

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3694

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 05 2022

RE: S.R. No. 33  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2022  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.R. No. 33 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION REQUESTING PUBLIC UTILITIES TO PROVIDE A FIFTY PERCENT RATE DISCOUNT TO RETIRED SENIOR CITIZENS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request public utilities to provide a fifty percent rate discount to retired senior citizens.

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 many retired seniors live on fixed incomes and rising utility costs can be highly burdensome. However, your Committee notes the concerns raised in testimony that, in addition to enforcement concerns, any discount rate shifts costs to other ratepayers and would result in cross-subsidization that could have unintended consequences, such as adversely affecting low- to moderate-income customers, resulting in utility bills becoming even less affordable. Accordingly, amendments to this measure are necessary to address these concerns.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:



- (1) Inserting findings acknowledging that low-income customers, in addition to retired senior citizens, may struggle to afford utility services due to widening gaps between costs and income;
- (2) Inserting findings acknowledging that public utilities offering discounted rates to any one customer group may shift costs to other ratepayers, making utility bills even less affordable;
- (3) Deleting language that would have requested public utilities to provide a fifty percent rate discount to retired senior citizens;
- (4) Inserting language requesting that the Public Utilities Commission investigate measures to benefit vulnerable customers, including low-income and retired customers, and to identify funding sources to support social policy objectives that would prevent the shifting of costs to other ratepayers;
- (5) Deleting language that would have requested the Public Utilities Commission to assess certain actions taken by public utilities and to provide certified copies of this measure to certain public utilities;
- (6) Amending its title to reflect its amended purpose; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 33, as amended herein, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as S.R. No. 33, S.D. 1.




Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Commerce and  
Consumer Protection,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair

The Senate  
 Thirty-First Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**  
**CPN**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SR 33	CPN	03-24-2022		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313		
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
BAKER, Rosalyn H. (C)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley (VC)	✓			
DECOITE, Lynn	✓			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.	✓			
RIVIERE, Gil	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	7			
Recommendation:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
				
Distribution:				
Original	Yellow	Pink	Goldenrod	
File with Committee Report	Clerk's Office	Drafting Agency	Committee File Copy	

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes