



# NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY



An Authority of the State of Hawaii attached to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

Statement of  
**Gregory P. Barbour**  
**Executive Director**

Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority  
before the

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

1:00 pm

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

in consideration of

### **SB 653 RELATING TO NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY.**

The Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA) is pleased to comment on SB 653 which appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to NELHA for continued operations and improvement. NELHA is a self-sufficient agency and currently receives no general funds to support its operations. Operations are paid for out of our special fund with approximately \$6 million in revenue annually from the sale of seawater and rent revenue. NELHA does have a request for five Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) in FY24 which have been transmitted to the Department of Budget and Finance for review and consideration.

NELHA has experienced an unexpected spike in activity over the past several years during the pandemic and times of economic uncertainty. We believe that this points to the resiliency of the sectors we target and can stand up to economic weaknesses.

This spike includes 13 new projects over the last two years, covering 76 acres or almost 10 percent of the land at HOST Park. This includes four leases which have buildings that are now under construction on 10.3 acres; four new leases on 27.6 acres; and, five leases pending approval in concept by the Board of Directors. In addition, our existing research campus which includes an incubator/office building is at virtually 100 percent occupancy. As such, there is very little available land with road frontage and points to the importance of our CIP requests.

The specific projects are: 1) an exploratory potable water well; 2) five roads; 3) an offshore research corridor environmental impact statement; 4) research campus expansion; and, 5) funds for maintenance and improvement of the seawater system.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.