

HB 1543, HD2

RELATING TO ENERGY TRAINING.

Requires the establishment of energy systems and technology training courses for state and county employees responsible for permitting, inspecting, licensing, and approving construction projects that contain renewable energy systems and related technology. Appropriates funds. (HB1543 HD2)



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: www.hawaii.gov/dbedt

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Statement of
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY
and
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND TECHNOLOGY
Friday, March 17, 2017
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 414

in consideration of
HB1543, HD2
RELATING TO ENERGY TRAINING.

Chairs Inouye and Wakai, Vice Chairs Dela Cruz and Taniguchi, and Members of the Committees.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **supports with amendments HB1543, HD2**, which requires DBEDT to establish an optional energy training course for state and county employees responsible for permitting, inspecting, licensing, and approving construction projects that contain renewable energy systems and related technology.

DBEDT is fundamentally not a curriculum development agency. As such, DBEDT is not equipped in its current budget with the appropriate human and financial resources to develop the ongoing curriculum required by this measure. For example, in order to implement the requirements of this measure, DBEDT would need ongoing (not just one time) funding and additional staff. However, recognizing the prevailing need to equip County personnel with appropriate training on the inspection and permitting of energy systems and technology, DBEDT proposes the attached amendments that: (1) would allow for the establishment and deployment of energy

systems and technology training courses by the University of Hawaii Community College System; (2) create a committee comprised of industry stakeholders such as representatives to support the development and deployment of such training; and (3) appropriately resource the University of Hawaii Community College System to meet the requirements of this measure. DBEDT worked with the Pacific Center for Advanced Technology Training and Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (PCATT) at Honolulu Community College on the proposed amendments. It is our understanding that PCATT has experience working with industry to develop and deploy energy related curriculum. For the above reasons, we respectfully request that the Legislature adopt our proposed amendments.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on HB1543, HD2.

STATE OF HAWAII

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENERGY TRAINING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The State's ambitious clean energy goals, along
2 with advances in energy technology, have created incentives for
3 the adoption of new ~~[technology]~~ energy system technologies and
4 equipment, including distributed electrical systems such as
5 solar panels and energy storage ~~[batteries]~~.

6 Installation of these modern energy systems has been an
7 economic driver ~~[of the economy]~~, reduced the State's dependence
8 on imported oil, and helped to protect the environment, but the
9 increased construction has placed additional burdens on some
10 county ~~[and state]~~ employees. Employees responsible for
11 permitting, inspecting, licensing, and approving projects,
12 including employees at county public works departments,
13 employees at planning and permitting departments, and
14 ~~[firefighters]~~ fire departments, must ~~[now remain constantly]~~ be
15 better informed of new technology in the energy
16 sector. However, the legislature finds that many of these

1 employees are not provided with the proper training and must
2 either research the standards themselves or pay for their own
3 training. In addition, the lack of training can lead to
4 unnecessary delays in the approval or implementation of a
5 project.

6 The purpose of this Act is to create a program to provide
7 training to the [~~state and~~] county employees responsible for
8 permitting, inspecting, licensing, and approving energy systems
9 and related technology.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 196, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
12 designated and to read as follows:

13 **"§196- Energy systems and technology training. (a)**
14 Energy systems and technology training courses shall be
15 established as needed to educate relevant officers and employees
16 of the [~~State and~~] counties on the various standards and
17 requirements for renewable energy systems and related
18 [~~technology~~] distributed electricity technologies, including
19 energy storage. The courses, including any materials necessary
20 to implement the courses, [~~may~~] shall be developed, designed,
21 prepared, and conducted by [~~the department of business, economic~~
22 ~~development, and tourism~~] the University of Hawaii Community
23 College System, or by a public or private entity contracted by

1 [the department] the University of Hawaii Community College
2 System.

3 (b) The energy systems and technology training courses
4 [shall] may include, but not be limited to, information on:

5 (1) New innovations in energy systems and technology, such
6 as recent advancements in [energy storage and the] distributed
7 electricity technologies and related interaction of these
8 [energy] systems and [technology] technologies with the
9 electrical grid;

10 (2) The implementation of new and existing energy systems
11 and technology in compliance with international, national,
12 state, and county standards, including building, electrical and
13 fire codes; and

14 (3) Any other relevant topic pertaining to the various
15 standards and requirements for renewable energy systems and
16 related technology.

17 (c) The [department of business, economic development, and
18 tourism may] University of Hawaii Community College System
19 shall:

20 (1) Administer the energy systems and technology training
21 courses;

22 (2) Provide notifications or advertisements of the courses
23 to relevant [state and] county employees, including employees at
24 county public works departments, employees at planning and

1 permitting departments, [firefighters] fire departments, and
2 others involved in the permitting, inspecting, licensing, or
3 [and] approving of construction projects; and

4 (3) Provide the courses at [at no cost] no cost or for a
5 fee to the participants, which may be offset to the extent
6 permitted by the appropriated budget in section 3 of this Act.

7 (d) The [department of business, economic development, and
8 tourism] University of Hawaii Community College System may
9 designate its staff to conduct the energy systems and technology
10 training courses or contract with a public or private entity to
11 conduct the courses."

12 (e) The University of Hawaii Community College System
13 shall establish a committee comprised of stakeholders, including
14 local and national industry representatives from distributed
15 energy systems providers, including solar and energy storage
16 systems and county representatives from each county, who will
17 work closely with the University of Hawaii Community College
18 System staff and subject-matter-experts to do the following:

19 (1) Provide input and guidance on identifying the
20 training areas needed to provide to county employees;

21 (2) Provide input and guidance on identifying the related
22 and required training equipment needed to be incorporated in to
23 training content;

1 (3) Help with outreach and buy-in from county employees
2 and constituents to get them to participate in training.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$125,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
6 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
7 2018-2019 for energy systems and technology training as provided
8 for in this Act.

9 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the [~~department~~
10 ~~of business, economic development, and tourism~~] University of
11 Hawaii Community College System for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, [2050]
14 2017.

Report Title:

Energy Systems and Technology; Training; [~~State Employees;~~
County Employees; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the establishment of energy systems and technology training courses for [~~state and~~] county employees responsible for permitting, inspecting, licensing, and approving construction projects that contain renewable energy systems and related technology. Appropriates funds. (HB1543 HD2 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.



Before the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Technology, and the Senate Committee on Transportation and Energy
Friday, March 17, 2017, 2 p.m., Room 414
HB 1543 HD 2: Relating to Energy Training

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Inouye, Vice Chairs Taniguchi and Dela Cruz, and members of the Committees,

On behalf of the Distributed Energy Resources Council of Hawaii (“DER Council”), I would like to testify in strong support for HB 1543 HD 2 which authorizes DBEDT to establish an optional training course for state and county employees responsible for permitting, inspecting, licensing and approving construction projects that contain renewable energy systems and related technology, and appropriates an unspecified amount to establish the training course.

The DER Council is a nonprofit trade organization formed to assist with the development of distributed energy resources and smart grid technologies which will support an affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy supply for Hawaii.

In the last few years, the renewable energy industry has been undergoing a rapid technological evolution. Both the components of renewable energy installations and the configurations of the installations have continued to evolve, and inspectors and plan checkers need to be informed and up to date to do their jobs. They are expected to understand a very wide variety of system and component variables ranging from smart inverters, AC and DC configurations, various battery chemistries, fire safety and enforcement protocol, and the many battery management systems that ensure safe and efficient operation of systems that include battery energy storage, just to name a few.

Unfortunately, there is no formal or ongoing means in place by which inspectors and plan checkers who work for the state and county can learn about the ongoing changes in the renewable energy industry. This means that state and county employees have different levels of understanding about renewable energy installations, resulting at times in the inconsistent application of the rules and an inefficient process where plans and inspections can be greatly delayed if the installation has unfamiliar technology

The state and county employees who work to ensure that renewable energy installations are safe and properly designed and installed should be given the option of trainings in renewable energy so that they can get the information that they need. In addition, we believe that the state energy office under DBEDT is the best entity to facilitate these trainings. Right now, the permitting and inspection process is one of the main impediments to renewable energy projects getting installed and energized. Without the necessary training, Hawaii’s 100% RPS goal will be adversely compromised. We therefore urge this committee to support HB 1543 HD 2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify
Leslie Cole-Brooks
Executive Director
Distributed Energy Resources Council of Hawaii