



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
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**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**MARK B. GLICK**  
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

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Testimony of  
**MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer**

before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM  
AND  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

Thursday, February 1, 2024  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In Support of  
**SB 2539**

**RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.**

Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 2539 that requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform by 1/1/2025. The measure also requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

HSEO notes that SolarAPP+ has several appealing features, including its development by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, nation-wide availability, significant improvements in capabilities since just last year, and partnerships with standards bodies, code councils, and at least one nationally recognized testing laboratory. But, HSEO appreciates the flexibility provided in the measure of the option to use a functionally equivalent online permitting platform.

HSEO recognizes that individual permitting agencies are taking steps to improve the permitting for solar photovoltaic and battery installations, and it appears that the SolarAPP+ requirement is compatible with those efforts.

HSEO looks forward to working with the authorities having jurisdiction on this section of the bill, which is consistent with existing statutory responsibilities of HSEO and of the Chief Energy Officer, including those set forth in Section 196-72 (d):

- (2) Identify, track, and report key performance measures and milestones related to the State's energy and decarbonization goals;
- (3) Provide technical assistance to state and county agencies to assess and implement projects and programs related to energy conservation and efficiency, renewable energy ... and related measures;

And also

- (15) Facilitate the efficient, expedited permitting of energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and energy resiliency projects.

Regarding the self-certification section of the bill, HSEO notes the efficiency of the concept and looks forward to supporting the authorities having jurisdiction as they “establish a self-certification process” (page 4, lines 13-14) to allow residential and commercial on-site solar distributed energy resource systems to **begin** construction, with the understanding (based on discussions on a similar bill introduced last year) that final compliance review and approval will take place at the time of final inspection by the authority having jurisdiction (i.e. permitting agency).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT GOVERNOR



## **Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority**

An Agency of the State of Hawaii

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
CHAIR

**GWEN S YAMAMOTO LAU**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Testimony of**  
**Gwen Yamamoto Lau**  
Executive Director  
**Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority**  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
and  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**  
February 1, 2024, 2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229  
in consideration of  
**SENATE BILL NO. 2539**  
**RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY**

Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and Members of the Energy, Economic Development & Tourism and Government Operations Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and provide comments on Senate Bill No. 2539, relating to renewable energy. The Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority (HGIA) **supports** this bill which contains measures to streamline the permitting process for distributed solar projects through use of an automated permitting platform.

HGIA, Hawaii's Green Bank, works to advance the State's goal of a 100% renewable portfolio standard in energy production to further decarbonize Hawaii's economy, and contribute to a more resilient, climate-ready energy grid. This bill could address delays in the permitting processes, saving ratepayers and contractors time and money while enabling faster reduction of carbon emissions. Removing administrative barriers to the deployment of solar energy systems by leveraging existing software will enable HGIA to more efficiently facilitate the transition to renewable energy for our ALICE households and other underserved ratepayers, and help them lower their energy burden.

HGIA defers to the authorities having jurisdiction over the proposed self-certification process and technical implementation of the concerned software.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and provide comments on Senate Bill No. 2539.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS

Thursday, February 1, 2024 — 2:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2539, Relating to Renewable Energy.**

Dear Chair DeCoite, Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committees:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports SB 2539**, which requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real time by 1/1/2025; and requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

Ulupono supports the use of SolarAPP+, or an equivalent platform, to help streamline solar and energy storage project permitting. The Hawai'i State Energy Office recently published its Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization Report, which identifies, among other things, the significant need for additional renewable energy generation to meet broader economy-wide decarbonization goals.<sup>1</sup> Solar photovoltaic (PV) systems are becoming so common that there is little risk and much to gain in terms of timeliness with such systems, as more renewable energy can be installed at a faster rate. The self-certifying procedure proposed in this bill supports a streamlined process for renewable energy projects, which may even decrease the workload on already burdened county planning and permitting departments.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization Act 238, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022, Report to the 2024 Hawai'i State Legislature December 2023. [https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Act-238\\_HSEO\\_Decarbonization\\_Report.pdf](https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Act-238_HSEO_Decarbonization_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The counties all struggle with a backlog of permit applications, so any effort to streamline the process would be welcomed. For example, the Civil Beat recently noted that the median residential permitting time for the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting, was 330 days and commercial jobs were at a median of 420 days. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/12/honolulus-building-permit-delays-a-nightmare-decades-in-the-making/>

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



**Hawaii Solar Energy Association**  
*Serving Hawaii Since 1977*

**Testimony of The Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA) Regarding SB2539, Relating to Renewable Energy, Before the Senate Committees on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism and Government Operations**

**Thursday, February 1, 2024**

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:

The Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA) **strongly supports SB2539**, which contains measures to streamline and remove barriers to permitting for distributed solar and energy storage projects critical to achieving Hawaii's clean energy transition.

HSEA members include the majority of locally owned and operated renewable energy companies doing business in the state of Hawaii along with leading global cleantech manufacturers and service providers that invest and sell in our market. We employ thousands of residents in diverse green economy jobs that are innovating, designing, and building Hawaii's pathway to a renewable energy future. We advocate for policies that help Hawaii achieve critical climate and resilience goals by enabling residents and businesses to invest in and benefit from the transition to clean energy. These investments provide reliable and affordable power that reduces energy cost burden and contributes to Hawaii's energy security as we decarbonize our economy and electric grid.

While some significant progress has been made at the municipal level, permitting bottlenecks and backlogs remain a problem for certain types of projects and for certain segments of our economy and citizenry. These bottlenecks add unnecessary cost, time, and risk to Hawaii's renewable energy transition which impacts all residents and businesses, particularly those that have not yet been able to install or participate in a solar and energy storage project. As new federal, state, and local programs are introduced to bring the cost of solar and energy storage systems down for residents, and systems become more available and accessible to underserved communities, the removal permitting obstacles offers a significant opportunity.

SB2539 addresses ongoing permitting challenges in several important ways:

***First, the bill establishes a requirement for building permit issuing authorities to adopt the SolarAPP+ automated online permitting tool, or an equivalent that processes and approves applications in real time.*** SolarAPP+ was developed by the U.S. Department of



**Hawaii Solar Energy Association**  
*Serving Hawaii Since 1977*

Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory and has been successfully deployed for PV and PV+Storage projects in numerous municipalities across the nation. Adoption of SolarAPP+ is a "win" for all participants in the permitting review process. It reduces compliance risks, lowers time and cost, and removes relatively small and simple projects from the manual review queue so that building permit officials can spend more time on larger and more complicated projects and customers can install and benefit from their systems sooner. The investment in SolarAPP+ will reduce administrative burden and taxpayer expense and allow the counties to re-focus resources on other high priorities.

***Second, the bill removes the burdensome and time-consuming materials and methods (MM#) review process and replaces it with standardized, peer-reviewed national product safety certification and product documentation requirements.*** In addition to causing delay and extra cost, this unnecessary requirement stifles innovation and blocks new lower-cost technologies and products from entering our market.

***Finally, the bill requires permitting authorities to provide a self-certification pathway for projects that do not qualify for the SolarAPP+ online permitting tool.*** If a duly licensed design professional certifies that a solar project's plans are compliant with all applicable laws and codes, the project should not be delayed from proceeding to construction. The final compliance review and approval can occur at inspection. This will speed up the overall process and significantly enhance current efforts at the municipal level.

HSEA and other stakeholders have long collaborated city and county administrations at the leadership and departmental level to improve permitting processes. We are committed to continue working collaboratively to fix issues with current systems and help implement internal process changes. While progress has been made, the current system remains time-consuming and hinders our economy and residents' livelihoods. With federal resources available through the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we have a unique chance to benefit Hawaii. Strengthening permitting capacity is crucial to seize these opportunities. This bill provides a clear way to save time and resources for all involved, aiding Hawaii's renewable energy goals and carbon reduction targets.

HSEA **strongly supports SB2539** and urges the committees to pass this measure. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully,



**Hawaii Solar Energy Association**  
*Serving Hawaii Since 1977*

***/s/ Rocky Mould***

Rocky Mould  
Executive Director



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

#### Executive Officers

**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway Hawaii, *Chair*  
**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Vice Chair*  
**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*  
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**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*  
**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

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TO: Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism, and Committee on Government Operations

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 1, 2024  
TIME: 2pm  
PLACE: Conference Room 229

RE: SB2539 Relating to Renewable Energy

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Chairs DeCoite and Wakai, Vice Chairs McKelvey and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing on behalf of the Hawaii Food Industry Association to express our enthusiastic support for S.B. NO. 2539, a critical piece of legislation aimed at advancing renewable energy in our state. Our association fully endorses the bill's emphasis on the self-certification provision and wishes to highlight its significance for the food industry, food security, and overall resilience.

The Hawaii Food Industry Association recognizes the imperative of transitioning to a one hundred per cent renewable portfolio standard by December 31, 2045, as mandated by Act 97, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015. This transition aligns with the broader goals of reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels and promoting the utilization of locally available renewable energy sources.

We particularly commend the inclusion of the self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems in S.B. NO. 2539. This provision is essential for the food industry as it allows for a more streamlined and efficient process for businesses to transition to solar without unnecessary administrative hurdles. The ability to self-certify ensures that our industry, which plays a crucial role in Hawaii's food security, can swiftly adopt renewable energy solutions, enhancing our overall resilience.



Food security is a paramount concern for our state, and the Hawaii Food Industry Association believes that enabling businesses to transition to solar through self-certification is a positive step forward. The ability to expedite the deployment of solar distributed energy resource systems will not only contribute to Hawaii's clean energy goals but also fortify the resilience of our food supply chain.

In conclusion, we urge the Committee to recognize the importance of the self-certification provision in S.B. NO. 2539 for the food industry, food security, and overall resilience. We believe this legislation will contribute significantly to Hawaii's renewable energy objectives while facilitating the swift and efficient adoption of solar technologies by businesses in our sector.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this matter. We look forward to witnessing the positive impact of S.B. NO. 2539 on the energy landscape of our state.



**Sunnova Energy Corporation**  
20 Greenway Plaza, Suite 540  
Houston, TX 77046  
sunnova.com

January 31, 2024

Re: Strong support for SB 2539 Relating to Renewable Energy

Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:

Sunnova Energy International, Inc. is a national provider of solar energy as a service. Founded in 2012, Sunnova services more than 380,000 customers across 40 States and U.S. territories including Hawaii. We strongly support SB 2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals.

SB 2539 will facilitate more efficient permitting processes for simple solar projects. When residents invest in solar, including paying application fees, they deserve a streamlined process. Unfortunately, hundreds of our customers have experienced egregious delays with local jurisdictions throughout the permitting process. This is unacceptable. It hurts local businesses (installers), and is also unfair to ratepayers who are doing their part to generate local clean energy. Solar is a simple and safe technology which should be approved instantaneously. Over-the-counter permit approval for solar systems is urgently needed in Hawaii. Clean energy projects should not be stalled by local bureaucracy.

We are asking the State legislature to intervene. We supported a similar bill last year, and were disappointed that it did not advance. Unfortunately, over the last year, permitting with local jurisdictions has not improved. This hurts our customers, our industry, small businesses, and our environment. Please provide the leadership necessary to move this critically needed legislation forward.

SolarAPP+ is free for local jurisdictions to use, has already been successfully deployed in multiple municipalities across the country and has reduced permitting timelines to less than one day. Solar projects that cannot be reviewed under SolarAPP+ will be given a self-certification pathway which will also save time and consumer money.

Thank you for receiving Sunnova's testimony on SB 2539. We believe this bill will help the residents of Hawaii save money and support Hawaii's climate resilience goals.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meghan Nutting". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "N".

Meghan Nutting, EVP of Government and Regulatory Affairs  
Sunnova Energy International

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 1:50:08 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dave Mulinix	Testifying for Greenpeace Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha EET committee members Decoitte, Wakai, Fukunaga, Mercado Kim & Fevella, and GVO committee members McKelvey, Gabbard, San Buenaventura, Wakai & Awa,

I am CoFounder of the Hawaii chapter of Greenpeace, the largest environmental organization in the world, with an international membership of over 3 million. On behalf of Greenpeace Hawaii's thousands of members statewide we Stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB2539 that addresses longstanding permitting issues that impede progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals.

SB2539 establishes a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects. Currently families are often waiting more than a year to receive their permit. This is unacceptable and must be remedied. By implementing provisions in SB2539, there will be auto-approval, proceed-to-build for all solar and storage projects that qualify for the online submittal.

It is important to note that Solar APP+ has been quite successful on the continent reducing solar permitting time down to as little as one day. SB2539 will greatly reduce solar permitting approval time in Hawaii. Streamlining permit processing time will greatly increase the installation of solar panels to help cut Hawaii's carbon emissions.

As a renewable source of power, solar energy has an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating Climate Change, which is critical to protecting humans, wildlife, and ecosystems. Solar coupled with battery storage also provides resiliency by providing a backup energy source when storms or other emergencies cause a power failure.

Please pass SB2539 to help remove the unnecessary roadblocks and burdens to installing solar plus storage systems so that all may access and benefit from solar energy and is an important step forward to support Hawaii in achieving our decarbonization goals!

Mahalo for your kind attention,

Dave Mulinix, CoFounder, Greenpeace Hawaii

February 1, 2024

TO: Chair Lynn DeCoite  
Vice Chair Glenn Wakai  
Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey  
Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Members of the Committee on Government Operations

FR: Noelani Derrickson  
Public Policy & Business Development  
Tesla

RE: SB2539 Relating to Renewable Energy. - **SUPPORT**

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Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Gabbard, Chair DeCoite, and Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 2539, which requires government entities to implement online automated platforms and streamline permitting processes for residential solar and storage.

Tesla **strongly supports SB 2539**, as it addresses the key obstacles for continued solar and storage growth in Hawaii – the time it takes to permit and install residential solar and storage systems. Additionally, we recommend consideration of proposed amendments in Appendix 1.

Across the country, local permitting processes can be complex and costly for contractors and consumers alike, sometimes taking many months for a simple solar permit. Although we acknowledge and appreciate recent improvements in residential solar and storage permitting review in Hawaii, additional process improvements as proposed in SB 2539 are important to ensure Hawaii can meet its climate goals and support residential resilience and reliability.

SB 2539 requires local government adoption of an automatic and online permitting system, such as [SolarAPP+](#), which can review 14 times more solar permits than traditional over-the-counter processes and is free to use. SolarAPP+ was developed for local governments by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), in coordination with Underwriters Laboratory, the International Code Council, the National Fire Protection Association, and local governments.

According to NREL, projects submitted through SolarAPP+ are permitted, installed, and inspected on average 13 business days faster than projects using the conventional process. As of 2024, SolarApp+ has been adopted in 167 local jurisdictions, in 11 states.

SB 2539 also requires local government adoption of a self-certification process for solar generation systems that deems a permit application approved and allows applicants to proceed to build, provided that, (1) the local government receives written notice from the project owner confirming ability to pay permitting fees, (2) the solar generation system is installed by a licensed architect or engineer, and (3) the installation of the system complies with all applicable codes and laws. Several major cities, such as Chicago and San Diego, offer self-certification processes, which help reduce permitting delays, particularly for systems that may be outside of the scope of SolarAPP+ or equivalent automatic and online permitting systems.

Lastly, SB 2539 also provides the direction for AHJ's to promote the use of labor standards, including participation in state-approved apprenticeship programs. It is unclear if this subsection creates new labor requirements or only encourages use of labor standards. We recommend further clarification on this subsection.

Thank you,

*Noelani Derrickson*

Noelani Derrickson

Public Policy & Business Development



To: The Senate Committee on Energy and Economic Development, and Tourism (EET)  
and  
The Senate Committee on Government Operations (GVO)  
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024, 2pm

### **In strong support of SB2539**

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and members of the EET and GOV committees,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SB2539** which requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real-time by 1/1/2025. This measure further requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

**SB2539** addresses longstanding permitting issues that impede progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. This bill offers a number of critical, common-sense measures that will streamline permitting ***without compromising on safety***. Addressing these permitting issues is essential if Hawaii is to achieve its decarbonization goals, reduce costs for residents, and become more resilient.

**This measure is a true game-changer.** In particular, by establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent, **SB2539** will streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects. It is noted that the **National Renewable Energy Laboratory, (NREL), developed SolarAPP+ in a collaborative partnership with industry and the building safety community, with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy.** Currently, Hawaii's families are often waiting more than a year to receive their permit. This is unacceptable and must be remedied. By implementing provisions in **SB2539**, there will be auto-approval, proceed-to-build for all solar and storage projects that qualify for the online

submittal. In jurisdictions in California already using the SolarAPP+, they have shortened waits for permits from months to a *single day*.

With the highest electrical rates in the country and the impacts of climate change already being felt, we need to move forward on smart solutions that will help to stimulate our economy and make us more resilient. The current system for processing permits is untenable and a detriment to Hawaii achieving our clean energy goals. This measure will remove unnecessary barriers and move us to the clean-energy economy we need.

Rooftop solar power reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and as such, is a key tool in our fight against the climate crisis. **SB2539 is a crucial step needed to help Hawaii meet its climate goals, reduce costs for residents, and become more resilient.** We must remove the unnecessary roadblocks and burdens to installing solar plus storage systems so that all may access the benefits from solar energy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important legislation.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

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

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

February 1, 2024

2:00 PM

Conference Room 229

**In SUPPORT of SB2539: Relating to Renewable Energy**

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Aloha Chair Decoite, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** SB2539, which will enhance our islands' climate resiliency by helping to expand our distributed renewable energy infrastructure in a timely and equitable manner.

Hawai'i's continued dependence on fossil fuels not only contributes to the climate crisis that has already reached our islands' shores – in the form of historic floods, prolonged droughts, wildfires, repeated coral bleaching events, the proliferation of invasive species, and the extinction of native species, among others – but also subjects our residents and businesses to the ever-increasing costs of fossil fuels, exacerbating the financial instability faced by so many who call these islands home. Moreover, our dependence on a centralized grid can render us particularly vulnerable to power outages caused by extreme weather or other events that compromise centralized energy producing facilities and distribution infrastructure. **Accordingly, the equitable development of distributed renewable energy infrastructure, such as distributed solar energy systems, is an important and necessary strategy to help reduce our islands' contributions to the climate crisis, free our utility costs from the ballooning price of fossil fuels, and ensure greater energy resiliency should a climate-related extreme weather event impact our islands' largely centralized energy infrastructure.**

The provisions contained in this measure, including those requiring the use of readily available app technology and empowering licensed professionals to self-certify solar and energy storage products, can reduce the cost, time, and risk in realizing the benefits of greater distributed renewable energy infrastructure throughout the islands. The Sierra Club appreciates that this measure may also particularly benefit those that have not yet been able to install or participate in a solar and energy storage project. SB2539 is therefore an important step forward to ensure a timely and equitable transition towards a cheaper, more resilient, and climate-friendly energy future for our islands.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committees to **PASS** SB2539. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 3:21:59 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Matthew Campbell	Testifying for Discover Energy Systems	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

Best Regards,

Matthew Campbell  
VP, Sales & Marketing



Legislative Testimony of Sunrun Inc.  
Before the EET/GVO Committee  
February 1, 2024

**IN SUPPORT of SB2539 – Relating to Renewable Energy**

Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and distinguished Members of the Committees on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism and Government Operations,

Sunrun is the nation's leading home solar, battery storage and energy services company, and has a long and proud history in Hawai'i with office and warehouse locations on O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i Islands. We employ more than 350 professions across the islands, including sales/marketers, customer experience professionals, and installation team members including electrical inspectors, technicians, forepersons and warehouse personnel.

**Sunrun strongly supports SB2539**, which would streamline the permitting process for solar distributed energy resource (DER) and storage projects. Permitting is one of the largest remaining roadblocks to widespread DER adoption, and SB2539 would address longstanding permitting issues that impede progress on Hawai'i's renewable energy and climate resilience goals by offering a number of common-sense measures such as:

1. Requiring implementation of the SolarAPP+ online permitting tool or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. Creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent); and
3. Removing the burdensome materials and methods number (MM#) requirement for solar DER systems.

Hawai'i has a 100% renewable portfolio standard (RPS) by 2045,<sup>1</sup> and DER systems are critical to achieving the state's RPS goals. In 2022, solar power generated nearly 17% of the state's total electricity, largely due to the rapid uptake of small-scale, customer-sites solar systems.<sup>2</sup> In 2023, Hawaiian Electric (HECO) achieved nearly 43% renewable generation, largely due to continued DER adoption.<sup>3</sup> Rooftop solar is the leading contributor to Hawai'i's clean energy portfolio, making up over 46% of all renewable energy in the state.<sup>4</sup> Continued implementation of rooftop solar has proven to be a strong component of the state's renewable energy generation and contributes to a more resilient energy system.

SolarAPP+ was developed by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory and has already been successfully deployed in hundreds of municipalities across the nation. It is now

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<sup>1</sup> <https://energy.hawaii.gov/what-we-do/clean-energy-vision/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/state/?sid=III#tabs-1>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/hawaiian-electric-hits-38-renewable-energy-in-2021>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/about-us/performance-scorecards-and-metrics/renewable-energy>

required by the state of California after legislation passed in 2022.<sup>5</sup> Further, the Solar Energy Industry Association (SEIA) estimates that soft costs make up about 65% of all residential solar installation costs, up from 58% in 2014.<sup>6</sup> This bill is a powerful tool to drive down soft costs for residents and businesses looking to install solar equipment.

Adoption of SolarAPP+ is a “win” for all participants in the permitting review process. It reduces compliance risks, lowers time and cost, and removes relatively small and simple projects from the manual review queue so that building permit officials can spend more time on larger and more complicated projects and customers can install and benefit from their systems sooner. The investment in SolarAPP+ will reduce administrative burden and taxpayer expense and allow the counties to re-focus resources where they are needed most.

Sunrun strongly supports SB2539 and respectfully urges the committee to advance this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this critical legislation. As a national solar, storage and energy services company, Sunrun has a broad view of states’ clean energy policies and stands ready to assist Hawai‘i with its policy goals.

Sincerely,



Steven Rymsha  
Director Grid Solutions, Public Policy  
steven.rymsha@sunrun.com  
808-220-7377

---

<sup>5</sup> S.B. 379, Residential solar energy systems: permitting. C.A. Legis. Assemb. 2021-2022.

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220SB379](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB379)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.seia.org/research-resources/solar-soft-costs>

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 1:23:10 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacob Millan	Testifying for Meyer Burger	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:

I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:

1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;
3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)

Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Jake Millan  
Meyer Burger Americas

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 12:02:03 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Sterns	Testifying for SunPower Corporation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Hawaii has always been a leader in clean energy deployment, but on this issue has lagged behind other states who have embraced automation and technology to cut red tape and speed up deployment. We hope with the passage of this bill that will change, and Hawaii will stay in a leading role of buiding the electric grid of the future. Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

Patrick Sterns

Director, Policy and Strategy

SunPower Corporation



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

February 1, 2024 at 2 PM  
Room 229

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2539**

Aloha Chair Decoite, Chair McKelvey, and members of the Committees:

Blue Planet Foundation **supports SB 2539**, which will streamline permitting for rooftop solar panels. This bill will increase the adoption of solar energy— helping us meet our climate goals, improve grid resiliency, and provide utility savings to homeowners and ratepayers.

The State of Hawai'i has committed to a decisive and irreversible transition away from fossil fuels. The legislature has passed aggressive carbon reduction goals, including a mandate to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2045 (Act 97 of 2015), and a goal to be carbon-negative by 2045 (Act 15 of 2018). Setting these bold targets is important, but alone it is insufficient. Hawai'i needs implementation-focused policies, such as improving the process for solar permitting, if we hope to achieve our clean energy and climate goals.

Hawaiian Electric's current plan for achieving Hawai'i's 100% renewable energy goal includes power generation from the rooftop of nearly every home across the islands. Over 106,000 homes on O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i island<sup>1</sup> and 6,000 homes on Kaua'i<sup>2</sup> have already installed rooftop solar. Residential rooftop solar is a proven tool to help homeowners and renters save money and reduces the need for utility investments in the power grid. When paired with batteries, rooftop solar panels can also increase resiliency in neighborhoods, helping homes keep the lights on and communication powered during a blackout.

Adjustments to the current permitting process will ensure a more timely transition to solar energy to help us meet our clean energy goals. Solar also provides additional benefits. Residential rooftop solar is a proven tool to help homeowners and renters save money and reduces the need for utility investments in the power grid, which are paid for by all ratepayers. When paired with batteries, rooftop solar panels can also increase resiliency in neighborhoods, helping homes keep the lights on and communication powered during a blackout.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Cumulative Installed PV - As of December 2023" *Hawaiian Electric Company*. Accessed January 27, 2024. ([hawaiianelectric.com/documents/clean\\_energy\\_hawaii/clean\\_energy\\_facts/pv\\_summary\\_4Q\\_2023.pdf](https://hawaiianelectric.com/documents/clean_energy_hawaii/clean_energy_facts/pv_summary_4Q_2023.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> Per KIUC testimony on SB 781 from 2023, page 12, see:

[https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2023/Testimony/SB781\\_TESTIMONY\\_EET-GVO\\_02-09-23\\_.PDF](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2023/Testimony/SB781_TESTIMONY_EET-GVO_02-09-23_.PDF)

For these reasons, we support SB 2539 as a common-sense measure to advance the adoption of solar energy and battery storage systems throughout Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 6:34:32 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
laurel brier	Testifying for Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to electrify to order to address the climate crisis. Make it easier for people by streamlining the permitting process.

Thank you

Strong support for SB2539



**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 7:03:50 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
PAUL OREM	Testifying for Photonworks Engineering	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Paul Orem*

*CEO Photonworks Engineering LLP*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 8:24:53 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ella Aki	Testifying for Sol-Ark	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Mahalo piha,*

*Ella Henanipuakea Aki*

*Sol-Ark RSM, Pacific Islands*

*(808) 379-3052*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 6:20:09 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Hamilton	Testifying for Inception Financial LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

***We plan to invest over \$100 Million in the State of Hawaii over the next 2 years. This will drive local job creation, increase local and State tax revenue, and deliver critical energy security and financial savings to thousands of HI residents. This legislation is critical to ensure our investment commitment can proceed.***

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Ryan Hamilton*

*Managing Partner*

*Inception Financial LLC*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:57:59 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
George Kuo	Testifying for Canadian Solar	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:

As one of the top 5 PV supplier globally, we want to participate and contribute to Hawaii's interest in renewable energy. We strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have **impeded** progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals, which **we are experiencing first-hand**. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:

1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;
3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)

Thank you for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

George Kuo

Sr. Director, Global Product Enablement

Canadian Solar Inc.

+1(831)234-6550



Oahu 599-7793  
Kauai 245-6570

Maui 871-9721  
Toll Free 1-877-786-5464

*Dear Chairs, DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers several common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. Establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects.*
- 2. Removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems.*
- 3. Creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean energy goals, especially at a time when all of you have a full plate this session. Also, for giving us the chance to share our views.*

*Respectfully,*

Paul Spencer  
President  
Sun King Inc.  
[solarenergy@sunkinghawaii.biz](mailto:solarenergy@sunkinghawaii.biz)

**LATE**

Testimony of  
Pacific Resource Partnership

Senate Committee On Energy, Economic Development, And Tourism  
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Senate Committee On Government Operations  
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

SB 2539—Relating To Renewable Energy  
Thursday, February 1, 2024  
2:00 P.M.

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) is a nonprofit organization that represents the Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters, the largest construction union in the state with approximately 6,000 members, in addition to more than 250 diverse contractors ranging from mom-and-pop owned businesses to national companies.

PRP writes in **support** of SB 2539.

This bill authorizes (not require) the counties to include labor standards in county ordinances related to the issuance of building permits for solar distributed energy resource systems.

Labor standards, including, but not limited to living wages, benefits, and requirements for participation in state-approved apprenticeship programs are vital to attracting and maintaining local workers with the requisite knowledge, skill, training, and experience needed to construct safe renewable energy systems in a timely manner.

Authorizing counties to include labor standards will encourage the timely build-out of diverse, resilient, and reliable portfolio of low-cost renewable energy systems consistent with the purpose of SB 781 and to help meet Hawai'i's 100% renewable energy goal by 2045.

As such, we respectfully request your favorable decision on this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony.



**Testimony of the Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and  
Landscape Architects**

**Before the  
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
and  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Thursday, February 1, 2024  
2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 229 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 2539, RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY**

Chair DeCoite, Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sheena Choy, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and Landscape Architects (Board). The Board will discuss this bill at its next publicly noticed meeting on February 8, 2024, after which it will be able to provide an official position.

The purposes of this bill are: (1) to require government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real-time by 1/1/2025; and (2) require government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**Canaan Shon**  
Hawaii Geophysical  
Services, LLC  
Chairman

**Ross Kawano**  
ECA, LLP  
Treasurer/Secretary

**Christine Lanning**  
Integrated Security  
Technologies, Inc.  
Incoming Chair

**Kevin Schmid**  
Oceanic Companies, Inc.  
Past Chairman

**Malcolm Barcarse, Jr.**  
A&B Electric Co., Inc.

**Ralph Sakauye**  
Bora, Inc.

**Paulina Baker**  
Redhammer LLC

**Wyatt Young**  
Roto-Rooter, Inc.



**Kathryn Mashima**  
Mashima Electric  
Chairman

**Ross Kawano**  
ECA, LLP  
Secretary

**David Tsuda**  
First Hawaiian Bank  
Treasurer

**Austin Doherty**  
Helix Electric  
Past Chairman

**Geoffrey Chu**  
Oceanic Companies, Inc.

**Maurice Torigoe**  
M. Torigoe Plumbing, Inc.

**Michelle Taketa**  
StarCom Builders, Inc.

**2024 CEF ETTF Board of  
Trustees**

**Leonard Tanaka**  
T&T Electric, Inc.

**Casey Reed**  
Helix Electric

**Jeff Waiblinger**  
Consolidated Painting LLC

**Christopher Lee**  
Ayko Group, LLC

January, 31, 2024

To: Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism  
Senator Lynn Decoite, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Committee on Government Operations  
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

From: Malcolm Barcarse, Jr. ABC Hawaii Board Legislative Committee Chair

Associated Builders and Contractors Hawaii Chapter **COMMENTS** Re SB 2539

Chairs Decoite & McKelvey, Vice Chairs Wakai & Gabbard and members of the  
Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, my name is Malcolm Barcarse, Jr. I am the Chair of the Legislative Committee of Associated Builders and Contractors, Hawaii Chapter which represents over 150 member companies in the Construction Industry in Hawaii. We also have a State Approved Trade Apprenticeship Program in the trades of Carpentry, Electrical, Painting, Plumbing and Roofing. Our national organization has over 21,000 members across 69 chapters.

Our comments today refer to the provision on Page 3, lines 17-21 that allows tying the issuance of building permits to labor standards. With the State scrambling to meet its renewable energy goals, we believe that adding additional burdens to these projects fails to help the State meet these renewable energy goals. They will potentially add additional costs to these projects along with slowing down the building permit process which is already taking too long in the current environment. Labor standards are covered in other areas of the law and administered by different agencies that have subject matter expertise in labor standards, so we ask those laws continue to be enforced by the agencies that are actually tasked to enforce those laws.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:18:43 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Arianna Feinberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

Please support this bill as we need to everything in our power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. More solar power and storage will help fight climate change.

Thanks,

Arianna Feinberg

Makawao, Maui

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:32:01 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ninon Rynerson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sb2539 will help to streamline the permitting process for solar which will help reduce our need for fossil fuels and save our environment thank you.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 10:07:26 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Cheryl Ho.

I testify as a resident of Nu‘uanu, where solar panels are highly desirable as a means of heating.

I strongly support the provisions of SB2539. An online processing system for permits will greatly expedite the state’s progress toward our 2045 goal of decarbonation.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Ho

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 11:21:02 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dyson Chee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2539!

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 4:59:38 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2539. Streamlining of the permitting process for rooftop solar is a necessity if Hawaii is to reach its carbon reduction goals.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 6:36:01 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keith Neal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair DeCoite and members of the EET**

**I support SB2539**

**Hawaii having a consistent permitting platform will benefit all concerned. Please implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform.**

**Mahalo,**

**Keith Neal**

**Waimea**

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 9:27:15 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Paul Bernstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite and members of the EET committee:

I support SB2539. I feel that the delay in permitting energy projects is a primary reason for the rolling blackouts on Oahu. This bill should address this problem and therefore improve grid reliability.

Mahalo,

Paul Bernstein

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 5:47:32 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Travis Idol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the intent of this bill to streamline the permitting household photovoltaic electricity systems. We need to move as quickly as possible to transition completely off fossil fuels. We should not let permitting and other bureaucratic processes slow this process down or discourage households from pursuing the installation of photovoltaic electricity systems.



**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 9:41:59 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald "Ron" Reilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair Glenn Wakai, and members of the Committee On Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism,

Thank you for hearing SB2539 relating to Relating To Renewable Energy. Many thanks also to the introducers of this measure which requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform.

Permitting should be made as efficient as practicable and this measure will work to reduce permitting backlog and improve the customer experience to encourage more adoption of roof top solar toward our State goal of net zero by 2045.

I respectfully urge your support of this measure.

Sincerely, Ron Reilly  
Volcano Village, Hawaii

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:08:19 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roy Skaggs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members,

I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:

1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;
3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)

Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha!

Roy Skaggs

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:29:47 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:

I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:

1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;
3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)

Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha, Jeff Lum

856 Nana Honua St

Honolulu, HI 96825

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:44:05 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Ann Saunders	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Lori Ann Saunders*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 12:04:53 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Furuta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Justin Furuta*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 12:11:24 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
wei lun lian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Wei lun Lian*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 12:39:12 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Streams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is essential that residents be able to more quickly obtain state permitting for solar panels and battery storage in order to do our part in reducing the progression of climate change and our use of fossil fuels.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 12:56:51 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Radford Nakamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

*Respectfully,*

*Radford Nakamura*



**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 1:49:25 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bill Bugbee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**IN SUPPORT OF SB2539** – The efficient and cost-effective adoption of solar energy is essential to Hawaii’s statewide clean energy goals and transition to a clean energy economy. Rapidly changing global climate impacts (fueled by Hawaii’s contributions to rising global greenhouse gas emissions) are no longer unavoidable in greater part due to the advent of zero-emissions solar energy adoption options.

Bureaucratic, costly, and inefficient solar permitting processes at state and county levels present significant barriers to solar adoption by residents and businesses, and directly contribute to unnecessary. SB2539 will streamline and eliminate unnecessary permit processing inefficiencies, burdensome project time delays, and other avoidable public costs. It represents an essential reform in the statewide adoption of solar energy and transition to a clean and sustainable energy economy for all.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 2:16:53 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alden Collinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Decoite, Chair McKelvey, and the members of the EET and GVO committees.

I am Alden Collinson, a 17 year old resident of the Big Island. I am in strong support of SB 2539 because it will shorten solar permitting approval times which will make it easier for Hawaiian residents to escape rising energy costs.

Last year, I identified two main problems focused in Hawai'i, economic inequality and climate change. To help make an impact on both of these problems, I started a nonprofit called Carbon Free Hawai'i in which I fundraised for ten low income families in the Hawaiian Homes Kailapa neighborhood to install solar panels. Many low income families in Hawai'i are struggling to make ends meet and are plagued by rising energy costs as a major impact on their income.

Working with Carbon Free Hawai'i, I have learned of the troubles and stagnacies of getting solar installations permitted in Hawai'i. My project has been limited in helping low income families because of permitting.

With SB 2539, families will be able to gain incentives of solar installation much quicker and can earn back their initial investment in a more timely manner. When waiting on permitting, people could be out of thousands of dollars without any energy or economic savings for months or years of waiting for approval.

Solar Energy is needed in Hawai'i both to make a movement against climate change, but also to reduce energy costs for our citizens and SB 2539 would do this by cutting the lengthy permit times that turn many solar consumers away.

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 9:08:50 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris	Testifying for PV Tech	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chairs DeCoite and McKelvey; Vice Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, and committee members:*

*I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that have impeded progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers a number of common-sense measures such as:*

- 1. establishing a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;*
- 2. removing the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems;*
- 3. creating a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)*

*Mahalo for scheduling this critically important bill for Hawaii's clean and resilient energy future and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony.*

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:11:04 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Miles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Dear Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and committee members:*

*I write in strong support of SB2986, Relating to Energy Resiliency, which requires retail crediting for energy exports within utility-managed grid service programs. Failing to credit grid service energy exports at the retail rate creates a disincentive that will discourage customer participation in these vital programs, robbing both the grid and ratepayers of these invaluable new grid services. If not adopted, this will ultimately result in a less dependable, less resilient, and more costly electrical grid; decrease access to the benefits of solar and energy storage, and cause a significant downturn in the solar market.*

*Thank you for hearing this critically important bill. Please advance SB2986 to ensure our more affordable and resilient energy transition for all ratepayers.*

Sincerely,

**Miles Yoshimoto**

Project Developer

**Alternate Energy Inc.**

**96-1276 Waihona Street Unit 114**

**Pearl City HI 96782**

**SB-2539**

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 7:12:26 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I strongly support SB2539 which addresses longstanding permitting issues that impede progress on Hawaii's renewable energy and climate resilience goals. SB2539 offers critical, common-sense measures that will streamline permitting. This is an important step to help Hawaii meet its climate goals, reduce costs for residents, and become more resilient.

-As a renewable source of power, solar energy has an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating Climate Change, which is critical to protecting humans, wildlife, and ecosystems. Solar coupled with battery storage also provides resiliency by providing a backup energy source when storms or other emergencies cause a power failure. We must remove the unnecessary roadblocks and burdens to installing solar plus storage systems so that all may access and benefit from solar energy!

I urge you to support this bill and transitioning to even more solar homes.

Sincerely,

Diane Ware, Volcano 96785-0698

February 1, 2024

Senators Lynn DeCoite and Angus McKelvey  
Senate Joint Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism *and* Government  
Operations

**RE:** SB2539 – RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Hearing:** Thursday, February 1, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

**Position:** **IN STRONG SUPPORT**

Chairs Decoite and McKelvey and members of the committee:

My name is Will Giese. I am the Senior Director of Government Affairs for The Solaray Corporation. Solaray was founded in 1975 and does business in Hawai'i as Inter-Island Solar Supply. Solaray also wholly owns Pacific Panel Cleaners ("PPC"), Generator & Power Systems ("GPS"), both Hawai'i Corporations, SunEarth, Inc., a California Corporation, and Alternate Energy Technologies (AET), a Florida Corporation. SunEarth & AET are domestic manufacturing companies producing American made clean energy products, much of which is installed and operated throughout Hawaii for over 40 years. GPS is the Generac Industrial generator distributor for Hawai'i. Solaray Corp., and its wholly owned subsidiaries, are proudly 100% employee owned. Er r

I am testifying **IN STRONG SUPPORT of SB2539**, relating to Renewable Energy

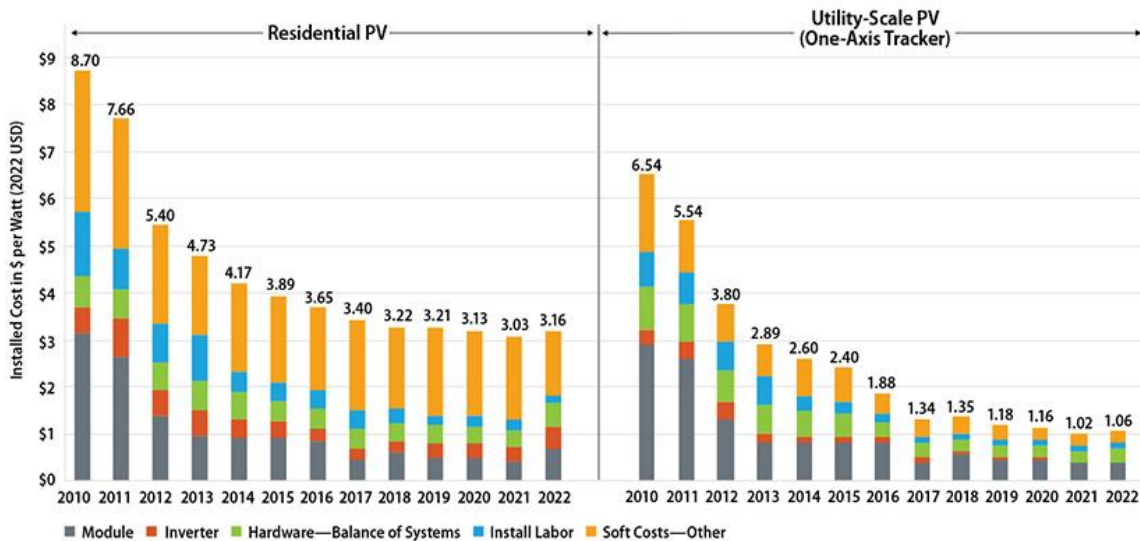
This bill requires government entities in the State that issue building permits to implement SolarAPP+ or a functionally equivalent online automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits to licensed contractors for solar distributed energy resource systems in real-time by 1/1/2025. Requires government entities in the State that issue building permits in areas served by an investor-owned electric utility to adopt a self-certification process for solar distributed energy resource systems that are not SolarAPP+ compatible.

## COMMENTS

Permitting of solar construction projects are a major driver for the overall \$/watt cost of residential, commercial, and utility scale solar around the United States. Creating efficiencies and cost reductions in the permitting, inspection, and interconnection ("PII") process increases solar adoption and decreases overall solar cost. Nationally PII makes up approximately 25-35% of total system \$/watt. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.nrel.gov/solar/market-research-analysis/solar-installed-system-cost.html>



In Hawaii this is even more evident. The City and County of Honolulu leads the nation in permitting times and overall onerous regulation.<sup>2</sup> While smart and effective permitting process increase safety and lower long-term operations and maintenance costs, Hawaii’s overregulated permitting landscape results in permitting delays that are three times as long as the national average. Every day that a small residential solar project sits in permitting waiting for review is another day of added costs to the customer and the developer.

Tools like SolarApp+, which was developed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory with collaboration by code officials, AHJs and permitting department, and the industry, is an inexpensive and effective way to reduce the cost burden of permit processing, and provide another tool in the toolbox of permitting and inspection professional to rely on when addressing renewable energy development.

SB2539 creates a framework for all counties in Hawaii to follow that, in part:

1. establishes a requirement to implement SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent to streamline online permitting for smaller-scale solar and energy storage projects;
2. removes the burdensome MM# requirement for solar distributed energy resource (DER) systems in places like Honolulu;
3. creates a self-certification pathway for all solar DER projects that do not qualify for SolarAPP+ (or the functional equivalent.)

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.hawaiibusiness.com/hawaii-building-permit-delays-top-nation-uhero-study-real-estate-carl-bonham/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEven%20when%20you%20look%20at,a%20permit%20and%20getting%20approval.%E2%80%9D>

The legislature and this committee have an opportunity to lower the cost to go solar while preserving an effective and safe permitting structure by passing crucial legislation like SB2539.

As a local, employee-owned solar business owned and operated in Hawaii for over 40 years, we again express our **STRONG SUPPORT for SB2539** and urge the committee to pass this important measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Will Giese  
Senior Director, Government Affairs  
The Solaray Corporation