

TESTIMONY OF HERMINA MORITA  
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

FEBRUARY 24, 2012

**MEASURE:** S.B. No. 2427, S.D. 1

**TITLE:** Relating to the Public Utilities Commission

Chair Ige and Members of the Committee:

**DESCRIPTION:**

This measure proposes to increase the Commission's budget by up to \$100,000.00 for fiscal year ("FY") 2012-2013 to enable the Commission to implement best practices in the following areas: 1) use of innovative regulatory frameworks; 2) updating of administrative rules; and 3) improvement of internal workflow with new information technologies. The measure requires the Commission to submit an annual report to the Legislature on the progress of developing the required best practices.

**POSITION:**

The Commission supports the intent of the bill and would like to offer the following comments.

**COMMENTS:**

The Commission has worked over the last few years to improve and enhance its operations through the updating and implementing of internal processes that have shortened the time requirements for regulatory action; by developing innovative regulatory frameworks, particularly relating to energy; in conducting an internal initiative to update all of the Commission's administrative rules; and by establishing its Document Management System and other enhanced technological capabilities, such as electronic filing and payment, meant to improve both internal efficiency and public access to the regulatory process.

The Commission appreciates the increased appropriation amount provided for by the Senate Committee on Commerce & Consumer Protection (“CPN”), as it will better support the Commission in carrying out this measure’s broad requirements for best practices for “all [C]ommission activities, both internal and external.” Should this bill move forward, the Commission would ask the Legislature to ensure, as noted by CPN, that this measure’s appropriation come from excess amounts in the public utilities commission special fund and not from necessary appropriations made for operations of the Commission and the Consumer Advocate.

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