

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 13 , 2020

RE: S.B. No. 2655  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirtieth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2020  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 2655, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO UTILITY TRANSMISSION LINES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to exempt a public utility from seeking approval from the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) to place, construct, erect, or build a high-voltage electric transmission system under certain circumstances.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.; Sustainable Energy Hawaii; and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Division of Consumer Advocacy and Public Utilities Commission.

Your Committee finds that the Commission currently reviews all proposals for the construction of high-voltage transmission lines to determine whether transmission line systems should be built above or below ground. It is often significantly more expensive to build transmission lines below ground than above ground, and when a public utility is paying these costs, the burden is passed onto the ratepayers. However, if an entity other



than a public utility is responsible for the cost of undergrounding, there is no direct ratepayer burden.

Your Committee has amended this measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2655, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2655, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Energy &  
Environmental Protection,



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NICOLE E. LOWEN, Chair



