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**TESTIMONY BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON**  
**ACTING DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
**TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
**ON**  
**SENATE BILL NO. 937**

**January 29, 2018**  
**10:15 A.M.**  
**Room 211**

**RELATING TO GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND PREMIUMS**

Senate Bill No. 937 proposes to amend Section 39-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to allow premiums received on the sale of general obligation (GO) bonds to be used for eligible capital expenditures pursuant to Section 39-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) in addition to allowing the premium to be deposited into the general fund.

The Department strongly supports this administration measure.

Currently, Section 39-6, HRS, requires the premiums received from the sale of GO bonds to be deposited in the State's general fund. The proposed legislation will also allow such premiums to be used to finance eligible capital expenditures, pursuant to Section 39-2, HRS, which includes the construction or improvement of various public facilities, such as elementary and secondary schools, community college, and university facilities, and other purposes approved by the Legislature. The purpose of the proposed amendment is to provide the Department with the flexibility to structure GO bond sales in the most efficient manner. For example, assuming the State desires GO bond funding for \$500 million of capital improvement projects, the Department would then have the option to:

- 1) issue GO bonds in the amounts required to fund capital projects, e.g. issue \$500 million of GO bonds to fund \$500 million in capital projects with the premium, if any, being deposited into the general fund (assume premium is \$50 million); or
- 2) issue GO bonds in a lesser amount than required for capital projects and utilize the premium to fund the difference required for capital projects, e.g. issue \$450 million in GO bonds and combined with the \$50 million premium, the State would generate the necessary \$500 million for capital projects.

The proposed amendment will allow the Department and the State of Hawaii to incur less debt and related annual debt service costs while being able to meet funding requirements for capital improvement projects.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.