

TESTIMONY OF HERMINA MORITA
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

MARCH 11, 2014
8:30 a.m.

MEASURE: S.B. No. 2279, S.D. 2
TITLE: Relating to Energy

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

DESCRIPTION:

This measure proposes to create a photovoltaic (“PV”) waste recycling task force (“PV Recycling Task Force”) within the Department of Health to study the feasibility of a Hawaii PV waste recycling program and to consider issues related to an expected increase in PV waste in the State. The PV Recycling Task Force is required to submit a report to the 2016 Legislature on its findings and recommendations. This bill contains an effective date of July 1, 2050.

POSITION:

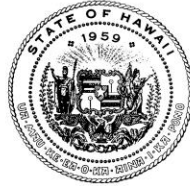
The Commission supports the intent of this measure and would like to offer the following comments for the Committee’s consideration.

COMMENTS:

Given the exponential growth of both residential and large-scale commercial PV system installations, the establishment of a PV Recycling Task Force to study the feasibility of a PV waste recycling program for Hawaii is a forward-looking action that recognizes a potentially significant disposal issue. Most PV systems have useful lives of between 20 and 30 years. This measure provides for the necessary planning today in order to address a very real issue that may add additional strain on the waste management resources of the State in the coming decades.

The Commission suggests that the list of PV Recycling Task Force considerations in this measure [Section 2(b), page 2] include the review of opportunities that can include taking advantage of underutilized shipping space on outbound freight carriers to remove PV waste materials to out-of-state recycling facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SB 2279, SD2, RELATING TO ENERGY

**Testimony of Linda Rosen, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Health**

**March 11, 2014
8:30am**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department Supports this bill with amendments provided that its
2 passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined. There is no funding attached to this bill and the Department is
4 unable to provide reimbursement for expenses.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** The Department concurs with the establishment of a task force to study the
6 feasibility of implementing a photovoltaic waste recycling program and to make recommendations on
7 how to deal with the wastes in the coming years. As photovoltaic panels begin to reach their life
8 expectancy, the State should be prepared to deal with environmental, financial and social impacts for
9 companies and consumers.

10 The Department respectfully requests that language in the bill regarding reimbursement for
11 expenses, including travel be deleted.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

Before the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Tuesday, March 11, 2014, 8:30 a.m., Room 325
SB 2279 SD 2: Relating to Energy

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Thielen, and members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection,

On behalf of the Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA), I would like to testify in support for SB 2279 SD 2, which establishes a task force to study the feasibility of a photovoltaic waste recycling program. HSEA is a non-profit trade organization that has been advocating for solar energy since 1977, with an emphasis on residential distributed generation and commercial for both solar hot water (SHW) and photovoltaics (PV). We currently represent 81 companies, which employ thousands in the local solar industry. With 37 years of advocacy behind us, HSEA's goal is to work for a sustainable energy future for all of Hawaii.

Hawaii does not currently have a policy on the disposal of photovoltaic panels. As of December 31, 2013, approximately 40,000 PV systems have been installed in Hawaii, the majority of which are residential systems. According to the utility's Net Energy Metering (NEM) Status Report, the bulk of these systems have been installed in the last five years, such that as of 2008, only 471 NEM systems have been installed in the utility's territories. In addition, given that the average life expectancy of PV panels is 25 to 30 years, the majority of the panels currently installed in Hawaii won't be due for disposal until 2038.

In addition, due to the relatively small waste stream of exhausted PV panels, no state has yet determined how to recycle PV panels, and the EPA has not yet specifically ruled on how PV panels should be disposed of. Also, California is currently in the process of examining the question, and has just begun considering public comment on the question. Some of the issues currently being addressed include whether PV panels should be declared universal waste rather than hazardous waste under the Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA—federal statute which oversees hazardous materials), how panels deemed waste should be stored and shipped, whether individual disposers would be exempt from rules as they currently are under the federal statute, and who would have liability to pay for recycling.

HSEA therefore supports the goal of forming a task force to consider the many issues around PV recycling, and HSEA supports the changes made in SD1 which extends the task force's deadline to report on its findings to twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2016.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Leslie Cole-Brooks
Executive Director
Hawaii Solar Energy Association