



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LT. GOVERNOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: 586-2850
Fax Number: 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN
DIRECTOR

JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 6, 2021
9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 78, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, RELATING TO THE UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION
OF HIGH-VOLTAGE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dean Nishina, and I am the Executive Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Division of Consumer Advocacy. The Department supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to eliminate the requirement for a public utility to seek approval from the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the underground construction of high-voltage electric transmission lines if certain conditions are met.

The Department supports reducing the workload of the Commission and the Department for electric transmission projects that may be uncontroversial and that are subject to the conditions set forth in this bill. The Department also appreciates the clarity that S.D. 1 provides regarding the regulatory treatment of costs covered by an entity other than the public utility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**Hawaiian
Electric**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS**

H.B.78 HD.1 SD.1

**Relating to the Underground Construction
Of High-Voltage Electric Transmission
Lines**

April 6, 2021
9:30AM, Agenda Item 2
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Dave Okamura
Director, Engineering
Hawaiian Electric Company

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dave Okamura and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric Company (Hawaiian Electric) **in support** of H.B. 78 HD1 SD1, Relating to the Underground Construction of High-Voltage Electrical Transmission Lines.

Hawaiian Electric supports the intent of this bill which is to streamline the regulatory process while maintaining appropriate oversight by the Public Utilities Commission. This bill proposes that in cases where the entire cost to underground a new 46,000 volt or greater electric transmission line is paid for by an entity other than the public utility, a report will be submitted in lieu of an application to the Public Utilities Commission requesting formal approval. This will save the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs time and resources and still provide necessary cost safeguards for Hawaiian Electric customers.

Accordingly, the Hawaiian Electric Company supports H.B. 78 HD1 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.