

Written Statement of
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and
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before the
HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS & MILITARY AFFAIRS AND
ENERGY & ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION

March 23, 2010

11:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

In consideration of
HCR 298 AND HR 215 REQUESTING THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION
CORPORATION TO CREATE AN ENERGY INNOVATION AWARD.

Chairs McKelvey and Morita, Vice Chairs Choy and Coffman, and Members of the House Committees on Economic Revitalization, Business & Military Affairs, and Energy & Environmental Protection.

The High Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) and the High Technology Innovation Corporation (HTIC) have strong concerns regarding the language of HCR 298 and HR 215, as shared in our testimony for HB 2290. We offer the following amendments to the language to both meet the intent of the House to identify energy innovation as a significant issue for Hawaii while not creating legislative problems with the governance and operation of HTIC.

Here are the suggested language changes:

1. Replace all appearances of HTIC with HTDC.

HTIC was established to perform the tasks of HTDC where HTIC's 501(c)(3) status is more appropriate or advantageous. In this case, there is no reason why any activities mentioned in the resolutions need to be housed in a non-profit entity, especially since HTIC has no paid staff or statutory ability to award grants. Further, the above legislative intent of HTIC has been questioned by the Senate subject committee, which has not been resolved. HTIC has voluntarily remained dormant as not to further complicate the issue.

2. Insert a new paragraph #2, (at line 12 in HCR 298, and at line 11 in HR 215), in the preamble: "WHEREAS, several venues of honoring and assisting innovation already exist within the Hawaii community; and"

As presented in HB 2290, innovation awards are offered by many organizations, including the State of Hawaii government from the Governor's office, Pacific

Business News, etc. Many entities and programs exist to assist in the area of energy sustainability such as the Blue Planet Foundation, Hawaii Renewable Energy Development Venture, Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, and HTDC through the Hawaii Small Business Innovation Research and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership programs, to name a few.

3. **Replace paragraphs #1 and #2 (page 1, lines 34 through 40, and page 2, lines 1 through 4, of HCR 298) in the resolutions with the following: “BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, the Senate concurring, that the High Technology Development Corporation is requested to coordinate initiatives within the community which address energy innovation with the organizers of energy awards and programs, and assist in their outreach to the Hawaii community; and”**
4. **Replace paragraphs #1 and #2 (page 1, lines 33 through 43, of HR 215) in the resolutions with the following: “BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the High Technology Development Corporation is requested to coordinate initiatives within the community which address energy innovation with the organizers of energy awards and programs, and assist in their outreach to the Hawaii community; and”**

The above statement in each resolution will provide guidance to the HTDC board that energy be a priority area for HTDC, and the role of HTDC as a State government entity is to act as a facilitator and leverage other sources of funding.

Establishing yet another award (even if fiscally and logistically possible), would only compete with existing awards and initiatives, especially ones offered by the private sector and the federal programs. In an economic climate where we are all suffering from lack of resources, surely government’s role is not to compete with existing initiatives, but to offer support to them to ensure we are realizing their potential.

HTIC and HTDC strongly believe legislation is unnecessary to accomplish the important intent of the resolution: to recognize local companies for taking innovative steps and assist them to realize a sustainable future in energy for the great state of Hawaii. If, however, the resolutions would help emphasize the legislators’ request for priorities for HTDC, an agency with a track record of being able to coordinate and collaborate events and initiatives in the area of innovation, the above requested amendments will make the legislators’ position clear to the board.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.