THE SENATE
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE, 2008
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 3139 S.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii county residents spend a considerable portion of their income on energy. According to the 2007 report, *Analysis and Recommendations for the Hawaii County Energy Sustainable Plan*, prepared by the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, a typical Hawaii county household may spend nearly $5,000 per year on gasoline and electricity. In 2005, the county spent an estimated $580,000,000 on energy, including electricity, gasoline, diesel, gas utilities, and aviation fuel. The county has a very high cost of living, where its electricity rate is more than three times the national average, currently at 31.04 cents per kilowatt-hour, and gasoline prices are amongst the highest in the nation, currently at $3.40 per gallon.

In 2007, county energy expenditures were projected to increase over thirty per cent to an estimated $750,000,000 due to increased energy prices and higher demand. This amount is projected to grow to $850,000,000 in 2008. In 2007, energy

expenditures for Hawaii county accounted for an estimated sixteen per cent of the gross county product of $4,600,000,000. In the past decade, energy expenditures for the whole United States was typically between six and eight per cent of the gross national domestic product, which amounts to less than half the proportion of what Hawaii county spends on energy costs. This financial drain is compounded dramatically in east Hawaii, where unemployment, temporary assistance for needy families, and food stamp benefit recipients number the highest in the State.

To take advantage of the current renewable energy drive, the Hawaii county economic opportunity council has proposed to establish a pioneering renewable energy project that will create new jobs. The project will establish an assembly plant to fabricate components to build rechargeable, battery-powered automobiles, or vehicles operated without an internal combustion engine, gasoline tank, or radiator that will run silently at a speed of sixty miles per hour, and will require a battery replacement only once every one hundred and twenty miles. The project shall also assemble three-kilowatt-hour electric power storage batteries that will incorporate the rechargeable battery and solar thermal energy that will simultaneously provide power and hot water for household use. The Hawaii county economic

opportunity council has been granted a license to assemble the storage battery units in Hawaii.

The project will create twenty-five new fabricator, assembler, and installer jobs during the first twelve-month period, six administrative staff positions, one plant supervisor position, and an additional twenty-five plant workers by the end of the second year. Hiring practices shall prioritize the hiring of persons who are receiving unemployment benefits and who are work-fare eligible.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the Hawaii county economic opportunity council to establish a renewable energy project in Hawaii county to build components for rechargeable, battery-powered automobiles.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the county of Hawaii through a contract with the Hawaii county economic opportunity council for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.

Report Title:
Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council; Appropriation

Description:
Makes an appropriation for the Hawaii county economic opportunity council to establish a renewable energy project to build components for rechargeable, battery-powered automobiles. (SD1)