



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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Testimony of
SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Wednesday, March 23, 2022
11:05 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

COMMENTS
HR 181

**REQUESTING A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE
TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING GROUND-EFFECT
VEHICLES AND OTHER INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES.**

Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Ilagan, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on HR 181, which requests the Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Departments of Land and Natural Resources and Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, to convene a working group to examine the impact of sustainable transportation solutions in the State, including ground-effect vehicles and other innovative technologies.

Emissions from transportation account for the largest share of energy sector emissions in the state. As noted in the 2017 Greenhouse Gas Inventory, transportation emissions in Hawai'i account for 51 percent of total energy sector emissions. A coordinated effort is needed amongst a wide range of stakeholders to continue meaningful progress on clean transportation. Ground-effect vehicles are one of many technologies that have the potential to benefit Hawaii in the decarbonization of the transportation sector.

HSEO offers the following comments regarding participation on the working group. HSEO suggests the Chief Energy Officer of the Hawaii State Energy Office or their designee be included as a member of the sustainable transportation working

group. Per §196-71 the statutory purpose of the Hawaii State Energy office includes providing analysis and planning to actively develop and inform policies to achieve energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy resiliency, and clean transportation goals in collaboration with the legislature, public utilities commission, state agencies, and other relevant stakeholders. HSEO notes there are currently no generally funded transportation positions within HSEO to support its participation. The House of Representatives proposes in HB 1600, HD1 to provide funding and a position for a transportation specialist in HSEO, which would enable HSEO to support a working group such as this should that budget become adopted into law. HSEO defers to the appropriate agency for the implementation and fiscal impacts of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



REGENT Craft Inc.
111 S Bedford Street
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Burlington, MA 01083

March 23, 2022

TO: Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
Representative Greggor Ilagan, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Committee on Transportation

FR: Billy Thalheimer
Co-Founder & CEO

RE: HR181 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM, TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING GROUND-EFFECT VEHICLES AND OTHER INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES. - **SUPPORT**

My name is Billy Thalheimer, and I am the CEO and Co-Founder of REGENT. REGENT builds all-electric seaglidgers, a new form of innovative maritime travel that represents a quantum leap forward for sustainable transportation. Seaglidgers combine the higher speeds and comfortable ride quality normally associated with an aircraft with the low travel overhead and cost structure of ferries. By combining existing technologies like electric batteries and hydrofoils together with the aerodynamic benefits of ground-effect, we have created a new mode of regional coastal transportation that is faster than a ferry, more affordable than a plane, better for planet earth, with a pathway to service by 2025.

Seaglidgers will significantly lower the cost of operations for any local airline, cargo, freight, air ambulance, and/or emergency services company operating in Hawaii. A better economic operating profile for local transportation service providers should translate to more affordable services in the market for residents. Because seaglidgers can utilize existing infrastructure found in ports and harbors, traveling on congested roads through packed airports will not be required in order to go from island to island. This will greatly increase convenience for all residents, allowing some to access this new form of inter-island transportation by walking or riding a bike to a nearby port or dock from their home or office.

My team and I have spent the last 6 months listening to key community groups, leaders in private industry, State and Local government officials and various other civic organizations about the challenges facing the Hawaiian Islands.

Learning from these conversations across the State has been encouraging and insightful. Here is a snapshot of what we heard while talking to various groups about our vehicle:

- Seaglidgers help move Hawaii off its dependence on foreign oil

- Vulnerable and underserved communities will benefit from this new mode of transportation in the form of better access to jobs, affordable housing and medicine
- Transitioning to new sustainable inter-island transportation solutions will drive significant investment in new renewable energy generation projects throughout the State helping further decrease Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuels
- Seaglidors have real potential to alleviate road congestion in a meaningful way while increasing convenience and value for residents
- A self-sustaining resilient transportation solution that will help the State be more prepared during natural disasters is mission critical

A significant benefit of our technology platform is our timeline for delivery. REGENT is working hard to have our vehicles certified and available for operations by local businesses in Hawaii by 2025. Passing HR 181 will provide our customers locally with a process for engaging the State on a variety of important and timely regulatory and infrastructure issues.

HR 181 is an important step forward for the State on its transition to zero-emission transportation. In addition to helping the State grapple with the effects of climate change, HR 181 will help get the State realigned with its clean energy initiatives and reduce the risk of environmental mishaps as recently experienced from the Red Hill fuel spill into Oahu's aquifer.

Because of Hawaii's geographic and destination recognition globally, passage of House Resolution 181 would not only set in motion Hawaii's transition to green- powered transportation but also has the potential to inspire other coastal states and pacific island regions on the front lines of climate change to follow Hawaii's lead.

I am reaching out to you today to encourage your support for House Resolution 181 which urges the State of Hawaii to convene a working group to examine the impact of sustainable inter- island transportation solutions.



HAWAII THINK TANK LLC.

March 21, 2022

Honorable Chair and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

I am reaching out to you today to encourage your support for House Resolution 181 which is **REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM, TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING GROUND-EFFECT VEHICLES AND OTHER INNONVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES.**

My name is David H. Uchiyama, and I am with Hawaii Think Tank a consulting agency specializing in tourism and transportation. I have worked in the hospitality industry for most of my career with the hotels, airlines, ground transportation, as well as leading the states branding efforts for the Hawaii Tourism Authority from 2007 to 2015.

In recent months it has become very apparent the as to the priority that we must place on all elements that contribute to the effects of climate change as we see greater erosion of our coastline, drought conditions across all islands, our reliance on fossil fuels and its impact on gas prices at the pump. Along with the risk of storing those fuels contributing to the environmental mishap recently experienced from the Red Hill fuel spill into Oahu's aquifer.

The State of Hawaii along with other states and countries needs to heighten their efforts, moving our planet and our islands towards zero emissions. Passing HR 181 enables the transition to begin and attracts green powered vehicle manufactures and broadening the opportunity for Hawaii's operators to migrate into green powered transportation. HR 181 is an important step which has extended benefits in addition to slowing the effects of climate change, realignment with the States Clean Energy initiative,

Hawaii's people will realize economic benefits as well when operators are able to reduce operational cost coming from operating green powered equipment when serving the needs of passenger travel, freight and/or cargo, emergency services, and better connecting Hawaii's people to health care services.

Because of Hawaii's geographic and destination recognition globally, your affirmative action on House Resolution 181 both sets in motion the transition to zero emission or green powered transportation for the islands but also will be recognized by other islands regions who follow Hawaii's vision.

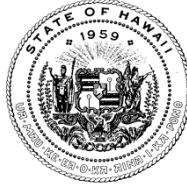
With Much Aloha,

David H. Uchiyama
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DAVID Y. IGE
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TESTIMONY BY:

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March 23, 2022
11:05 a.m.
State Capitol, Teleconference

H.R. 181
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM, TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING GROUND-EFFECT VEHICLES AND OTHER INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES.

House Committee on Transportation

H.R. 181 requests the Department of Transportation (DOT) to examine emerging technologies to see if these innovative transportation solutions have the potential to improve, among other things, operational efficiency in the transportation of passengers, freight, and cargo. The DOT supports the intent of the resolution.

Setting goals to reduce carbon dioxide emissions has been established by the Governor to convert its transportation fleet to electric vehicles, where feasible. While alternative energy methods are being developed for aviation and maritime industries, there is also the need to standardize electric charging stations for the aviation and maritime industries that are involved with international travel and trade. For example, manufacturers of different products had to design for the differences in the use of electricity voltage with different power adapters if the destination is not U.S. compatible. So will aircraft and vessels manufacturers need standardization when traveling and making trade stops around the world and Pacific Rim.

The DOT as a whole and each modal division is actively working through various initiatives to support clean transportation and to achieve the state's clean energy goals. As technologies and sustainable transportation solutions become commercially available, the DOT has adopted them. For example, in 2015, the DOT entered into a 20-year energy savings contract that guaranteed a 40-percent reduction of energy use at state airports, harbors and highway facilities through the installation of energy efficient systems and photovoltaic panels. Last year, the DOT entered into an innovative statewide fleet electrification contract, and the DOT pursues strategies to support the expansion of electric vehicle charging facilities across the state.

While the DOT is committed to sustainable transportation solutions, advancing innovative technologies like ground-effect vehicles in Hawaii will be largely driven by the private sector, including the users of DOT harbors and airports facilities. Programs, interventions, and solutions that extend beyond the department's purview must be part of the working group to achieve the intended outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

House Committee on Transportation

HR181 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM, TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING GROUND-EFFECT VEHICLES AND OTHER INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES.

Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 11:05am, Rm 423 & Videoconference

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) offers testimony in **SUPPORT** of HR181, which requests the Department of Transportation to convene a working group to examine the impact of sustainable transportation solutions in the State, including ground-effect vehicles and other innovative technologies.

As an initial matter, CNHA applauds the Legislature’s efforts to facilitate the State’s transition away from fossil-based fuels. As the effects of climate change can already be seen in Hawai’i and throughout the world, we must act quickly and decisively to reduce our carbon footprint. New developments and technological advancements in transportation will play a critical role in mitigating the impact of climate change on future generations.

In addition to being a greener alternative, sustainable transportation solutions also have the potential to reduce the operational costs of transporting passengers, freight, and cargo. This, in turn, could also help lower the cost of goods, facilitate affordable inter-island travel, and improve access to healthcare and emergency services for neighbor-island residents.

Accordingly, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement urges the Committee to **PASS** HR181. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Respectfully,

J. Kūhiō Lewis, CEO
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement

HR-181

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 5:03:48 PM

Testimony for TRN on 3/23/2022 11:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gordon LaBedz	Surfeder Foundation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT

There is a Climate Crisis and the State Government ignores airline pollution.