

HAWAII RENEWABLE ENERGY ALLIANCE

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TESTIMONY OF WARREN BOLLMEIER ON BEHALF OF THE HAWAII
RENEWABLE ENERGY ALLIANCE BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

HB 2506 HD1 SD1, RELATING TO REORGANIZATION OF STATE
AGENCIES

March 28 2008

Chair Baker, Vice-Chair Tsutsui and members of the Committee I am Warren Bollmeier, testifying on behalf of the Hawaii Renewable Energy Alliance (HREA). HREA is a nonprofit corporation in Hawaii, established in 1995 by a group of individuals and organizations concerned about the energy future of Hawaii. HREA's mission is to support, through education and advocacy, the use of renewables for a sustainable, energy-efficient, environmentally-friendly, economically-sound future for Hawaii. One of HREA's goals is to support appropriate policy changes in state and local government, the Public Utilities Commission and the electric utilities to encourage increased use of renewables in Hawaii.

The purposes of HB 2506 HD2 SD1 are to: (1) direct the legislative reference bureau to research the responsibilities of state agencies that are integral to achieving state energy objectives; (2) identify any duplication or deficiency in the state agencies responsibilities; (3) research how other states address similar deficiencies in the administration of their energy policies; and (4) make recommendations regarding how the state agencies can be reorganized to advance the long-term energy strategy. HREA strongly supports this bill with the following comments:

1. Priority. Our state's need to reduce its dependence on imported energy and to increase its energy security is a very high priority. In that regard, we recommend that the Legislative Reference Bureau ("LRB") focus its attention on the formation of a state Department of Energy;
2. Coordination. HREA also believes coordination among all state agencies with energy objectives and/or activities is a high priority, and consider recommending that the Dept. of Energy be given the key role coordination role; and
3. Accountability. Finally, we recommend that LRB examine the role the new Dept. of Energy would have in implementing state energy policy, and specifically with respect to the existing roles of the Public Utility Commission and Division Consumer Advocacy (Dept. of Commerce and Consumer Affairs).

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.