

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

With Comments

House Bill No. 2700, HD1, Relating to Wildfires

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The Office of the Governor offers the following comments on H.B. No. 2700, HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

H.B. No. 2700, HD1 establishes the Hawai'i wildfire relief fund and corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State and would appropriate funding.

The Maui wildfire resulted in unbearable loss of lives, homes, infrastructure, and businesses. This tragic event is a wake-up call that due to climate changes, the risk of catastrophic wildfires, along with other natural disasters in Hawaii has increased.

The Office of the Governor sees this proposal as one of a few important pieces of legislation that needs to be explored as our state figures out how to stabilize our electric utility and our energy future. The bill proposes to establish a fund that the state, the electric utility, telecom companies and private landowners may contribute to a relief fund that would then potentially cover future claims arising out of a catastrophic future wildfire.

While the Office of the Governor is open to this concept, we do not feel like there is sufficient detail in this proposal, and do not currently see a full comprehensive package from the electric utility on how to resolve past claims before we believe it would be prudent for the state to commit to an approach on future claims.

Therefore, we cannot support this bill currently. However, we do not oppose this bill moving forward so that we may continue our discussions with the electric utility and other key affected stakeholders.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

TESTIMONY OF
LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF HAWAII

TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 13, 2024
2:00 p.m.

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

MEASURE: H.B. No. 2700, H.D. 1
TITLE: RELATING TO WILDFIRES.

DESCRIPTION: Establishes the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

POSITION:

The Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) offers the following comments for consideration.

COMMENTS:

The Commission appreciates the intent of this measure to mitigate the effects of a catastrophic wildfire in Hawaii by establishing a wildfire relief fund and corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in Hawaii.

The Commission appreciates the Joint Committees on Water and Land, and Consumer Protection and Commerce’s consideration of the Commission’s comments on the initial version of the measure. For example, the Commission appreciates the removal of presumed prudence if an investor-owned utility had a wildfire risk mitigation plan that was approved by the Commission. The Commission also notes the amendments to the measure that create conformity between investor-owned utilities and cooperative utilities with respect to whether their contributions may be recovered from their customers in rates and in the evaluation of the prudence of their conduct should a catastrophic wildfire have

been ignited by the public utilities facilities. The Commission observes that given the relative size of investor-owned and cooperative electric utilities in Hawaii, it may be beneficial to set different levels of initial contributions under § -8 (d) (3).

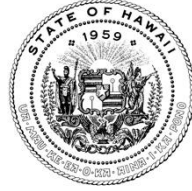
In H.B. 2700, H.D. 1, the Commission observes that the burden to pay for capitalization and participation in the fund has shifted from a Commission determination as to whether costs should be recovered from ratepayers or shareholders, to solely shareholder responsibility. The Commission agrees that it is important to carefully consider what costs are appropriate for ratepayers to bear and does not want to unjustly recover costs from ratepayers. Just and reasonable rates, prudence of incurred costs, and affordability are driving factors in every decision that the Commission makes. This proposed wildfire fund, however, is a form of insurance for electric utilities that own systems that are extremely costly to insure on the private market. Similar insurance is sometimes recovered in utility rates following a Commission determination that it provides a benefit to ratepayers. In California, the similar wildfire fund includes contributions from both electric utility ratepayers and shareholders in a sophisticated landscape that has been developed over more than a decade.

The Commission believes that it is critical to have a financially viable utility to serve customers and that it may be appropriate to recover costs from both ratepayers and shareholders for participation in the fund. Therefore, the Commission offers the following amendment for consideration:

(k) Utility contribution. A public utility's contributions to the wildfire relief fund, including initial and supplemental contributions, ~~shall not~~ may be recovered from its customers in rates and from its shareholders in amounts to be determined by the Commission.

Further, the Commission observes that it is hard to determine whether the limitations on reimbursement provided in section - 9 (d) are appropriate without first understanding the relative contributions to capitalization by different entities. Additionally, the Commission questions whether assessing "only acts that may have caused the ignition", is appropriate, or whether it may also be appropriate to assess whether a public utility contributed to the extent of a wildfire as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committees on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 2700, H.D.1, RELATING TO WILDFIRES.**

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committees:

My name is Nadine Ando, and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department offers comments on this bill.

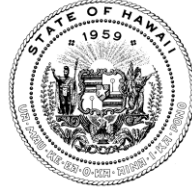
The purpose of this bill is to establish the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State and appropriates funds.

The Department appreciates the amendments in the current version of this bill, the H.D.1, includes the following amendments: (1) make unspecified the minimum number of acres of land in Hawaii that private landowners, or whose affiliated persons or entities in the aggregate, must own in order to be eligible to participate in the Wildfire Relief Fund as a contributor; (2) remove the distinction between investor-owned utilities and cooperative utilities with respect to whether their contributions may be recovered from their customers in rates and in the evaluation of the prudence of their conduct in

the event a catastrophic wildfire may have been ignited by public-utility facilities; (3) clarify that the Wildfire Relief Fund is not subject to chapter 431, Hawaii Revised Statutes; (4) prohibit a public utility from recovering its contributions from its customers in rates; (5) clarify the factors to be considered in determining the prudence of a public utility's conduct in the event a catastrophic wildfire may have been ignited by the public utility's facilities; (6) modify the procedures for hearings and appeals of determinations with respect to: (a) the Wildfire Relief Fund Administrator's determination of the amount of payment due from the Wildfire Relief Fund to a property owner, property insurer, the State, or other governmental entity; or (b) The Wildfire Relief Fund Board of Directors' determination of a contributor's allocation for any contribution; (7) change its effective date to July 1, 3000; and (8) make technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The purpose of the wildfire relief fund is to process eligible claims for property damage resulting from future catastrophic wildfires. Notably, however, the current proposal does not address the means or the mechanisms to compensate for claims of property damage arising out of the recent devastating Maui wildfires. The Department believes that a more comprehensive proposal from key stakeholders such as the electric utility, is needed to better assess the feasibility and effectiveness of any proposed measure relating to property damage compensation and risk exposure.

The Department remains committed to contributing constructively to the development of legislation that ensures the safety and well-being of our communities and is grateful for the opportunity to offer comments on this bill.



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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 2700, H.D. 1, RELATING TO WILDFIRES**

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committees:

My name is Michael Angelo, and I am the Executive Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (Department) Division of Consumer Advocacy (DCA). The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State and appropriate funds.

The current version of this bill, the HD1, includes the following amendments: (1) make unspecified the minimum number of acres of land in Hawaii that private landowners, or whose affiliated persons or entities in the aggregate, must own in order to be eligible to participate in the Wildfire Relief Fund as a contributor; (2) remove the distinction between investor-owned utilities and cooperative utilities with respect to whether their contributions may be recovered from their customers in rates and in the evaluation of the prudence of their conduct in the event a catastrophic wildfire may have been ignited by

public-utility facilities; (3) clarify that the Wildfire Relief Fund is not subject to chapter 431, Hawaii Revised Statutes; (4) prohibit a public utility from recovering its contributions from its customers in rates; (5) clarify the factors to be considered in determining the prudence of a public utility's conduct in the event a catastrophic wildfire may have been ignited by the public utility's facilities; (6) modify the procedures for hearings and appeals of determinations with respect to (a) the Wildfire Relief Fund Administrator's determination of the amount of payment due from the Wildfire Relief Fund to a property owner, property insurer, the State, or other governmental entity; or to (b) the Wildfire Relief Fund Board of Directors' determination of a contributor's allocation for any contribution; and (7) change its effective date to July 1, 3000.

The Maui wildfire resulted in tragic losses of life, personal injuries, and property damage. The pain of that tragedy will be felt for generations. We must take decisive action to eliminate the possibility of such tragic outcomes from recurring by focusing on mitigating the risks from natural hazards.

This bill proposes establishing a fund that the State, electric utilities, public utilities that contribute to the risk of occurrence or severity of a catastrophic wildfire, other government entities, and private landowners may participate in. The money within the fund would then potentially cover future claims related to property damage arising out of a future catastrophic wildfire.

The Department appreciates that this bill seeks to address the stability of the State's public utilities. The Department greatly appreciates that the amendments in the HD1 version, which provide language that would prevent utility ratepayers from having to shoulder the burden of paying costs to cover property claims arising from future catastrophic wildfires. Specifically, the HD1 version's proposed § -8(k) and § -9(f) prohibits a participating public utility from recovering contributions and reimbursements, respectively, from their ratepayers. The Department believes that these new provisions must be included within the bill if this bill is passed and enacted.

The Department also notes amendments that, in effect, allow non-investor owned utilities, such as member-owned cooperatives, to participate in the proposed program. The Department believes that those amendments are needed because non-investor

owned utilities may suffer damages from or possibly contribute to the cause of a catastrophic wildfire. However, the Department respectfully recommends that the proposed § -8(d)(3) be amended to require different contribution amounts from the investor-owned and non-investor owned utilities that account for differences in revenues and assets between the different ownership models.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & via Videoconference

On the following measure:
H.B. 2700, H.D. 1, RELATING TO WILDFIRES

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

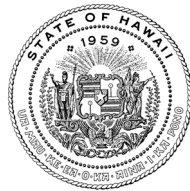
Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

My name is Denise Balanay, and I am the Senior Hearings Officer of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to establish the Hawai'i Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State and to appropriate funds.

The OAH requests correction of a technical error on page 40, line 2 of the bill: "hearing officer's determination" should be replaced with "hearings officer's determination."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 2700, H.D. 1

February 13, 2024
2:00 p.m.
Room 325 and Videoconference

RELATING TO WILDFIRES

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 2700, H.D. 1: 1) establishes the Wildfire Relief Fund (WRF) within the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) and outside of the State treasury to hold contributions from participating entities and fund compensation payments for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires; 2) establishes the WRF Corporation within DCCA to administer the WRF and specifies that it is not subject to the Insurance Code; 3) authorizes the Public Utilities Commission to order public utilities to reimburse the WRF for compensation payments if it determines the public utility engaged in imprudent conduct; and 4) appropriates an unspecified amount in FY 25 to seed the new fund and to establish 1.00 full-time equivalent administrator position to support the WRF Corporation.

B&F understands the intent of this measure as it establishes a broad framework to:

1) commission an actuarial study of the capitalization amount of the proposed WRF necessary to manage claims arising from catastrophic wildfires; 2) collect contributions from governmental entities and utilities; and 3) make payments to eligible claimants. B&F is willing to work with its sister departments, agencies, and the Legislature to advance the purposes of this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 S. Hotel Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



**Hawaiian
Electric**

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700, HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Jason Benn

Senior Vice President Chief Information Officer

Hawaiian Electric

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jason Benn, Senior Vice President & Chief Information Officer for Hawaiian Electric and I am testifying **in strong support of HB 2700, HD1, Relating to Wildfires, and requesting amendments as proposed in the attached.** HB 2700, HD1 would create a statewide wildfire relief fund to compensate property owners, insurers, and government entities for property damage resulting from future catastrophic wildfires, regardless of who or what caused them. As we so painfully learned on August 8, 2023, the impacts of climate change, combined with the changing uses of land in Hawaii, are creating a whole-of-society problem. HB 2700, HD1 is part of that whole-of-society solution.

This measure – and the other measures Hawaiian Electric has proposed that will be considered by this committee – does not contemplate a financial bailout for the company related to the Maui wildfires. These measures are forward-looking, about working to prevent something terrible like this from ever happening again and to provide

additional financial protection for everyone in the unlikely event of a future catastrophic wildfire. This legislation will also help strengthen the financial standing of Hawaiian Electric, enabling it to continue serving the energy needs of Hawaii as it has done since 1891.

We emphasize that HB 2700, HD1 does not apply to claims arising from the August 8 event. Rather, it is intended to help protect the people of Hawaii and our economy by providing compensation for property damage should another catastrophic wildfire occur in the future. In short, if passed HB 2700, HD1 would:

- Provide expedited compensation to property owners for uninsured losses—with no up-front out of pocket costs, and without the need for time-consuming, costly, and uncertain litigation.
- Provide compensation to state and local governments for losses, including the costs of fire suppression and damage to infrastructure.
- Reimburse property insurers a percentage of their payments to their policyholders. Again, this would be accomplished through an expedited, low-cost, non-litigation process.

Other noteworthy features of HB 2700, HD1 include:

- The fund would pay regardless of the cause. If a fire is caused by arson, fireworks, trash fires or natural events, or where a fire cannot be legally attributed to a financially capable party, property owners have no recourse to recover their uninsured losses. This bill seeks to address that, while also eliminating costly and lengthy litigation.
- Contributors to the Fund would be the State, electric utilities, large landowners, and counties, if those entities voluntarily choose to participate.
- Beneficiaries who chose to participate, such as property owners and property insurers, would not be able to sue those who contribute to the Fund. Contributors, for their part, would provide funds available to compensate beneficiaries no matter the cause of a catastrophic fire—pooling their resources to provide a financial backstop regardless of fault. At the same time, the bill includes a process to hold contributors accountable if they are found to have caused or contributed to the spread of fire, by means of a reimbursement to the fund.

- All property owners that do not opt out of the program via their annual property tax assessment would be participants. That feature makes it possible for the Fund to cover all catastrophic wildfires regardless of fault.
- The Fund can be flexibly capitalized, through a combination of cash contributions up front and over time, plus other, non-cash support such as a guarantee, insurance, and other financial products. That is, the Fund is designed to have the *capacity* to compensate beneficiaries for losses, but it does not need to have all of the *cash* on-hand at all times.

The Fund not only provides compensation to property owners and insurers; it also helps the State and individuals avoid the costs and burdens of litigation, as well as the financial instability that can result from litigation due to catastrophic wildfires. The State has a strong interest in avoiding that outcome. Electric utilities, for example, invest hundreds of millions of dollars every year in our State to help achieve its energy policy objectives. These include renewable energy, decarbonization, resilience and the availability of safe, reliable, and secure service to our customers, including other critical infrastructure providers, such as hospitals and the Department of Defense. Furthermore, the scope of a catastrophic wildfire is the result of a number of factors, including climate change and land management practices, that are not the fault of any single entity. The Fund equitably shares the burden of these factors that can lead to a catastrophic wildfire, promoting the public's interest in ensuring that our critical infrastructure providers, including electric utilities, remain able to raise the capital needed to invest in our State.

In order to continue to be able to make these large upfront investments, the utility must eliminate the financial uncertainty of future wildfire risks and regain access to capital. We believe this bill and investments Hawaiian Electric and others will make to mitigate wildfire risk, will help do so.

We appreciate the care the committees for Water & Land and Consumer Protection & Commerce took in preparing HD1, and we support most of their amendments. However, we request that two amendments in HD1 not be accepted and instead revert to the original language of the bill, details of which are included in the attached.

First, under earlier versions of HB 2700, a public utility's contributions to this Fund are recoverable in rates. HD1 changes that, prohibiting any rate recovery of Hawaiian Electric's contribution to the Fund. Respectfully, the original proposal is consistent with current law and fair. Historically, Hawaiian Electric has always recovered the costs of liability insurance from its customers in its regulated rates. Commercial insurance for large losses resulting from catastrophic wildfires isn't available, but if it were, it would be far more expensive than the Fund. We believe therefore it is reasonable to allow for customer contributions to Hawaiian Electric's portion of the Fund.

The provision in HD1 that would require shareholder funding of the contribution to the Fund also wrongly prejudices Hawaiian Electric as culpable for a future catastrophic wildfire, before any investigation has been conducted, and even if the contribution is used to pay for damages from fires that the utility had no role in. We feel that is unfair. Our proposal provides for the Public Utilities Commission ("PUC" or "Commission") to investigate the utility's conduct and, if it finds that the utility's imprudence caused or contributed to a future catastrophic wildfire, then the PUC will order it to reimburse the fund up to a cap. That way, the utility will be held accountable if, but only if, the PUC finds that it acts wrongly.

Second, the original version of HB 2700 stated that, in a PUC review, the utility's conduct will be presumed. HD1 eliminates this presumption. We request that this Committee restore the presumption. First, to clarify, this presumption has nothing to do with civil liability or lawsuits; it is strictly limited to a PUC review. Second, the presumption harmonizes the Wildfire Relief Fund with other laws establishing a PUC-approved wildfire mitigation plan. The presumption reflects that the PUC has evaluated and approved wildfire mitigation plans based on principles of reasonableness and prudence. At the same time, the presumption isn't absolute; if a serious doubt is raised about the utility's prudence, the presumption falls away. Our proposal mirrors the California statute, as well as the approach taken by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

In summary, HB 2700, HD1 provides a low-cost and rapid process to compensate property owners and insurance companies and avoids the uncertainty of litigation that can financially destabilize utilities, large landowners, and government entities. Solving the impacts of climate change on our State must be addressed collectively and collaboratively.

On behalf of the 2,600 employees, 5,200 retirees and the generations of Hawaiian Electric employees who have faithfully served our community for 132 years, mahalo for allowing me to testify in strong support of this important bill. Please pass HB 2700, HD1.

Proposed Amendments to HB 2700, HD1

§ -8 Wildfire relief fund; funding.

(k) Utility contribution. A public utility's contributions to the wildfire relief fund, including initial and supplemental contributions, shall ~~not~~ be recovered from its customers in rates, unless the public utilities commission directs otherwise pursuant to section -9.

§ -9 Replenishment of the wildfire relief fund; determination of prudence.

(a) If the administrator, or an agency of the State with responsibility for determining the causes of wildfires, informs the public utilities commission that a catastrophic wildfire may have been ignited by the facilities of a public utility that is a contributor, the public utilities commission shall initiate a proceeding to review the public utility's conduct leading to the catastrophic wildfire and make findings. The public utilities commission may, even without formal notice from the administrator or the agency, initiate this proceeding of its own accord.

(b) The public utilities commission shall evaluate the prudence of the conduct of the public utility in connection with a catastrophic wildfire as follows.

(1) If the investor-utility has a wildfire risk mitigation plan that was approved by the public utilities commission, the investor-utility's conduct will be deemed to have been prudent, unless a party to the proceeding creates a serious doubt as to the prudence of the investor-owned utility's conduct; or

(2) If the investor-utility does not have a wildfire risk mitigation plan that was approved by the public utilities commission, or if the public utilities commission determines that the presumption is overcome, the public utilities commission shall determine whether the public utility acted prudently, considering only acts that may have caused the ignition and evaluating the public utility's actions in the context of the public utility's overall systems, processes, and programs, such that an error by a public utility employee would not be a basis for a finding of imprudence, unless that error resulted from any imprudent system, process, or program.

(c) In evaluating prudence under this section, the public utilities commission shall determine whether the actions of the public utility were consistent with actions that a reasonable public utility would have undertaken in good faith under similar circumstances, at the relevant point in time, and based on the information available to the public utility at the relevant point in time.

Reasonable conduct shall not be limited to the optimum practice, method, or act to the exclusion of others, but rather

shall encompass a spectrum of possible practices, methods, or acts consistent with utility system needs, the interest of ratepayers, and the requirements of governmental agencies of competent jurisdiction.

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SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 13, 2024

TO: Representative David A. Tarnas
Chair, Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Matt Tsujimura

RE: **H.B. 2700 H.D. 1 – Relating to Wildfires**
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 2:00PM
Conference Room: 325

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

I am Matt Tsujimura, representing State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company (State Farm). State Farm offers this testimony **in opposition** to H.B. 2700 H.D. 1, Relating to Wildfires.

H.B. 2700 H.D. 1 establishes the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

H.B. 2700 H.D. 1 does not protect consumers. Participating in the Wildfire Relief Fund would result in the property owner never being made whole. Instead, the proposal asks property owners and insurers to waive rights before a loss has occurred and the extent of the damage and liability is known. It requires property owners to participate in the fund unless they “opt out.” If the property owner does not affirmatively “opt out,” the only source of recovery against a negligent party is a pre-determined amount (uninsured property owner) or a percentage (insured property owner) of their overall loss. A property owner who failed to “opt out” may unknowingly waive their individual right to seek damages from a negligent party and which may also impact an insurer’s subrogation rights.¹

Insurers are required to “opt-in” to participate in the proposed Wildfire Relief Fund and, if they do so, the recovery is limited to a percentage predetermined by the fund. The proposal essentially asks an insurer to assess liability and likelihood of potential recovery before the event has occurred, a time when the facts, circumstances, and identity of the responsible parties is unknown.

H.B. 2700 H.D. 1 does not appear to *require* any type of wildfire mitigation plan by contributing entities to prevent catastrophic wildfire events. Rather, the proposal gives the public utilities commission, the fund administrator, or other state agency the ability

¹ Subrogation supports a critical public policy purpose of ensuring the party who caused the loss bears the financial burden for the damage caused.

to determine if the conduct was “prudent.”² While unlikely, this could enable contributing entities to pay into the fund to significantly limit their liability while limiting other types of preventative wildfire measures they could take due to the protection offered by being a fund contributor.

Ultimately, State Farm is concerned this proposal is detrimental to consumers and does little to help mitigate wildfire losses, while allowing the responsible parties to limit liability for their wrongful conduct.

For these reasons we offer this testimony in opposition. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

² Investor-owned utilities who have a wildfire mitigation plan approved by the public utilities commission are deemed to have been “prudent” unless a party to the proceeding creates doubt as to the conduct.

**TESTIMONY OF EVAN OUE ON BEHALF OF THE HAWAII
ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE (HAJ) IN OPPOSITION OF
HB 2700**

Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Time: 2:00 p.m.

My name is Evan Oue and thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Association for Justice (HAJ) in **OPPOSITION** to HB 2700 - RELATING TO WILDFIRES. The measure seeks to establish a Hawaii Wildfire Fire Relief Fund to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

Primarily, HAJ is concerned with § -18, pages 40-41, relating to limitations on claims. Specifically, the measure provides that: "**No suit, claim, or other civil legal action may be instituted or maintained against contributors or their affiliates, employees, agents, or insurers:** (1). For recovery of losses or damages of a type for which compensation may be sought from the wildfire relief fund." HB 2700 seeks to immunizes electric utilities, public utilities other than electric utilities, the State, or private landowners from property damage claims arising from a catastrophic wildfire.

HAJ has always held the position that broad immunity is bad public policy. In this instance, HAJ is concerned that the proposed measure will preclude all property damage claims against fund contributors for any disaster in the future. The measure seeks to revictimize the people of Maui who were affected by the 2023 wildfires and to undercut the rights of victims of any, and all future disasters. This immunity will apply even to disasters that are caused by the sort of negligence that led to the recent destruction of so many lives and livelihoods on Maui.

HAJ understands the implications this measure may have for fund contributors, however, we fail to see why those who have caused so much damage and destruction should grant broad immunity for the damage they caused at the expense of their victims.

Furthermore, HAJ is not aware of any other state that has provided such broad immunity of this type when establishing a relief fund. Under the current measure, Hawaii would be the first state in the nation to reward potentially responsible parties by absolving them of their responsibilities to those they harm. Providing immunity under this measure will remove any accountability for utility companies, the State, and private landowners whose actions or omissions result in damage to residents across the state. The current immunity language sets a dangerous precedent of rewarding companies, our government, and private landowners for their negligence which contribute to catastrophic wildfires or disasters in the future.

Ultimately, the residents of Hawaii will be unable to seek recourse for damage to their property. HB 2700 may remove fund a contributor's responsibility to safely design and maintain their operations. The public welfare depends on fund contributors employing reasonable diligence and our state should not limit claims for our residents, especially immediately following a disaster which impacted so many. We encourage the State to protect the residents of Hawaii and ensure that victims of these disasters are able to freely seek recourse for damage to their property.

We look forward to working with all involved stakeholders on this measure. Thank you very much for allowing me to testify in OPPOSITION of this measure. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or desire additional information.



Testimony Before the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

By David Bissell
President and Chief Executive Officer
Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative
4463 Pahe'e Street, Suite 1, Līhu'e, Hawai'i, 96766-2000

Tuesday, February 13, 2024; 2:00 pm
Conference Room #325 & Videoconference

House Bill No. 2700 HD1 - RELATING WILDFIRES

To the Honorable Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Gregg Takayama and Members of the Committee:

Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) is a not-for-profit utility providing electrical service to more than 34,000 commercial and residential members.

KIUC offers comments on this measure.

KIUC shares the legislature's concern regarding the risks posed by catastrophic wildfires and the potential impact to the health, safety and financial security of residents and businesses throughout the state. KIUC agrees that it is in the best interest of the state to minimize the impact of potential litigation following catastrophic events, and ensure residents have access to compensation for property damage resulting from wildfires.

The establishment of a Wildfire Relief Fund could have significant financial impacts, both positive and negative, on residents, businesses, utilities, government agencies and other stakeholders. KIUC believes the needs and circumstances of each of these stakeholders is diverse and should be considered prior to acting on this legislation. Without access to background on studies or other information used to develop this complex proposal, we have concerns about the bill's potential negative impact to KIUC. In order to support the establishment of a Wildfire Relief Fund, KIUC would need much more information on costs and potential benefits of participating, both initially and ongoing.

The preamble to HB 2700 states that the measure is designed in part to "...ensure that the threat of wildfires does not make investment in Hawaii's public utilities so financially risky that it becomes too costly or impossible for them to raise capital to implement vital plans, including plans to mitigate wildfire risk, and to provide safe, reliable, and affordable service to the people of the State."

While this is undoubtedly a consideration for an investor-owned utility such as Hawaiian Electric (HECO), a cooperative such as KIUC does not bear anywhere near the same amount of investment risk. Because KIUC has no shareholders and is therefore considered to be part of the public power universe of electric utilities, KIUC would have access to funding assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the event

of a wildfire, and it is likely that FEMA would cover 75% of KIUC's rebuild costs following a major catastrophic event. Additionally, as a cooperative, KIUC has access to low-cost capital through the U.S.D.A. Rural Utilities Service (RUS), which would likely be a lower interest rate source of debt capital than even AAA-rated securitized bonds. If RUS debt is unavailable, KIUC would seek capital from one of our cooperative lenders, such as the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation or CoBank.

KIUC has concerns that, as a utility representing just 5% of the state's population, the costs associated with establishing and maintaining the fund could have a disproportionate financial impact on our members without a commensurate return. Accordingly, KIUC requests that participation from cooperative utilities be made optional so that costs and benefits of participation can be considered.

In summary, we ask that you fully evaluate the costs and potential benefits of this bill prior to making a decision.

Thank you for your consideration.



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
FEBRUARY 13, 2024
HB 2700 HD1 RELATING TO WILDFIRES.**

Good afternoon, Chair Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901, RMH is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

We support the intent of HB 2700 HD1. This measure establishes the Hawai'i Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000.

The recent Maui Wildfires had a devastating effect on the community. We hope this never happens again in our state. Families, businesses, and the community were heavily affected. This measure is a solution in the event that we are faced with another catastrophic wildfire.

Should our state face another devastating wildfire (that could be caused by a multitude of unknown factors), this wildfire relief fund would help to ensure that resources would be available for potential victims. It would also provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage, no matter the cause of the wildfire.

Furthermore, this bill would help to reduce the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future wildfires as well as protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund. This is a step in the right direction.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

126 Queen Street, Suite 305

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS, Hawai‘i Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation; Public Utilities Commission; Catastrophic Wildfire

BILL NUMBER: HB 2700 HD 1

INTRODUCED BY: House Committees on Water & Land and Consumer Protection & Commerce

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Establishes the Hawai‘i wildfire relief fund and corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

SYNOPSIS: Amends the HRS by adding a new chapter. The new chapter would establish the Wildfire Relief Fund and an associated quasi-government Wildfire Relief Fund Corporation. The entity is charged with administering a voluntary program for wildfire victims to apply for a payment from the fund in exchange for releasing from liability the entities that had contributed to the fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 3000.

STAFF COMMENTS: Our comments are contained in our publication of November 30, 2023, entitled “The Lahaina Recovery Fund,” reprinted below.

The Lahaina Recovery Fund

One of the more innovative items announced by the Governor’s office when it comes to disaster relief measures is the creation of a Lahaina Recovery Fund.

In a press release announcing the measure, the Governor’s Office said that the concept was similar to the 9/11 Fund created in the aftermath of the destruction of the World Trade Center. The idea is that the government, Hawaiian Electric, Kamehameha Schools, and others who might be facing lawsuits would pay into the fund. Claimants who want a distribution from the fund agree not to sue the fund contributors.

It was a controversial enough plan that the Star-Advertiser conducted an informal “Big Q” online poll to see if its readers thought the fund was a good idea. (As of this writing, supporters were a little more than twice the number of detractors.)

Typical of the opposition was this post on X: “So in other words, what our state government deems is the value of your loss is all you will receive because you sign your rights away to sue for more?!? DON’T DO IT #LAHAINA!”

In a previous column, we urged the government to create this type of fund. The primary advantages are (1) claimants get money in months, not years; (2) claimants typically won’t have to contend with attorneys’ fees, which could otherwise be a huge amount like a third of the

recovery; and (3) people can get on with their lives instead of worrying about discovery, depositions, trial, and possible appeals.

The fund being proposed has a voluntary participation element, like many class actions. If someone thinks that they can get a better result by suing, they are certainly free to do so. And even for folks who sue, it's tough to get past the idea that the payment will "be a payment of the State's choosing." After all, if there is a settlement of any kind (90% of litigated court cases are settled), the government will have to sign off on the payment because it would be a defendant in the litigation.

Those who want to be purists about it would need to settle in for the long haul. Take-no-prisoners litigation would need at least a couple of years to get to trial. Many more years could be added to that if appeals follow. Those purists will be waiting a long time for their money.

So, how much is each participant going to get if they opt into the fund? The exact amount isn't known at this point. This is because negotiations are still ongoing with the potential defendants who would be putting money into the fund, and folks don't yet have a clear idea of how many people would be participating. This is not unusual even for mass tort litigation and other class actions. The Governor says that the amount per participant will be north of \$1 million. Obviously, this is not a case where the government is trying to get people to sign off for a pittance like 20 bucks in some preloaded gift card. This is serious money and should be considered by the claimants seriously.

People who are thinking about being a possible claimant of the fund need to thoughtfully consider the dollar amount, whether the claimant could do better if he or she filed a lawsuit, and the cost of that lawsuit. Attorneys don't come cheap, and a "contingency fee" where the attorney is paid only if there is a recovery may cost a third (or more) of the total recovery. Add to that the uncertainty of when, or if, litigation recovery will be paid. The recovery fund, in contrast, will be ready to pay out in months, not years.

Maui claimants can be the adults in the room. They can and should make their own choices about their own future. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to a Lahaina claim. We congratulate the Governor's office for putting this option on the table.

Digested: 2/12/2024



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700, HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Eric Wright on behalf of Par Hawaii

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eric Wright and I serve as President of Par Hawaii. I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires. I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor.

This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund by reining in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Hawaii State Legislature
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

February 12, 2024

Filed via electronic testimony submission system

RE: HB 2700, HD -1, Relating to Wildfires - NAMIC's Testimony in Opposition

Thank you for providing the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) an opportunity to submit written testimony to your committee for the February 13, 2024, public hearing. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the public hearing, because of a previously scheduled professional obligation.

The National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) membership includes nearly 1,500 member companies. The association supports regional and local mutual insurance companies on main streets across America and many of the country's largest national insurers. NAMIC member companies write over \$1.8 billion in annual premiums.

NAMIC and its members support the public policy objective of addressing the societal dangers wildfires pose to the physical safety and financial stability of citizens of the State of Hawaii. We believe that a collaborative partnership between interested stakeholders is essential. As we have all painfully learned in Hawaii and throughout the western United States, in recent years, wildfire mitigation risk management is of paramount importance to the health and safety of homeowners and communities. Consequently, we are concerned that the proposed legislation does not address wildfire fuel reduction and risk mitigation management practices of utilities companies, who by their very business nature need to be vigilant in their efforts to mitigate risk and prevent wildfires from starting. Instead of focusing upon vegetation management planning and wildfire risk reduction, HB 2700, HD -1 focuses upon reducing liability exposure for utilities.

Although NAMIC appreciates the liability exposure concerns and litigation challenges that exist for utilities, we do not believe that the proposed legislation is in the best interest of insurance consumers, so we are opposed to the legislation for the following reasons:

- 1) The proposed legislation is likely to create consumer confusion that could adversely impact a consumer's ability to protect their legal rights.**

HB 2700, HD-1 requires homeowners to "opt-out" of the Wildfire Relief Fund, arguably, at each and every property tax payment renewal cycle or they will be automatically included within the purview of Fund, with all the legal implications of being a participant

in the fund. This is concerning for a number of due process of law legal reasons and problematic from a public policy perspective. First, a homeowner may not even appreciate that they need to make a formal decision and “opt-out” of the Wildfire Relief Fund (hereinafter “Fund”). Notice, even conspicuous notice, within the property tax assessment invoice is questionable legal notice, at best, especially when failure to affirmatively act upon the notice could prejudice a homeowner’s legal right to pursue a future claim against a tortfeasor whose negligence could have adversely impacted their home. A homeowner’s ability to protect one of their most valuable assets should not hinge upon them identifying the legal notice within their tax assessment document, understand the legal implications of not “opting out” of a new and complex Fund, and then timely effectuating an “opt-out” activity.

Second, homeowners are going to be provided with limited information about the specific details of the organizational and operational requirements of participating in and submitting a claim to the Fund and the legal implications of participating in the Fund (i.e. how this participation in the Fund interacts with and impacts their private homeowner’s insurance coverage protection). How is forcing homeowner’s into making a prompt decision on “opting-out” of the Fund when they have limited information about the legal implications of their action or inaction in the best interest of citizens of the state? One could argue that the likely result of this “opt out” requirement is that many homeowners will be unknowingly or unintentionally turned into participants in the Fund. Informed and intentional participation is always preferable to uninformed and unintentional participation.

- 2) **HB 2700, HD-1 would provide utilities with a mechanism to reduce their legal liability exposure without requiring them to engage in any proactive, pro-consumer protection wildfire risk mitigation management.**

Although the bill is intended to reduce litigation costs and better allocate utilities’ liability settlement resources to homeowners after a wildfire, the practical reality of the situation is that HB 2700, HD-1 is predominantly a utilities liability exposure reduction bill for the benefit of the utilities. It creates a complex process (the bill itself is 44 pages, and the regulations and operating agreement necessary for the creation and administration of the Wildfire Relief Fund Corporation will likely be considerably longer and more complex) whereby homeowners may end up unknowingly waiving, in advance, their legal right to sue an at-fault utilities company in exchange for a promise of a fractional payout of their personal and property damages caused by a utilities’ legal negligence. How is this pro-consumer protection and not pro-utilities protection?

Additionally, the bill treats insured homeowners and uninsured homeowners differently as to the legal protections the Fund provides to them. This seems to raise due process of law and equal protection of law legal issues rife with potential for legal challenge.

- 3) **The proposed legislation creates an unworkable legal relationship for homeowners’ insurance companies.**

The proposed legislation requires insurer to prospectively “opt-in” to the Fund before they even know what their claims liability exposure is or what the Fund Corporation’s legal determination of a utilities’ legal liability is on a particular wildfire. In effect, insurers would be forced to make a prospective legal and business decision that could adversely impact their future insurance rates for consumers without complete information about the Fund Corporation’s wildfire liability determination. Settlements are typically made after the parties to a legal claim have information about the scope and valuation of the damages, not before.

Additionally, the very relationship between the Fund and the homeowner could put the insurer and its policyholder in a legally challenging position. Insurers pay the policyholder’s claim and then they are contractually assigned the policyholder’s legal right to pursue the at-fault party that caused the damages. If the policyholder adversely impacts the insurer’s right to subrogate against the at-fault party, the policyholder is in breach of the insuring agreement. HB 2700, HD-1, especially with its homeowner “opt out” requirement, could expose homeowners to a situation where they are violating the terms of their homeowner’s insurance policy and thereby jeopardizing their insurance protection coverages.

NAMIC appreciates that the proponent’s of the bill are attempting to come up with a creative and novel approach to address the liability exposure of utilities for the benefit of all interested stakeholders, but HB 2700, HD-1 is not the answer. It is rife with legal and public policy problems that are unfair to consumers and likely to lead to protracted litigation over the legal implications of this confusing and unclear Wildfire Relief Fund.

For the aforementioned reasons, NAMIC asks for a No Vote on HB 2700, HD-1.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me at 303.907.0587 or at crataj@namic.org, if you would like to discuss NAMIC’s written testimony.

Respectfully,



Christian John Rataj, Esq.
NAMIC Senior Regional Vice President
State Government Affairs, Western Region

February 13, 2024

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

RE: House Bill 2700, HD1, Relating to Wildfires

HEARING: Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 11,000 members. HAR **supports** House Bill 2700, HD1, which establishes the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000.

This measure establishes the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund to help residents affected by wildfires in the future and makes it easier for Hawaii families to get compensation for property damage. It will also help protect the financial stability of the state, counties, big landowners, and utilities by reducing the uncertainty caused by the risk of future wildfires. While we hope what happened in Maui never occurs again, this measure helps to ensure resources are available should a catastrophic wildfire happen again.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 13, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2700, HD1
RELATING TO WILDFIRES

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 2700, HD1, which establishes the Hawai'i Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawai'i families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund by reining in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



**HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
State Capitol
2:00 PM**

February 13, 2024

Subject: HB 2700, HD 1 - RELATING TO WILDFIRES

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Takayama, and members of the Committee:

My name is Max Lindsey, Government Relations Committee Chair of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is in general support of the intent of HB 2700, HD1 as the bill proposes to establish the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State. The bill would ensure a limited amount of financial resources are available to support Hawaii residents that may be impacted by a future natural disaster.

The bill proposes to create a process for recovering property damages and would provide a level of financial protection to the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to reduce the risk and uncertainty created by future catastrophic wildfires.

While the bill would benefit large landowners and existing electric utilities, it is important to note that any business will find it difficult to protect themselves from unlimited liability caused by these new natural disasters. These new risks may cause investors and/or lenders to reconsider investing or lending to these entities. Moreover, insurance may be difficult to obtain in the future as the concerns grow over these new natural disasters.

What types of protections should be provided for Hawaii homeowners and residents need to be addressed in this bill. The current version of the bill is far from perfect; however, it does provide the vehicle for further discussion on how best to prepare all segments of the community from the growing risk of these new natural disasters.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair

HB2700

RELATING TO WILDFIRES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2700** which establishes the Hawaii Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

Hawaii's ranchers are key stakeholders in preventing wildfires. Unfortunate wildfire events are becoming more commonplace, but ranchers are dedicated to stewarding the land to reduce fire fuel loads through managed grazing. Further, ranchers are reliable resources during fires to help with heavy equipment operation and access to reservoirs. While prevention of fire is key, the establishment of this fund is forward-thinking to prepare for future damages.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



February 12, 2024

RE: HB 2700 HD1: Relating to Wildfires

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Founded in 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to enhance the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. With 470 member businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce **supports** HB 2700 HD1: Relating to Wildfires.

The catastrophic event that happened in West Maui is a reminder of how vulnerable we are to the dangers of wildfires. This bill proposes a future solution to create a wildfire relief fund to help potential victims recover from any catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause.

In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund. It aims to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

We ask you to pass HB 2700 HD1: Relating to Wildfires.

Sincerely,



Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce



OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL UNION No. 3

2181 LAUWILIWILI STREET, KAPOLEI, HI 96707 • (808) 845-7871 • FAX (808) 682-0906
Jurisdiction: Northern California, Northern Nevada, Utah, Hawaii, and the Mid-Pacific Islands

February 12, 2024

Honorable, David A. Tarnas, House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, Chair
Honorable, Gregg Takayama, House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

RE: HB 2700 HD1 RELATING TO WILDFIRES

Chair Ichiyama & Chair Nakashima,

My name is Ana Tuiasosopo. I am the District Representative and Trustee for Operating Engineers Local 3. We are the largest Construction Trades Local in the United States. I and the members of Operating Engineers Local 3 support HB 2700 HD1.

We support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

We humbly ask for your support and approval of HB 2700 HD1.

Sincerely,

Ana Tuiasosopo
Hawaii District Representative, Trustee
Hawaii Operating Engineers Local 3



Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

1321 Kino'ole Street
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone: (808) 935-7178
Fax: (808) 961-4435
E-mail: admin@hicc.biz
www.hicc.biz

February 12, 2024

Testimony Before the House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee

February 13, 2024 at 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

RE: HB 2700, HD1 Relating to Wildfires

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce (HICC) **supports** HB 2700, HD1 because it proposes a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor.

Founded in 1898, HICC has been a part of our island's business community for 125 years. Our organization is comprised of over 300 member businesses and professionals from a variety of industries including non-profit organizations from Hawai'i Island.

HB 2700, HD1 would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund by reining in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

Mahalo for this opportunity to express our support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Miles Yoshioka, Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, February 13, 2024
TIME: 2:01 p.m.
PLACE: State Capitol
Conference Room 325

RE: **Testimony in Support** of House Bill 2700 HD1

Aloha Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of Committee;

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 (IBEW 1260) would like to respectfully offer the following testimony **in Support** of House Bill 2700 HD1.

IBEW 1260 is comprised of approximately 3,000 members representing Hawaii's electric utility companies as well as government service contracts and media personnel throughout Hawaii, Guam, and Wake Island. Our members are a diverse local workforce of dedicated, highly skilled, and trained individuals working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to generate, transmit, and distribute electricity throughout Hawai'i and to ensure the reliability of this precious resource.

IBEW 1260 supports House Bill 2700 as amended in HD1 which establishes the Hawai'i Wildfire Relief Fund and Corporation to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State.

House Bill 2700 HD1 seeks to establish a streamline process to provide mitigative relief and economic stability to all who would be affected by future catastrophic events. Recent events have magnified the tragic harm that can befall an entire community by such occurrences, and how critical such processes and financial backstops are to prevent economic uncertainty and to ensure the continued stability and viability of Hawai'i's major institutions.

The electric utility and infrastructure that Hawaiian Electric provides is vital to our community, and to our members and their families. As a local company, tracing its roots back to Hawai'i's monarchy, HECO has been a generous corporate partner and philanthropic contributor to our community and provides a valuable and sustainable careers to many of Hawai'i's local residents. In a time when cost of living and affordability

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Noreen Takeshita

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Noreen Takeshita and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Enrique Che

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Enrique Che and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 32 years. Having worked for the company as an engineer. I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Lyanne Hiromoto

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lyanne Hiromoto and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 32 years. Having worked for the company, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Sarie Uechi

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarie Uechi and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland. It is a company with local roots and is committed to continuing to serve Hawai'i.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawai'i families who are our neighbors with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Sharon Suzuki

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sharon Suzuki and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 28 years. Having worked for the company in various positions, most recently as President, Maui County and Hawaii Island Utilities, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, like mine, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Alden Ishii

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alden Ishii, and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 31 years. Having worked for the company in management (e.g., Engineering, Power Plant, and Safety), I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available to affected residents if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Mark Suehiro

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mark Suehiro and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 29 years. Having worked for the company as an Electrical Engineer, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 9:57:48 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Reynolds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 2700 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Patsy Nanbu

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Patsy Nanbu and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 35 years. Having worked for the company in the accounting and regulatory areas, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii. As experienced while working at the company for over three decades, Hawaiian Electric has and continues to be deeply committed to serving local families and businesses, providing jobs and giving back to the communities.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Keith Kobuke

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keith Kobuke and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 30 years. Having worked for the company as a(n) engineer, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Karen Hirota

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Karen Hirota and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 20 years. Having worked for the company as an executive assistant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Teri Theuriet

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Teri Theuriet and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

As someone born and raised in Kaneohe, I appreciate that Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work here in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. This bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if we are unfortunate enough to experience another disaster like the Maui wildfires. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Michelle Koyanagi

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michelle Koyanagi and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 17 years. Having worked for the company as an accountant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 7:40:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacklyn Spencer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Jacklyn D. Spencer

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jacklyn Spencer and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 25 years. Having worked for the company as a Clerk Dispatcher, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing

to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 8:20:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Leslie Kwock

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Leslie Kwock and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. With the sad outcome of many other local companies closing after the pandemic, this local company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland, where the culture and environment does not have the same warmth as Hawai'i. I was born, raised and have a family here on O'ahu, being very grateful of this unique gift and opportunity from my parents. I would like to continue my family roots here, including the benefit of having as many local companies like Hawaiian Electric.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factors. While I hope what happened in West Mau'i never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provides Hawai'i families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause – this resembles 'ohana where families are supportive and protective of each other and even extends beyond genetic bonds. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2024 6:59:51 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
scott cramer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony before the HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Scott Cramer

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Scott Cramer and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Joyce Chang

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joyce Chang and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 15 years. Having worked for the company as a Sr. Financial Administrator, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Ken Aramaki

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ken Aramaki and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Lorrie Iwanaga

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lorrie Iwanaga and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 32 years. Having worked for the company as an executive assistant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Phillip Gerwien

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Phillip Gerwien, and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Jamie Lee

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jamie Lee and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 29 years. Having worked for the company as an accountant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Susan A. Li

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Susan A. Li and I submit this testimony in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and worked there for nearly 30 years in their legal department. I am proud to have been a part of one the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii, and contributing significantly to the community for over 100 years.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland. The company has also provided opportunities for employees to give back to their community and to support many non-profit organizations in the state.

HB 2700 HD1 proposes a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire, which could occur due to any number of unknown factors. While we all hope that what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure that resources would be available if it does. The bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and would provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, the bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. The bill's purpose is to minimize the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow it access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Accordingly, I urge the committee to pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Terry Garcia

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Terry Garcia and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Lorie Nagata

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lorie Nagata and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 36 years. Having worked for the company in the finance and accounting area, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kristin Nakamura

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kristin Nakamura and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Caryn Fukunaga

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Caryn Fukunaga and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Jared Mimura

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jared Mimura and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by David Kurohara

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Kurohara and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Grant Imamura

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Grant Imamura and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Michael T Iwahashi

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michael T Iwahashi and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1,
Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 33 years. Having worked for the company as a Lineman, Troublemaker, Foreman & Asst Superintendent, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Yvonne Phillipson

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Yvonne Phillipson and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kelsey Ito

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelsey Ito and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kandice Kubojiri

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kandice Kubojiri and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kathie Okuda

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathie Okuda and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Tia Waikīkī

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tia Waikīkī and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by **Joanne Williamson**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joanne Williamson and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I support HB2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any factor. This bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available when a catastrophic fire occurs.. This bill creates a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

This bill creates a template for recovery efforts for all types of natural disaster.

Please pass HD2700 HD1 and thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by David Tester

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Tester and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Fabio van den Bylaardt

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Fabio van den Bylaardt and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kerriann “Kuhea” Asiu

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kuhea Asiu and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawai'i families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

We all need to pull together and support one another now more than ever. Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Mahalo,

Kuhea Asiu

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kristen Okinaka

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kristen Okinaka and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted By Darren Ishimura

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Darren Ishimura and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While I hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does.

This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawai'i families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. Reining in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires can, for example, help maintain an electric utility's positive credit rating and thus allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety, reliability, and resilience of its electrical grid. Ultimately, this is in the best interests of Hawai'i's residents.

Hawaiian Electric is deeply rooted in Hawai'i's communities and the State needs Hawaiian Electric to continue its vital role in serving its customers and helping the State prosper. As one of Hawai'i's largest employers, Hawaiian Electric continues to provide opportunities for families and our younger generation to live and work in the islands.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Jodi Borges

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jodi Borges and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Mark Wong

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mark Wong and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kerry Kanakaole

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kerry Kanakaole and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 29 years. Having worked for the company as a(n) Apprentice Lineman, Lineman, Asst Superintendent and C&M Superintendent, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Everett A. Lacro

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Everett Lacro and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for 26 years. I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Earlynn F. Maile

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Earlynn Maile and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 35 years. Having worked for the company primarily as an Engineer, Project Manager and Planner, I am very proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, and run by leadership from Hawai`i.

The company has provided career opportunities for myself and others who grew up here in the islands. I went to college on the mainland and wanted to come back to Hawai`i to live and raise my family. Hawaiian Electric made that possible. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Wendy Takara

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Wendy Takara and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Iris Eala

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Iris Eala and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 29 years. Having worked for the company in various departments and positions, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Robert Young

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robert Young and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 41 years. Having worked for the company as an electrical engineer, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Lyle J. Matsunaga

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lyle Matsunaga and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Maui Electric and Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 19 years. Having worked for the companies as a Manager, Accounting and Director, Finance, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The companies have provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The companies continue to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Samantha Spake

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Samantha Spake and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid. Cost of living has been increasing over the years and to keep folks here, we need to keep things affordable and a positive credit rating would help do so.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Cliff Yim, LPLS

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cliff Yim and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Joanna Markle

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joanna Markle and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 10:43:38 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Baughn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Stephen Baughn

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stephen Baughn and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kevin Kuo

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Kuo and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by **Wade I. Hayama**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Your name** and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired former employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 3 years. Having worked for the company as a HR Systems Analyst, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Danny Ishii

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Danny Ishii and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 17 years. Having worked for the company as a Human Resources Consultant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii, with a purpose of giving power to the people of Hawaii to live their lifestyle.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to:

1. Ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause.
2. Protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700, HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Christopher P. Schlueter

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christopher P. Schlueter and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires. I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor.

This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund by reining in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Faith Duenas

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Faith Duenas and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Greg Demko

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Greg Demko and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Donica Kaneshiro

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Donica Kaneshiro and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Laura Rogers

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laura Rogers and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700, HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Karen Kuis-Zelko

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Karen Kuis-Zelko and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

RELATING to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Daniel M. Ford

Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Daniel M. Ford, and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 H1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am both a retired Honolulu Police Officer and a retired employee of the Hawaiian Electric Company and was employed at HECO, for over fourteen years. Having worked for the company as the Senior Security Supervisor, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation with an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Timothy Lee

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Timothy Lee and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for eight years. I am also a retired employee of Verizon Hawaii with 24 years of service. Having worked for Hawaiian Electric as a regulatory analyst, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii. Having also retired from Verizon Hawaii, I can share that the experience with the Carlyle Group to acquire Verizon Hawaii was not a positive one.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

Even if I were not a retiree of Hawaiian Electric, I would still support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's

positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Alton Ramos

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alton Ramos and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 19 years. Having worked for the company as a(n) Business Consultant, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by **Darren Yamamoto**

Dear Chair Tanas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Darren Yamamoto and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 34 years. Having worked for the company as a lineman and several administrative positions. I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Jason Cosma

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jason Cosma and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Kenneth Chan

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kenneth Chan and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has been a part of the fabric of our islands for over a hundred years and has been an intimate partner to its many communities in that time. The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by William Chang

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is William Chang and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Lori Yafuso

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lori Yafuso and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 22 years. Having worked for the company as a(n) IT Program Manager, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Michelle Chang

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michelle Chang and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

Hawaiian Electric has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Peter Okunami

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Okunami and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 32 years. Having worked for the company as an Engineer and graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

HB-2700-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 2:53:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/13/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna P. Van Osdol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I apologize for submitting my testimony a little late. I already testified in favor of this worthy piece of legislation that will help our residents if they are affected by wildfires. Anything to assist our Hawaii families is always beneficial to our communities and especially to our children.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Donna Van Osdol

Mililani, HI

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

HB 2700 HD1

Relating to Wildfires

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Submitted by Gary Hanaoka

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gary Hanaoka and I am testifying in support of HB 2700 HD1, Relating to Wildfires.

I am a retired employee of Hawaiian Electric and was employed there for over 11 years. Having worked for the company as a(n) ERP System Administrator, I am proud to have been a part of the very few remaining local companies in the State, led by local management, run by leadership from Hawaii.

The company has provided career opportunities for our families who grew up here in the islands, and for some, a family legacy of generations. The company continues to provide our younger generation an opportunity to live and work in the islands, rather than having to move to the mainland.

I support HB 2700 HD1 because it is proposing a future solution in the event of another catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by any unknown factor. While we hope what happened in West Maui never occurs again, this bill is being proposed to ensure resources would be available if it does. This bill would create a future wildfire relief fund for potential victims and provide Hawaii families with an efficient process for recovering property damage from a future catastrophic wildfire, no matter the cause. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the state, counties, large landowners and utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to rein in the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. For example, a utility's positive credit rating would allow them access to cost-effective financing to improve the safety and reliability of its electrical grid.

Please pass HB 2700 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 325
Tuesday, February 13, 2024 AT 2:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

SUPPORT HB2700 HD1 RELATING TO WILDFIRES

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB2700 HD1.**

The Chamber supports the concept of this fund that helps protect impacted residents and businesses of future catastrophic wildfires by getting paid from the fund regardless of the cause of the wildfire. We acknowledge that it will help protect state, counties, large landowners, and utilities that contribute to the fund from financial uncertainty by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires. We note that residents and businesses that will benefit from this fund will also be contributors to this fund through state and other governmental taxes. We appreciate the amendment that prohibits a public utility from recovering its contributions from its customers in rates. We all must come together on solutions when dealing with catastrophic events.

We are concerned with the removal of the 1,000-acre threshold for landowners in the last committee hearing and ask that this be reinserted. Our understanding is by having the 1,000-acre threshold, approximately 42 landowners throughout the state will have to contribute to the fund. If this number is reduced, it may significantly negatively impact farmers and ranchers, who we are trying to support and grow in the agricultural industry.

We appreciate the forward thinking of this initiative. We hope that the state will continue to explore federal and other methods of funding for expediting protective measures in order to help lessen the impacts of future disasters. The Chamber looks forward to continued discussions on this and other related bills to find the best possible solutions.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT HB2700 HD1.**

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.