

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. No. 2691, Relating to Transportation Affordability

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Transportation

DATE: Thursday, February 5, 2026

TIME: 3:01 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding S.B. 2691 for your consideration.

Section 2 of the bill creates a new section 196-A, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), which establishes a clean rebate program to be administered by the Department of Transportation (HDOT). Subsection (h), on page 11, provides that any rebate received shall not be considered income for purposes of state or county taxes.

Section 2 of the bill also creates a new section 196-B, HRS, on page 13, which establishes a clean vehicle special fund, which will be funded with revenues from the transportation affordability and energy security tax, funds received by HDOT for purposes of the clean vehicle special fund, and interest earnings on all amounts in the special fund.

Section 3 of the bill, on page 14, creates a new section in chapter 237, HRS, establishing an "additional tax," in addition to the 4 percent general excise tax levied on the sale of tangible personal property, on the gross proceeds of sale of light-duty motor vehicles powered solely by gasoline, diesel, or gasoline or diesel blends, with or without a battery. The additional tax will be levied at three different rates, which are currently unspecified, based on the miles per gallon of the vehicle under federal Environmental

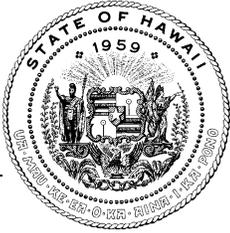
Protection Agency ratings. The additional tax is to be deposited into the clean vehicle special fund.

The bill is effective on July 1, 2026.

DOTAX notes that the provision requiring an allocation of revenues from the additional tax into the clean vehicle special fund would require a fundamental change in the way that DOTAX accounts for and reports on GET revenues. This bill would create administrative difficulties, as DOTAX will need to reconcile the amounts reported from the additional tax with actual amounts collected. Discrepancies will arise because the amount of tax collected often does not match the amount of tax reported for various reasons, including errors in payment or reporting or intentional underpayment. Additionally, many taxpayers report multiple categories of business activities on a single GET return, which complicates the accurate determination of amounts to be allocated. DOTAX therefore requests that the allocation of revenue to the special fund be replaced with an appropriation of a set dollar amount.

DOTAX further requests that the effective date be amended to January 1, 2027 to allow sufficient time to make the necessary form, instruction, and system changes.

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



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Thursday, February 5, 2026
3:01 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
SENATE BILL NO. 2691

RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY.

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers the following comments on Senate Bill No. 2691, which requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, establishes the clean vehicle special fund and establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

There is no dispute that meeting Hawai'i's decarbonization goals will require significant emissions reductions from ground transportation with Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) as a key strategy as reported in HSEO's *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization* report¹ submitted to the Legislature in December 2023 pursuant to Act 238 (2022). To achieve those ends significant penetration in all segments of the ZEV ground transportation market will need to be achieved.

All three mitigation scenarios in the *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization* report assume Hawai'i will achieve 100% ZEV light-duty vehicle sales by 2035, with 21% of registered light-duty passenger vehicles needing to be ZEVs by 2030.

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

HSEO is currently working on a data-driven statewide EV charging infrastructure roadmap to guide efficient investments and address market gaps. Access to market data helps to refine assumptions, improve data resolution, incorporate evolving vehicle adoption trends, and measure effectiveness of EV adoption policies and programs by evaluating adoption of ZEVs by region, housing type, and demographic information. HSEO appreciates provisions in the bill to provide the chief energy officer relevant data from the proposed program to fulfill the duties under sections 225P-8 and 196-71.

While achieving these goals requires policies that remove barriers to ZEV adoption, including a market-based clean vehicle rebate program targeted at lower-income households, 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.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NALANI BRUN, DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
REIKO MATSUYAMA, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Christina Kaser

Energy Coordinator, Office of Economic Development
County of Kaua'i

Before the

Senate Committee on Transportation

February 5, 2026; 3:01 p.m.

Conference Room 229 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of

Senate Bill 2691

Relating to Transportation Affordability

Honorable Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

The County of Kaua'i is in **support** of Senate Bill 2691, which requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles; Establishes the clean vehicle special fund; Establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

The County is committed to working towards Hawai'i's state-wide goal of 100% carbon neutrality by 2045, noting the significance of contributions from transportation. Citing the most recently completed County greenhouse gas inventory from 2017, emissions from the transportation sector accounted for over 65% of Kaua'i's greenhouse gas emissions, with roughly 35% of transportation emissions from ground transportation. Tackling ground transportation emissions will require state-wide intervention, including investment in creating spaces for multi-modal mobility options to thrive, as well as transitioning to electrified transportation.

Upfront costs and access are a barrier to transitioning to EVs, and we recognize that since our island first saw EVs on our roads in 2012, not everyone has been in a position where they can purchase a new, or even used, electric car.

In 2022, we witnessed California commit to banning gas-powered vehicle sales by 2035, prompting many car manufacturers to follow in similar commitments considering California has the largest car market in the US and drives the national auto industry. In the last few years, we have also seen upfront EV prices fall and become more comparable to conventional gas-powered vehicles. With Kaua'i County Council's passing of EV-ready and EVSE-installed requirements for new construction and retrofits in 2022, and the County's commitment to expanding EV charging infrastructure in public spaces, we expect to see more EV adoption on Kaua'i across all income brackets.

The County suggests that there is great value in developing localized programs to incentivize electric vehicle adoption, especially as support for EVs has lapsed at the federal level. We anticipate the

proposed state-wide funding would provide ease of participation and increased EV uptake among those individuals who have had barriers to early adoption.

EVs are often cheaper to power and yield significant savings in maintenance compared to conventional fuel-powered vehicles. The County supports these efforts to provide more opportunities for our community to enjoy the benefits of EVs and overall contribute to increased electrification.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of SB2691.

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: GENERAL EXCISE, Transportation Affordability and Energy Security Tax with Clean Vehicle Rebate

BILL NUMBER: SB 2691

INTRODUCED BY: INOUYE, FUKUNAGA, LEE, C., RHOADS, SAN BUENAVENTURA, Elefante, Lamosao

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. Establishes the clean vehicle special fund. Establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

SYNOPSIS: Adds two new sections to chapter 196, HRS, to establish a clean vehicle rebate program. Rebates shall be distributed for purchases or leases of eligible clean vehicles as follows:

(1) Each eligible purchase or lease of a new zero-emission vehicle shall receive a rebate of \$5,000;

(2) Each eligible purchase or lease of a new plug-in hybrid electric vehicle shall receive a rebate of \$2,500;

(3) Each eligible purchase or lease of a used zero-emission vehicle shall receive a rebate of \$2,000; and

(4) Each eligible purchase or lease of a used plug-in hybrid electric vehicle shall receive a rebate of \$1,000.

The rebate shall be applied at the point of sale by participating dealers.

But:

(1) Rebates shall be offered to applicants with household incomes of up to two hundred per cent of the area median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development;

(2) Rebates for new vehicles shall be offered for vehicles that have a manufacturer's suggested retail price of not more than \$60,000;

(3) Rebates for used vehicles shall be offered for vehicles that:

(A) Are purchased from a dealer;

(B) Have a sale price of not less than \$3,000 and not more than \$25,000 before the application of the rebate but after any trade-in value;

(C) Are a model year at least two years earlier than the calendar year in which the vehicle purchased;

(D) Have not previously received a rebate for a used vehicle purchase or lease under this section; and

(E) Meet minimum reliability metrics developed by the department of transportation in implementing the clean vehicle rebate program;

Upon request by a dealer, the department of transportation shall disclose whether a vehicle has previously received a rebate for a used vehicle purchase or lease under this section.

(4) Rebates for leased vehicles shall be offered for vehicles that:

(A) Are leased by dealers or retailers to consumers; and

(B) Have not previously received a rebate for a vehicle lease under this section;

provided that the dealer or retailer shall clearly show the calculated lease price before and after the application of the rebate; and

(5) Rebates for plug-in hybrid vehicles shall be offered for vehicles that have an electric range of not less than forty miles.

An additional rebate of \$1,000, in addition to the rebate for eligible clean vehicle types in subsection (b), shall be offered to purchasers and lessees in low- and moderate-income households. The department shall provide outreach to low- and moderate-income households and communities to increase consumer awareness of the rebate program.

Establishes a special fund out of which the rebates will be paid.

Amends section 237-13, HRS, to impose (through the general excise tax system) an additional tax on the sale of a light-duty motor vehicle that is powered solely by gasoline, diesel, or gasoline or diesel blends, with or without a battery, as follows:

Tax Rate	Vehicle MPG
___%	Less than 30
___%	30 or more but less than 50
___%	More than 50

Tax collections are to be deposited into the clean vehicle special fund.

Defines “light-duty motor vehicle” by cross-reference to section 196-9, HRS.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026.

STAFF COMMENTS: The new tax proposed appears to be a Hawaii analog to the federal gas guzzler tax.

In the late 1970s, the U.S. Congress, in an effort to conserve fossil fuels, passed the 1978 Energy Tax Act. It awarded tax breaks to citizens and businesses employing specific renewable energy solutions to reduce the use of fossil fuels like oil and natural gas. Also included in the legislation was a blueprint to tax cars falling below the regulation's 22.5 miles per gallon (mpg) standard. Today, we know it as the Gas Guzzler Tax (GGT). It is still in effect today.

According to the Kelley Blue Book, the tax appears to have had minimal effectiveness:

A relic of the response to oil embargoes and gas shortages of the 1970s, the Gas Guzzler Tax was a somewhat mildly effective tool raised against fuel-slurping land yachts and high-horsepower performance cars. Although the goal was to discourage consumers from buying fuel-inefficient cars, in reality, it had little impact on purchase decisions. Had it been effective, the government would surely have expanded the GGT to, in some way, cover SUVs and pickups, too. What has been effective for reducing the number of gasoline-thirsty vehicle sales is government pressure on carmakers to meet ever-higher average mileage requirements. This has curbed V8 and higher cylinder-count engines from new car showrooms.

Heaps, R., Gas Guzzler Tax: What You Need to Know (May 30, 2025), available at [Gas Guzzler Tax: What You Need to Know - Kelley Blue Book](#)

As written, the new tax may be subject to the same loophole that the gas guzzler tax has: it is only to apply to a "light-duty motor vehicle," so would that exclude pickup trucks, vans, or SUVs? The definition in the bill refers to section 196-9, HRS, which defines the term by cross-reference to 10 CFR part 490. 10 CFR section 490.2 defines the term as "a light duty truck or light duty vehicle, as such terms are defined under section 216(7) of the Clean Air Act ([42 U.S.C. § 7550\(7\)](#)), having a gross vehicle weight rating of 8,500 pounds or less, before any after-market conversion to alternative fuel operation." The Clean Air Act defines "light-duty vehicle," among similar terms, by cross-reference to regulations promulgated by the Administrator [of the EPA] and in effect as of November 15, 1990. The regulation referenced is apparently 40 CFR section 86.082-2, which defines "light-duty vehicle" as a passenger car or passenger car derivative capable of seating 12 passengers or less. (Jeez! Just say that without having to go through all of these cross-references!) So the loophole would exist and taxpayers could avoid the tax by buying a pickup truck or SUV.

Next, the rebates are withdrawn if the recipient makes 200% of area median income. That indicates the income limit could vary by county, adding to its complexity. Also, is it a good idea to cut off the rebate with an income limit if the desired social behavior is buying fuel efficient vehicles?

Digested: 2/3/2026



SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2691

February 5, 2026, 3:01 p.m.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Committee Members:

Earthjustice strongly **supports Senate Bill 2691**, “Relating to Transportation Affordability,” which promotes affordability and equity, energy and economic security, and climate safety by establishing a self-funding, market-based clean vehicle rebate program to be administered by the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (“HDOT”). Based on ongoing discussions with HDOT, we recommend various amendments, which are attached to this testimony, to further increase the support and safeguards for lower-income households and enhance the bill’s benefits of broadening access to cleaner and cheaper transportation choices.

As SB 2691 recognizes, Hawai‘i’s dependency on imported fossil fuels for ground transportation is an affordability and economic security crisis and a climate injustice. Hawai‘i residents spend, and the Hawai‘i economy loses, *billions* of dollars per year on gas and diesel fuel for cars and trucks. But the burdens of this legacy fossil fuel transportation system hit rural and undeserved communities the hardest. A recent report by Ulupono highlights that households with the highest reliance on gasoline spend thousands of dollars per year on their gas bills, amounting to 14 percent of their incomes. At the same time, rural and disadvantaged communities bear the brunt of the harms and costs of climate change, which are compounded by disparate access to infrastructure and services.

Yet, as SB 2691 further recognizes, existing technology can provide savings today for our local families and advance our state decarbonization commitments to meet the climate emergency. Just by switching the highest seven percent of gasoline users to electric vehicles, for example, these households would save almost 40% on their bills, or more than \$5000 per year. This would save the Hawai‘i economy \$220 billion per year and more than 680,000 metric tons of carbon emissions, which is more than the entire commercial sector’s emissions. The upfront investment for electric vehicles, however, remains a barrier to accessing these savings, especially for lower-income households. SB 2691 seeks to address this barrier head on.

SB 2691 establishes a clean vehicle rebate program to support the shift to zero-emission vehicles and reduce the cost of living for Hawai'i households. The bill affords particular support and safeguards for lower-income households, by providing an extra rebate for low- and moderate-income ("LMI") customers, applying rebates to more affordable clean vehicle options, and encompassing as many of these options as possible, including plug-in hybrid, leased, and used vehicles. Recognizing the budget challenges the State currently faces, SB 2691 also provides a self-funding mechanism for the program, collecting modest fees on the sale of new fossil fuel vehicles and recirculating the funds back to the market and industry to support clean vehicle options. The program is thus intended and designed to be revenue neutral for the state budget.

SB 2691 patterns the proposed clean vehicle rebate program on successful models such as the federal EV tax credit, EV rebate programs in numerous states including California, and EV incentive programs across the world including the EU. It incorporates provisions the legislature has adopted for other clean transportation incentive programs including the e-bike rebate program and the EV charging system rebate program. It also builds on the inaugural Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan that HDOT developed under the landmark settlement agreement in the *Navahine* case, which recommends such a rebate program as part of its comprehensive framework for enabling transportation savings opportunities and pollution reductions.

Based on discussions with HDOT, we attach proposed amendments to SB 2691, along with supporting explanations. These amendments include updates to the fee provisions based on expert analysis of Hawai'i market data, an increase to the additional rebate for LMI households, as well as various drafting fixes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this key building block for transportation affordability and a cleaner and safer transportation future for all of Hawai'i's people. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or for further information.

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

Senate Bill 2691, Relating to Transportation Affordability:
Proposed Amendments

The following summarizes proposed amendments to SB2691, along with background explanations. These amendments include:

- I. Updating and filling in the numbers for the fee provision in Section 3 (“Transportation affordability and energy security tax”), based on detailed analysis of Hawai’i market data.
- II. Increasing the amount of the additional rebate for low- and moderate-income (“LMI”) households from \$1000 to \$3000, while deleting the general income restriction for the base rebate.
- III. Fixing miscellaneous drafting details.

I. Updates to the Fee Provision in Section 3.

- On pages 14-15, revise the provisions under subsection (a) as follows (additions underscored; deletions bracketed and stricken):

- (1) 4 per cent if the vehicle obtains less than [~~thirty~~] twenty-two miles per gallon based on federal Environmental Protection Agency combined ratings;
- (2) 2 per cent if the vehicle obtains at least [~~thirty~~] twenty-two but not more than [~~fifty~~] thirty miles per gallon based on federal Environmental Protection Agency combined ratings; and
- (3) 1 per cent if the vehicle obtains more than [~~fifty~~] thirty miles per gallon based on federal Environmental Protection Agency combined ratings;
provided that vehicles that have a manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$32,000 or less shall be exempt from the tax.

Explanation: An expert team led by Dr. Aditya Ramji from the U.C. Davis Institute of Transportation Studies has helped provide analysis to inform updates to the fee provision in Section 3 of the bill. Using detailed Hawai’i market data provided by the State Energy Office, Dr. Ramji’s team built a modeling tool showing that a modest fee in the range of only 1 to 4 percent on the sale of new fossil fuel vehicles would provide ample funds for the EV rebate program in the amounts proposed in the bill.

Based on this analysis, we recommend the updates above to the fee structure and amounts. These changes also include a specific exemption for vehicles with an MSRP of \$32,000 or less, which is the median price for Hawai’i vehicle sales. This exemption for the lower-priced

half of the vehicle market (which is also generally more fuel efficient) aims to avoid burdening lower-income consumers' ability to choose these more affordable options.

II. Increase to the LMI Extra Rebate, and Deletion of the Income Limitation for the Base Rebate (addition underscored; deletion bracketed and stricken).

- On page 9, revise the first sentence of subsection (d) as follows (addition underscored; deletion bracketed and stricken):

(d) An increased rebate of up to \$3000 ~~[1000]~~, in addition to the rebate for eligible clean vehicle types in subsection (b), shall be offered to applicants from low- and moderate-income households.

- Also, on page 7, delete the following provision under subsection (c) and renumber the rest of the provisions accordingly (deletion bracketed and stricken):

~~{(1) Rebates shall be offered to applicants with household incomes of up to two hundred percent of the area median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development;}~~

Explanation: This increase in the additional rebate for LMI households from \$1000 to \$3000 further supports the bill's core goal of affordability and equity. This increase also brings the proposed rebate structure (base amount and additional LMI amount) more in parallel with the amounts in the California rebate program. The modeling tool analysis confirms that the revenues can support this increased LMI rebate amount.

The deletion of the income limitation for the base rebate is to simplify the program, including any administrative complexities around income verifications. The proposed bill already incorporates numerous provisions with support and safeguards for lower-income vehicle options and households, including: limiting the rebate to clean vehicles less than \$60K; excluding the fee for fossil fuel vehicles less than \$32K; and providing the extra rebate for LMI households. The bill also provides HDOT the discretion to implement additional guidelines as necessary to optimally manage the program budget.

III. Miscellaneous Drafting Fixes.

In addition, several edits are needed to fix some details from the drafting process:

- Edit No. 1. On Page 7, lines 7-8, add the following language (addition underscored):

"The rebate shall be applied at the point of sale by participating dealers on the manufacturer's suggested retail price."

Explanation: Specifying that the rebate is to be applied on the listed MSRP is necessary to avoid any ambiguity and confusion on how the rebate will work at the point of sale.

- Edit No. 2. On page 8, lines 4-5, revise this provision as follows (addition underscored; deletion bracketed and stricken):

“Rebates for used vehicles shall be offered for vehicles that: . . . (C) have not received a rebate for a new vehicle purchase under this section in the past twenty-four months prior to the purchase as a used vehicle [~~are a model year at least two years earlier than the calendar year in which the vehicle purchased~~].

Explanation: The purpose of this provision, which is derived from the California EV rebate program, is to ensure that a rebate for a used EV is available only if the vehicle hasn’t already received a rebate for a new EV purchase in the past 24 months. The deleted language doesn’t clearly address and accomplish this purpose and should be revised as indicated above.

- Edit No. 3. On page 8, lines 11 to 14, delete the following sentence (deletion bracketed and stricken):

[~~Upon request by a dealer, the department of transportation shall disclose whether a vehicle has previously received a rebate for a used vehicle purchase or lease under this section.~~]

Explanation: This sentence was added in drafting as a proposed clarification, but based on feedback from experts, this provision is unnecessary and can cause confusion. The way these rebate programs work is that any rebates issued for a vehicle are tracked by each vehicle’s VIN number. Dealers should already know this information for the vehicles they are selling, or they can readily access this information and process the rebate at the time of sale, usually via a portal set up by the program administrator. It’s thus cleaner and simpler to omit this sentence.

- Edit No. 4. On page 8, line 17, delete “or retailers”; likewise, on page 9, line 1, delete “or retailer.”

Explanation: Elsewhere in the bill, drafting changed references to “dealers and retailers” to just “dealers,” then inserted a citation to the definition of “dealer” under HRS § 437-1.1 (see page 13, line 2). To be consistent, other remaining references to “retailer(s)” should also be deleted.



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 5, 2026

TO: Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Chair, Committee on Transportation

Senator Brandon Elefante
Vice Chair, Committee on Transportation

FROM: Tiffany Yajima

RE: **S.B. 2691 - Relating to Transportation Affordability**
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 5, 2026 at 3:01 p.m.
Conference Room: 229

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Alliance for Automotive Innovation (“Auto Innovators”) we submit these **comments** supporting the intent of an EV and PHEV rebate but expressing concerns on the creation of a tax on gasoline and diesel vehicles.

The Alliance for Automotive Innovation represents the full auto industry, a sector supporting 10 million American jobs and five percent of the economy. From the manufacturers producing most vehicles sold in the U.S. to autonomous vehicle innovators to equipment suppliers, battery producers and semiconductor makers – the association is committed to a cleaner, safer and smarter personal transportation future.

Auto Innovators **support section 2** of this measure which would establish under the Department of Transportation a tiered rebate on the purchase or lease of new and used electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles at the time of purchase of the vehicle and offer rebates to applicants in households of low to moderate income.

Auto Innovators **oppose section 3** of this bill which levies an additional tax on the gross proceeds of the sale of light-duty motor vehicles powered solely by gasoline, diesel, or gasoline or diesel blends based on miles per gallon, and is concerned that this shifts the cost burden to acquire a more expensive EV to gasoline or diesel-powered vehicle owners.

EV/PHEV rebate

Hawaii has one of the highest rates of adoption of passenger electric vehicles in the nation with more than 40,000 passenger electric vehicles registered in the state as of 2025, and yet this number represents less than 4 percent of the total number of registered vehicles in Hawaii.

Electric vehicle rebate programs have shown to be effective in encouraging consumers to purchase electric vehicles by bringing down the relatively higher cost of an electric vehicle compared to a gasoline-powered vehicle. There are 14 states that provide consumer rebates on the purchase or lease of electric vehicles, including California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Oregon. California remains the largest and most studied program and has consistently shown the strong influence of rebates on consumer behavior – showing that over half of EV buyers would not have purchased an EV without the state rebate, underscoring the effectiveness of financial incentives in accelerating adoption of electric vehicles.

Tax on gasoline or diesel vehicles

Auto Innovators is concerned that the bill would establish a new tiered tax on the gross proceeds of the sale of light-duty vehicles powered by gasoline, diesel, or blended fuels. Lower-income households are far more likely to drive older, cheaper gasoline or diesel vehicles, live farther from work, and have no access to alternative modes of transportation. As a result, these households spend a larger share of their income on fuel. Because EVs in general cost more than their fuel equivalent vehicles, this unintentionally shifts the tax burden from those who can most afford electric vehicles to those who can only afford gasoline or diesel vehicles.

Under this measure, higher-income households – who are more likely to buy EVs and can afford them – not only avoid the tax but are subsidized by those who can least afford it. For that reason, Auto Innovators has strong concerns with this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.



FEBRUARY 5, 2026

SENATE BILL 2691

CURRENT REFERRAL: TRS

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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 SB 2691, relating to transportation affordability, which requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles; establishes the clean vehicle special fund; and establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Hawai'i, accounting for nearly 50% of statewide emissions, with light-duty vehicles representing most of that share. Electric vehicles offer a proven pathway to reduce these emissions. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, EVs produce significantly lower lifetime emissions than comparable gasoline vehicles when charged on cleaner grids, a benefit that grows as electricity systems decarbonize and aligns with our state's carbon reduction, climate mitigation, and clean economy goals.

Hawai'i's grid is rapidly becoming cleaner, with renewable sources like wind, solar, and geothermal exceeding 40% of generation and planned increases under the state's 100% renewable portfolio goals. This means each EV on Hawai'i roads displaces more carbon emissions per mile traveled than in many other states. To meet statutory greenhouse gas reduction targets, accelerating EV adoption is essential.

Historically, federal tax credits—up to \$7,500 under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)—have been a critical incentive for EV purchases. Recent federal budget legislation (commonly referenced as H.R. 1, enacted in late 2025) substantially reduced the availability and value of EV tax credits effective January 1, 2026. H.R. 1 eliminated the new clean vehicle tax credit and capped or removed incentives for used EVs, which were previously essential for low- and moderate-income families to access EVs.

Regressive federal actions have heightened 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.

These federal changes are expected to slow EV adoption nationwide and reduce the affordability of cleaner vehicles in markets already challenged by high purchase prices. In Hawai'i, where financial insecurity is high and vehicle costs are elevated due in part to import costs, the federal rollback magnifies equity challenges and slows progress toward climate goals. This proposal would create a state EV purchase rebate that fills the gap left by federal changes and restores financial incentives for Hawai'i residents to adopt clean transportation alternatives.

State rebates have been shown to significantly influence consumer decisions. A 2023 analysis by the International Council on Clean Transportation found that combining federal and state incentives can increase EV market share by 2–8 percentage points within five years, particularly among moderate-income buyers. Further, states such as New Jersey, Colorado, and California that implemented robust state EV incentives saw accelerated EV adoption rates compared to states without such incentives, with low-income rebate tiers helping to broaden access.

In Hawai'i specifically, EV market share has grown steadily but lags national leaders. According to Hawai'i Energy data from 2025, EVs account for a small, but increasing percentage of registered passenger vehicles, driven largely by early adopters and public fleets. A state rebate would broaden adoption into communities that are currently excluded from the EV market because of economic precarity, thereby building a sorely needed foundation of equity into our electrification transition.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Thursday, February 5, 2026 — 3:01 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2691, Relating to Transportation Affordability.

Dear Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Vice President of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 2691, which requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles; establishes a clean vehicle special fund; and establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

Ulupono supports helping our community transition to cleaner transportation choices, as ground transportation makes up a significant portion of Hawai'i's reliance on imported oil and is the largest contributor to our state's greenhouse gas emissions. The Hawai'i Department of Transportation's own Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan indicates that 81% of new vehicles sales must be electric by 2030 to meet our climate goals. A great way to help our community members save money and reduce emissions is to better enable the choice of electric vehicles (EVs) when they need to drive. This bill employs a revenue-neutral approach to lower the upfront costs of new and used non-luxury EVs, ensuring those who can most benefit from EVs are able to do so.

In addition, EV rebates at points of sale, like described in this bill, have proven to be effective at accelerating the adoption of zero-emission vehicles, especially for low- to moderate-income families. With recent reductions in federal EV tax credits, state-level incentives are now more critical than ever to reduce our fossil fuel dependence and provide affordable transportation options that ease the cost of living.

As Hawai'i's energy issues become increasingly complex and challenging, we appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support the continued adoption of clean transportation throughout the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Vice President of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



To: The Honorable Representative Lorraine Inouye, Chair, the Honorable Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Transportation.

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

Re: **Hearing SB2691 RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY**

Hearing: Thursday February 5, 2026 3:01P.m.

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee on Transportation!

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help return to a safe and stable climate.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB2691!**

In this time of great concern about the cost of living, this bill would provide a clean vehicle rebate program that will reduce the cost of living for many Hawai'i families. The program also would reduce climate-heating emissions from fossil fuels. It would achieve these benefits by providing rebates to incentivize the purchase or lease of new and used clean vehicles. The rebates shall be applied at the point of sale by participating dealers.

Rural communities and lower-income families are particularly overburdened by the high and rising costs of fossil fuel vehicles, especially on Hawai'i Island. Our State's gasoline prices are among the nation's highest, particularly on the neighbor islands. A recent study

found that rural and lower-income households disproportionately consume and spend the most on gasoline.

Gasoline consumption by light-duty vehicles alone accounts for almost a quarter of the State's climate pollution. Current electric vehicle technology can save money for local families while eliminating this pollution. Now that the federal government has abandoned the federal electric vehicle tax credits, the State must push forward with programs to reduce Hawaii's dependence on expensive imported fossil fuels and mitigate the continual financial drain and oppressive burdens on the local economy and everyday household budgets.

Prices of zero-emission electric vehicles continue to decline. Many electric vehicles already actually cost thousands of dollars less than fossil-fuel cars over their lifetimes, thanks to lower fuel and maintenance expenses.

For low- to moderate-income households, however, the upfront investment for a new vehicle remains a significant barrier to accessing these savings opportunities. Rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used electric vehicles are needed to expand savings opportunities for low- and moderate-income families so they will not be left behind in the transition to a clean and climate-safe transportation system. The rebate program is designed to be self-financing and revenue-neutral so as not to increase expenditures from or reduce revenues into the general fund.

Please pass this bill to help reduce ground transportation costs for rural communities and lower-income families! Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



Carbon Cashback

February 4, 2026

Re: TRS Hearing of SB2691 on Feb. 5, 2026, at 3:01 pm
Position: Support

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

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 is in strong support of SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For the foregoing reasons, Carbon Cashback Hawai‘i supports this bill.



Testimony in Support of SB2691

Hearing on February 5, 2026 at 3:01pm | Senate Committee on Transportation

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

My name is Doorae Shin, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Our Children's Trust in strong support of SB2691, which establishes the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program to make electric vehicles more affordable and reduce pollution from the transportation sector. We want to formally support the amendments submitted by Earthjustice to be integrated into this bill.

SB2691 is designed very intentionally with several affordability and equity components to ensure that it does not hurt low and moderate income families and that it benefits those residents most. Some of those details include:

- Rebates are accessible only for electric vehicles under a certain MSRP (excludes luxury vehicles)
- Rebates are offered for used electric vehicle sales as well
- The fee only applies to new vehicle sales over a certain price (excludes ~50% of the most affordable new car sales)
- There is an additional rebate amount for households that fall within a certain AMI
- Plug-in hybrids are included in the rebate program

SB2691 addresses one of the most significant barriers to clean vehicle adoption in Hawai'i: affordability. Transportation is one of the largest household expenses for families across the state, and the upfront cost of electric vehicles remains out of reach for many residents, particularly low- and moderate-income households. By providing point-of-sale rebates for eligible clean vehicles, this bill helps more Hawai'i residents access the long-term cost savings, reliability, and public health benefits of electric transportation.

Expanding access to clean vehicles is also a critical equity issue. Communities that are already overburdened by high energy costs and transportation expenses are often the least able to benefit from clean transportation technologies. SB2691 helps ensure that the transition to electric vehicles is not limited to higher-income households, but instead supports broader participation, especially for families who would benefit most from reduced fuel and maintenance costs.

In addition to lowering household costs, SB2691 advances Hawai'i's climate, public health, and energy security goals. Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state and a major contributor to air pollution. Increasing electric vehicle adoption reduces reliance on imported fossil fuels, improves local air quality, and supports healthier communities, particularly for keiki and other vulnerable populations who are disproportionately affected by transportation-related pollution.

SB2691 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*, resulting in a settlement agreement that requires HDOT to take any actions necessary to achieve zero emissions from ground, marine, and inter-island transportation by no later than 2045. In response, HDOT released its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, which identifies expanded clean vehicle adoption as a critical near-term strategy to meet these obligations. Passing this bill is one practical and important solution toward fulfilling the commitments outlined in the settlement and protecting children's constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system.

SB2691 is a revenue-neutral way to give households that need it most access to the savings associated with driving electric. By expanding access to clean vehicles, this bill helps ensure that the benefits of the clean energy transition are shared more broadly and fairly across Hawai'i. For these reasons, Our Children's Trust strongly urges your support for SB2691. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your leadership on this important issue.

Mahalo,



Doorae Shin
Our Children's Trust



To: The Senate Committee on Transportation (TRS)
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Thursday, February 5, 2026, 3:01pm

In strong support of SB2691

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the TRS committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports SB2691** that would require the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. This measure establishes the clean vehicle special fund and transportation affordability and energy security tax.

This bill creates a revenue-neutral rebate program to lower the upfront cost of new and used electric vehicles for Hawaii residents, letting more of our community access the savings of driving electric. This bill centers equity, with rebates applying only to non-luxury EVs (including used EVs), with no fees placed on the most affordable gas/diesel vehicles. This ensures that working families, not just the wealthy, can enjoy the financial and health benefits of EVs.

In 2024, the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) reached an unprecedented settlement in *Navahine v. HDOT*, with a commitment to protect children's constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system and to preserve Hawaii's public trust resources for present and future generations. The settlement requires HDOT to develop and support strategies that reduce carbon pollution from the transportation sector. This measure represents a common-sense solution that directly addresses this mandate.

Hawaii's proposed Clean Vehicle Rebate Program ensures that going electric becomes the easy and affordable choice for Hawaii's hardworking families, and would do so without raising taxes or using general funds. To protect our climate and future, we need ambitious efforts like SB2691. We urge you to PASS this important legislation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.
Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



HAWAI'I YOUTH TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

HYTC Testimony for the Senate Committee on
TRANSPORTATION

SB 2691 | Thursday, February 5, 2026

IN STRONG SUPPORT

LATE

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Committee Members,

Mahalo for the chance to testify at today's hearing. **The Hawai'i Youth Transportation Council (HYTC) strongly supports SB 2691.** This bill will allow for families across Hawai'i to buy a **zero-emission or plug-in hybrid vehicle at an affordable price.** This has the benefit of bringing more affordable transportation options to our state while reducing carbon emissions, both core tenets of the HYTC.

Many working-class residents across Hawai'i want to afford these ZEVs and plug-in hybrids, **but prices have not come down enough to make them affordable.** While the youth council would prefer people use public transportation, the reality is that, according to the 2020 census, **13.9% of Hawai'i residents live in rural areas that public transit may not reach. Or they have a line of work that requires the use of heavy-duty vehicles.** These residents need a renewable and affordable vehicle option.

Additionally, the HYTC finds that the use of ZEVs and plug-in hybrids, compared to conventional combustion engine vehicles, **produces far less carbon emissions, especially when bought used, which this bill allows.** SB 2691 aligns with our **Energy Security and Waste Reduction proposal, specifically in transitioning the state from internal combustion engine vehicles to more sustainable, low-emission alternatives.**

In conclusion, SB 2691 provides affordable transportation options for Hawai'i's working residents and reduces our state's carbon emissions, **aligning with the council's Energy Security and Waste Reduction Proposal. We urge the committee to pass SB 2691.**

Mahalo,

Mia Nishiguchi
Council Chair
O'ahu Honolulu Representative

Luke Gee
Council Vice-Chair
West Side Hawai'i Representative

Moss Kuon
Press Secretary
Central Maui Representative

Derek Takeno
Outreach Chair
Central Maui Representative

Luca Zev Cuniberti
Policy and Legislation Chair
O'ahu North Shore Representative

Connor Ulene
Policy and Legislation Vice Chair
Central Maui Representative



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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

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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 Committee on
TRANSPORTATION**

**Thursday, February 5, 2026
3:01 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2691
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY**

Senate Bill 2691 requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (EV). The bill establishes the clean vehicle special fund and a transportation affordability and energy security tax. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

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

Federal EV rebates ended in September 2025, leaving EVs out of reach for many. EV drivers in Hawai'i save an average of \$5 every 100 miles and \$6,000-\$10,000 over the lifetime of ownership in reduced maintenance costs. However, the cost of new electric vehicles on average is still higher than internal combustion vehicles, creating a barrier to accessing these savings. This bill reduces this barrier by providing a rebate to reduce upfront costs, allowing for greater access.

Transition to EVs is a key action identified by the State's climate plans including the Climate Action Pathways (2025), Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan (2025) and the Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization (2023). EVs do not produce tailpipe emission meaning cleaner air for Hawai'i especially in areas where idling is common such as schools. This bill would help to create a more affordable, cleaner Hawai'i. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:22:24 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rylee Brooke Kamahele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Rylee Brooke Kamahele, and I am from Mililani, O‘ahu. I am writing in strong support of SB2691, which establishes Hawai‘i’s Clean Vehicle Rebate Program.

I am a young person who has grown up experiencing firsthand the rising costs of transportation, the health impacts of pollution, and the increasing climate risks facing our islands. Reliable transportation is essential in Hawai‘i, yet the cost of gas continues to strain families and young people who are just starting out. For many in my community, transportation is not a necessity — it is a lifeline to school, work, medical care, and family. At the same time, we are breathing the consequences of vehicle pollution every day, especially in communities near major roadways.

I was also one of the youth plaintiffs in *Navahine v. Hawai‘i Department of Transportation*. We brought this case because we believe our state has a responsibility to protect our constitutional right to a life-sustaining climate system. The settlement recognizes that transportation emissions threaten not only our environment, but our health, our cultural resources, and our future. This case was never about punishment — it was about accountability and action.

Transportation is the largest source of pollution in Hawai‘i, accounting for more than half of our statewide emissions. Our state also spends billions of dollars every year importing gasoline and diesel, draining our local economy while worsening climate change and public health harms that disproportionately affect working families and youth.

In 2022, thirteen youth plaintiffs, including myself, 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 in order to protect children’s constitutional rights and preserve Hawai‘i’s public trust resources for present and future generations.

In 2025, HDOT released its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, identifying the near-, mid-, and long-term policies needed to comply with the settlement. SB2691 is one of those critical solutions. HDOT’s plan shows that 81% of new vehicle sales must be electric by 2030 to stay on track — yet we are currently at only about 14%.

This bill creates a revenue-neutral rebate program that lowers the upfront cost of new and used electric vehicles, making clean transportation accessible to more Hawai‘i residents. Importantly, SB2691 centers equity by focusing on non-luxury vehicles, including used EVs, and by not placing fees on the most affordable gas or diesel vehicles. This ensures that working families and young people — not just the wealthy — can benefit from cleaner air, lower fuel costs, and long-term savings.

SB2691 is a practical, fair, and necessary step toward honoring the Navahine settlement and protecting the future of Hawai‘i’s youth. Please help make clean transportation a realistic option for families across the islands by supporting SB2691.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:33:16 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE this bill. NO MORE NEW TAXES. "Subsidies" are funded by taxpayers.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:04:17 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:09:40 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Seuta'atia Cochran, Ewa Beach

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:10:12 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Murray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emissions vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

Automotive transportation is one of our state's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and a major contributor to high household energy costs. This bill directly address both challenges by aiding residents transition to cleaner, more energy-efficient vehicles which reduce fuel expenses and reliance on imported fossil fuels.

This bill's focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase remains a barrier for many low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes household income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for these households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress towards our state's climate and clean energy goals.

Most importantly, however, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai'i and reducing our vulnerability to volatility in the global fossil fuel market.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

David Murray, Kaneohe

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:15:45 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Virginia Tincher

Honolulu

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:27:19 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Counsell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SB2691, which establishes rebates for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

Hawai‘i has set some of the most ambitious renewable energy and climate goals in the nation, including achieving 100% renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors. Meeting these commitments requires addressing transportation, which remains one of the largest consumers of imported fossil fuels in our state. Expanding access to clean vehicle technologies is essential to ensuring that Hawai‘i’s transition to renewable energy extends beyond electricity generation and into how residents move throughout our communities.

SB2691 helps align our transportation system with the State’s long-term clean energy strategy by accelerating the adoption of vehicles that can operate using renewable electricity. As Hawai‘i continues to increase renewable energy production, electric vehicles serve as an important tool to maximize the use of locally generated clean power while reducing dependence on imported petroleum.

The bill also recognizes that the transition to renewable energy must be equitable. While zero-emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles offer long-term savings, upfront costs can prevent many households from participating in this transition. By providing enhanced rebates for low- and moderate-income families, SB2691 helps ensure that the benefits of Hawai‘i’s renewable energy future are accessible to all residents.

In addition to supporting our renewable energy goals, expanding clean vehicle adoption will reduce air pollution, lower transportation-related emissions, and strengthen Hawai‘i’s energy independence by keeping more energy dollars circulating within our local economy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB2691.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Travis Counsell
Kailua, Hawai‘i

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:56:56 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Daleiden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:34:40 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691.

The bill will accelerate the State's transition to clean vehicles, which will reduce our reliance on price-volatile imported fossil fuels, reduce climate pollution, and ultimately help residents reduce their transportation expenses. Reducing barriers for low- and moderate-income individuals, as the bill would do, is especially important.

I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you,

Thomas Graham, Honolulu

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:01:17 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

We need to reduce emissions, lower fossil fuel use and costs in an equitable way. There's much to recommend this bill

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:46:06 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlotte Madin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Charlotte Madin, I live in Kailua, O’ahu, and I am writing in strong support of SB2691, which establishes Hawai‘i’s Clean Vehicle Rebate Program.

As a young person who has lived in Hawai‘i for eight years now, I am constantly in awe of this beautiful place and the incredible community I get to be a part of. There is nothing more I want than to be able to protect the ‘Āina. In order to do this however, we must come up with alternatives to fossil-fuel burning and carbon dioxide emitting vehicles. It is my belief that if we incentivize owning electric vehicles, ownership of these vehicles will rise. This is a necessary step in the right direction, towards minimizing carbon emissions and protecting the nature that surrounds us.

Transportation is the largest source of pollution in Hawai‘i, accounting for more than half of our statewide emissions. And our state spends billions each year importing gasoline and diesel, hurting our local economy and contributing to climate change and public health harms.

In 2022, thirteen youth plaintiffs filed Navahine v. Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT), resulting in a settlement that requires the 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. This bill is one of those critical solutions. HDOT's plan indicates that 81% of new vehicle sales must be electric by 2030 to stay on track, far behind the current ~14%.

This bill creates a revenue-neutral rebate program to lower the upfront cost of new and used electric vehicles for Hawai'i residents, letting more of our community access the savings of driving electric. This bill centers equity, with rebates applying only to non-luxury EVs (including used EVs), with no fees placed on the most affordable gas/diesel vehicles. This ensures that working families, not just the wealthy, can enjoy the financial and health benefits of EVs.

Please make clean transportation a realistic option for families across the islands, and support SB2691.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:51:11 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I own an EV and I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Diane Ware Volcano HI 96785-0698

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:08:28 AM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Carbon Cashback Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:33:42 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support!

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:56:40 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

SUPPORT FOR SB2691 (RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY)

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice-Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee,

I'm a long-time advocate for sustainable transportation in Hawaii. I support SB2691, which requires the Department of Transportation to establish a clean vehicle rebate program to provide rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. Establishes the clean vehicle special fund. Establishes a transportation affordability and energy security tax.

SB2691 will enable a more equitable adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) by helping low- to moderate-income (LMI) households purchase them. EVs can save families thousands of dollars in operating and maintenance costs, but upfront purchase prices can deter LMI households.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for enabling the fair and equitable adoption of efficient and affordable transportation.

Please pass SB2691.

[Noel Morin](#)

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate

Hilo, Hawaii

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:04:15 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mesina DiGrazia-Roberts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Mesina and I am 18 years old. I am writing in strong support of SB2691, which establishes Hawai'i's Clean Vehicle Rebate Program.

I am writing as a plaintiff in *Navahine v. Hawai' Department of Transportation*; a case which after settling out of court, agreed to protect children's constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate system and to preserve Hawaii's public trust resources for present and future generations.

Through *Navahine v. HDOT*, I have sat at the table with government officials. I have seen their signatures at the bottom of documents promising to decarbonize transportation by 2045, and I know that we have the full support of the court over the next 20 years to see our settlement through. This bill is a step toward the future that myself, my fellows, and the Department of Transportation have promised the people of Hawaii.

I am hoping you will continue to support all efforts aligned with the Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, HDOT released, which identifies the critical near-, mid-, and long-term policies needed to comply with the settlement agreement. This directly includes the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program bill as one of these crucial solutions.

This bill creates a revenue-neutral rebate program to lower the upfront cost of new and used electric vehicles for Hawai'i residents, letting more of our community access the savings of driving electric. This bill centers equity, with rebates applying only to non-luxury EVs (including used EVs), with no fees placed on the most affordable gas/diesel vehicles. This ensures that working families, not just the wealthy, can enjoy the financial and health benefits of EVs.

Please make clean transportation a realistic option for families across the islands, and support SB2691.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:25:13 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lyle Wilkinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

Battery Electric Vehicles reduce CO2 emissions and can reduce an individual's transportation costs, but high Battery Electric Vehical prices have put them beyond reach for many.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill's focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai'i's climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai'i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Lyle Wilkinson

Kahului

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:29:03 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Hagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Doug Hagan

Paia, HI

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:43:19 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Buck Joiner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

Buck Joiner

Maui

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:52:25 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Young MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please support this bill for a better greener world thru electric cars... less pollution Mahalo

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:12:41 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support legislation that promotes transition to electric vehicles and progress toward Hawai'i's climate and clean energy goals.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:48:31 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanette Vinton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing to express my strong support for SB2691, which seeks to establish a clean vehicle rebate program and the clean vehicle special fund.

While electric vehicles (EVs) offer significant long-term savings on fuel and maintenance, the upfront cost remains a hurdle for many Hawaii residents. This bill provides the necessary financial assistance—especially for used vehicles and low-to-moderate income households—to make clean transportation accessible for all.

With Hawaii committing to a carbon-neutral future by 2045, the transition to clean transportation is necessary. This bill provides a clear mechanism to accelerate that transition, including creating a sustainable funding model.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB2691.

Sincerely,

Nanette Vinton

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:20:29 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Simonds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB 1880** and ban 1,3-dichloropropene. Not only is the pesticide toxic as well as drift from the pesticide, but allowing its use paves the way for extractive "churn-and-burn" practices that threaten the integrity of soils as well as our coastal coral communities.

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:43:53 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Many families in my community depend on long commutes and imported gasoline, making us especially vulnerable to high fuel prices. Transportation is also one of Hawai'i's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, directly affecting our air quality and long-term climate resilience.

What I appreciate most about this bill is its equity focus. While electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles can significantly reduce fuel and maintenance costs over time, the upfront price puts them out of reach for many low- and moderate-income families. By tying additional rebates to household income, SB2691 recognizes that clean transportation should not be a luxury, but an accessible option for everyday residents.

For young people like me, this bill represents a future where Hawai'i is less dependent on imported fossil fuels and more resilient to global price shocks. Expanding access to clean vehicles also means quieter neighborhoods, cleaner air, and healthier communities, benefits that are felt locally and immediately.

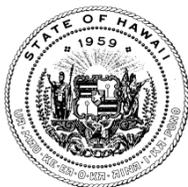
Finally, investing in zero-emission transportation keeps more energy dollars circulating in Hawai'i instead of leaving the state, strengthening our local economy while advancing our climate goals.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB2691.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Chelsey Miguel

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097



Thursday, February 5, 2026
3:01 PM
State Capitol, 229

SB2691
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY

Senate Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports the intent of S.B. No. 2691, which seeks to establish a market-based clean vehicle rebate program. DOT supports efforts to ensure that such a program advances affordability and equity for Hawai'i households particularly lower-income and rural communities while avoiding unintended impacts on lower-income consumers and unnecessary administrative burdens.

S.B. No. 2691 is intended to reduce the cost of transportation by making zero-emission and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles more affordable for local households. By lowering upfront vehicle costs, the program would help address Hawai'i's high reliance on gasoline and exposure to volatile fuel prices. As noted in the bill, households with the highest reliance on gasoline spend an average of \$13,700 annually on fuel, accounting for approximately fourteen percent of household income, and transitioning to electric vehicles could result in annual savings of approximately \$5,300.

The DOT's position on this measure is consistent with its Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan (October 2025), which identifies increased adoption of electric and zero-emission vehicles as a primary strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from ground transportation statewide. The Plan emphasizes expanding access to electric vehicles through financial incentives and supporting infrastructure, while recognizing the importance of affordability and equitable access. It further acknowledges that transportation costs place a significant burden on Hawai'i residents and that near-term strategies can help reduce household costs while advancing long-term emissions reduction goals.

The DOT appreciates that the proposed program structure is designed to be self-financing and does not rely on general fund appropriations. The bill establishes a revenue-neutral approach that redistributes funds within the vehicle market to support cleaner transportation options, while maintaining flexibility to respond to market conditions over time.

The DOT shares the Legislature's goal of ensuring that Hawai'i's transition to clean transportation is inclusive and equitable. This proposal represents an important step toward improving energy security, reducing household transportation costs, and supporting environmental sustainability across the State.

The DOT notes that effective implementation will require sufficient administrative capacity. If this measure advances, the Department would work with the Legislature to ensure that appropriate resources and staffing are available to administer the program efficiently and effectively.

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

LATE

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:03:43 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

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LATE

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:11:17 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

Expanding the adoption of zero emission and plug-in hybrid vehicles will also deliver environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and progress toward Hawai‘i’s climate and clean energy goals.

Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Benjamin Narwold, Kapaa, Hawaii

LATE

SB-2691

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:32:24 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/5/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaymen Laupola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

I strongly support SB2691, which provides rebates for the purchase of zero emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

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 cleaner, more efficient vehicles that reduce fuel expenses and the reliance on imported fossil fuels.

The bill’s focus on equity is especially important. While electric vehicles can significantly reduce transportation costs, the upfront purchase price remains a barrier for many families, especially low- and moderate-income families. This bill takes family income into consideration by offering an additional rebate for low- and moderate-income households.

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Finally, this bill supports local economic resilience by keeping more energy dollars in Hawai‘i and reducing our vulnerability to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Jaymen Laupola