaluating



baseline opinions, values, core beliefs, and identities of a community's diverse population can allow environmental health professionals to better understand how and where behavior change can produce maximum positive results. Promoting long-term planning for climate change is important. Communities must create and be examples of how to live more efficient and sustainable lifestyles, such as using mass transportation, reducing waste, and conserving energy and water. Environmental health professionals can lead the way.

References

Bierbaum, R., Smith, J.B., Lee, A., Blair, M., Carter, L., Chapin, F.S., III, Fleming, P., Ruffo, S., Stults, M., McNeeley, S., Wasley, E., & Verduzco, L. (2013). A comprehensive review of climate adaptation in the United States: More than before, but less than needed. *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change*, 18(3), 361–406. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11027-012-9423-1>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *CDC's Climate and Health Program*. <http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Heat & Health Tracker*. <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/heatTracker/>

Chandra, A., Acosta, J.D., Howard, S., Uscher-Pines, L., Williams, M.V., Yeung, D., Garnett, J., & Meredith, L.S. (2011). *Building community resilience to disasters: A way forward to enhance national health security*. RAND Corporation.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2011). *A whole community approach to emergency management: Principles, themes, and pathways for action* (FDOC 104-008-1). https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/whole_community_dec2011__2.pdf

Furman, J., & Podesta, J. (2014, July 29). *New report: The cost of delaying action to stem climate change* [Blog]. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/07/29/new-report-cost-delaying-action-stem-climate-change>

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2021). *Climate change 2012, the physical science basis: Summary for policymakers*. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM_final.pdf

Maibach, E., Roser-Renouf, C., & Leiserowitz, A. (2009). *Global Warming's Six Americas: An audience segmentation analysis*. Yale Project on Climate Change and George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication. <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/05/pdf/6americas.pdf>

Manangan, A.P., Uejio, C.K., Saha, S., Schramm, P.J., Marinucci, G.D., Langford Brown, C., Hess, J.J., & Luber, G. (2014). *Assessing health vulnerability to climate change: A guide for health departments* (CS249409-A). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects. <https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/pubs/AssessingHealthVulnerabilitytoClimateChange.pdf>



- Marinucci, G.D., Luber, G., Uejio, C.K., Saha, S., & Hess, J.J. (2014). Building Resilience Against Climate Effects—A novel framework to facilitate climate readiness in public health agencies. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 11(6), 6433–6458. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph110606433>
- Radtke, T., Gist, G.L., & Wittkopf, T.E. (1997). National Environmental Health Association position on global climate change. *Journal of Environmental Health*, 60(4), 45–46. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44527187>
- Seto, K.C., Güneralp, B., & Hutyra, L.R. (2012). Global forecasts of urban expansion to 2030 and direct impacts on biodiversity and carbon pools. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 109(40), 16083–16088. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1211658109>
- Taylor, R.G., Todd, M.C., Kongola, L., Maurice, L., Nahozya, E., Sanga, H., & MacDonald, A.M. (2013). Evidence of the dependence of groundwater resources on extreme rainfall in East Africa. *Nature Climate Change*, 3, 374–387. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate1731>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2022). *Climate change and the health of socially vulnerable people*. <https://www.epa.gov/climateimpacts/climate-change-and-health-socially-vulnerable-people>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023a). *Report on the environment: Ground water*. <https://www.epa.gov/report-environment/ground-water>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023b). *Climate change indicators: View the indicators*. <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/view-indicators>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023c). *Climate change indicators in the United States*. <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023d). *Overview of greenhouse gases*. <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases>
- U.S. Geological Survey. (n.d.). *Droughts and climate change*. <https://www.usgs.gov/science/science-explorer/climate/droughts-and-climate-change>
- U.S. Global Change Research Program. (2016). *The impacts of climate change on human health in the United States: A scientific assessment*. <https://health2016.globalchange.gov>
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2015). *Climate change: HHS could take further steps to enhance understanding of public health risks* (GAO-16-122). <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-16-122>
- Watts, N., Adger, W.N., Agnolucci, P., Blackstock, J., Byass, P., Cai, W., Chaytor, C., Colbourn, T., Collins, M., Cooper, A., Cox, P.M., Depledge, J., Drummond, P., Elkins, P., Galaz, V., Grace, D., Graham, H., Grubb, M., Haines, A., . . . Costello, A. (2015). Health and climate change: Policy responses to protect public health. *The Lancet*, 386(100060), 1861–1914. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)60854-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60854-6)



Drafted in 2020 by the NEHA Climate and Health Committee

Tania M. Busch Isaksen, MPH, PhD, REHS

Lecturer, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, University of Washington, School of Public Health

Richard Hicks, MPA

Office of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, Environmental Health Division, Columbus Public Health

Richard Valentine

Director, Air Quality Bureau, Salt Lake County Health Department

Leon Vinci, DHA, RS

NEHA Climate Change Technical Advisor, Founder and CEO, Health Promotion Consultants

Updated in 2023 by the NEHA Climate and Health Committee

Timothy Arr

Indian Health Service

Rose Galbraith

New Mexico Department of Health

Steven Konkel, PhD, MCP, SB (Arch. E)

Principal, Konkel and Associates

Scott Leroy

Corizon Health

Michael A. Pascucilla, MPH, REHS, DAAS

CEO/Director of Public Health, East Shore District Health Department

Leon Vinci, DHA, RS, DAAS

Founder and CEO, Health Promotion Consultants

Edited by:

Kristen Ruby-Cisneros

Managing Editor, *Journal of Environmental Health*



SB-2486

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 6:03:09 PM

Testimony for EIG on 2/12/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Climate Protectors Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!



To: The Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIG)
and
The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Monday, February 9, 2026, 3pm

Comments for SB2486

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Chang and Richards, and members of the EIG and AEN committees,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org offers **comments on SB2486** that requires the Hawai'i State Energy Office to contract with a third-party consultant to develop a Climate Protection Plan and establishes a Climate Protection Advisory Committee to assist the third-party consultant.

350Hawaii is in strong support of efforts put forth by this legislature that would advance the development of a much-needed Climate Protection Plan. As an island state, Hawaii is ground zero for climate devastation, from more intense storms, to food insecurity, to rising seas and shoreline destruction. And let's be clear. Climate change is not an abstract problem for the future. Climate change is happening now, we are causing it, and the longer we wait to act, the more we lose.

Decisive planning using a science-based roadmap to ensure the State can continue developing renewable energy resources and reducing harmful emissions, even amid federal cuts to climate programs, is absolutely critical. We applaud and fully support the intent of this measure. It is essential that these plans include a just transition to a net-zero economy, Native Hawaiian values, and the State's existing climate and energy commitments, as noted in this measure.

As such, we respectfully offer amendments towards achieving these stated objectives.

First, we note that the measure stipulates various deliverables to be included in the Climate Protection Plan, deliverables that are both necessary and essential for the plan, and which we are in strong support of. However, we have serious concerns that "nuclear microreactors" is included in this measure as part of the evaluation of emerging technologies needed.

Including the evaluation of "nuclear microreactors" as part of this plan would be a poor use of our tax dollars. The Hawai'i State Energy Office has already performed this evaluation and recently released the final report of the Nuclear Energy Working Group created by the Legislature under SCR136. It is important to note that the report concludes that advanced

nuclear technologies (like small modular reactors) are not currently suitable for Hawaii. Moreover, through this working group, a mechanism has already been put in place to monitor advancements and consider updates. As such, we strongly recommend that language in this measure referencing “nuclear microreactors” be stricken from the text of this bill as it is not needed and would be duplicative of existing efforts.

Second, we strongly encourage the inclusion of a representative from the Native Hawaiian community be part of the membership of the Climate Protection Advisory Committee. This is particularly important, as we note that the integration of Native Hawaiian rights and knowledge systems are intended to be incorporated into strategies that are recommended in this plan, in addition to defining roles for relevant community partners, including Native Hawaiian organizations.

Climate change is not something in the future, it is happening now, and we are living in a climate crisis. Steps must be made to address the crisis and plan accordingly. Developing a Climate Protection Plan combines strategies with the actions needed for the roadmap we must take to a low-carbon and resilient future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration of our suggested amendments.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-2486

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:50:49 PM

Testimony for EIG on 2/12/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynda Williams	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I respectfully urge the committee to amend SB2486 by removing the reference to nuclear microreactors in Section 3(a)(14) on page 4.

I served on the Hawai'i State Energy Office Nuclear Energy Working Group in 2025, which was established pursuant to SB136. That process already evaluated advanced nuclear and microreactor proposals and clearly found that nuclear power is not feasible or appropriate for Hawai'i. Microreactors are not commercially available, will not be deployable within the timeframe of this Climate Protection Plan, are not classified as renewable under Hawai'i law, and raise legal and constitutional conflicts. Requiring a third-party consultant to revisit this settled issue is redundant and an inefficient use of public funds.

I also urge the committee to amend the advisory committee provisions to explicitly require seats on the Climate Protection Advisory Committee for Native Hawaiian stakeholders, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and for Indigenous practitioners with expertise in traditional ecological knowledge, climate adaptation, and sustainability. These representatives must be formally appointed members of the advisory committee, not optional invitees or discretionary participants.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Lynda Williams

Hilo, Hawai'i

LATE

SB-2486

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:20:50 PM

Testimony for EIG on 2/12/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Zehr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully oppose SB2486. Hawai‘i already has some of the most ambitious climate and renewable energy mandates in the nation, along with multiple agencies, commissions, and statutory frameworks dedicated to mitigation and adaptation. SB2486 would appropriate \$2 million to hire a third-party consultant to produce yet another comprehensive plan, despite the existence of established goals, inventories, sector strategies, and reporting requirements.

While long-term planning is important, this bill risks duplicating existing efforts rather than accelerating meaningful action. The State Energy Office, the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, DBEDT, DOT, DOH, and the University of Hawai‘i already generate data, strategies, and implementation roadmaps. Creating an additional advisory committee and consultant-driven process may divert limited public funds toward process instead of tangible resilience projects, such as hardening infrastructure, restoring watersheds, or supporting locally generated energy.

Further, the bill prescribes an expansive and highly detailed planning mandate, including equity allocations, benefit-flow directives, behavioral incentives, and sector-specific interventions. Embedding such policy preferences into a consultant-led framework before legislative debate risks predetermining outcomes and constraining future flexibility. Climate strategy should remain adaptable to technological innovation, market signals, and evolving economic conditions, especially in a high-cost state where energy affordability and economic competitiveness are already serious concerns.

If federal funding uncertainty is the concern, the Legislature may wish to prioritize targeted, shovel-ready resilience investments or regulatory reforms that reduce barriers to private-sector

renewable deployment, rather than funding a new multi-year planning process set to conclude in 2029.

Hawai'i's climate goals are already clear. The more pressing need is efficient implementation, fiscal discipline, and regulatory streamlining, not another statewide plan.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to defer SB2486.