



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Thursday, March 14, 2024
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
SB 2677, SD2

RELATING TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) offers comments on SB 2677, SD2, which retains the Chief Energy Officer's jurisdiction over and responsibility for approving variances for the installation of solar water heater systems, requires a copy of a solar water heater system variance application be provided to the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits and authorizes the authority to provide comments, authorizes applicants to submit the variance request concurrently with the building permit, and expands qualified attestations for a variance application.

HSEO prefers SB 2677, SD1, which amends Section 196-6.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, by transferring the authority over solar water heater variances from the Chief Energy Officer to the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits. The bill also requires the fees collected by each county authority having jurisdiction over building permits to be deposited into the appropriate county operating fund.

Transferring the authority over solar water heater variances to the counties is a pragmatic and logical step that can improve efficiency, consistency, expertise, and overall regulatory effectiveness while ensuring that safety and building code standards

are upheld. HSEO is not responsible for reviewing building permit applications and has no corrective or enforcement capability with respect to building permits. The counties, however, do, and should be the accountable party for the entire process of reviewing solar water heater variance requests and building permit applications. This approach can benefit both the government and the community by streamlining processes and promoting accountability.

HSEO would like to suggest the following amendments to SB 2677, SD2:

- (1) Replace all references to "chief energy officer of the Hawaii state energy office" with "county authority having jurisdiction over building permits."
- (2) Delete the following from page 3, lines 8 – 11:

~~[The appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits shall also receive a copy of the application and may provide comments.]~~

This requirement will delay the solar water heater variance review process. Additionally, if the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits can review and provide comments on a solar water heater variance request, it follows that they would have time to take action on a request.

- (3) Amend the following on page 3, lines 20 – 21, and page 4, lines 1 – 3:

(c) The ~~[director of business, economic development, and tourism]~~ director of the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits may ~~[adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 to]~~ impose and collect fees to cover the costs of administering variances under this section. The fees, if any, shall be deposited into the ~~[energy security special fund established under section 201-12.8.]~~ county's appropriate operating fund.

This amendment gives the counties the ability to assess a processing fee which will help recoup costs associated with implementing the solar water heater variance program.

- (4) Amend the following from page 4, lines 10 – 18:

(f) A solar water heater variance request ~~[may]~~ shall be submitted concurrently with the building permit application. If the building permit application indicates the installation of a solar water heater and a different water heating technology is installed after the building

permit is issued, any solar water heater variance request submitted before or after the completion of the new single-family dwelling's construction shall be automatically [~~accepted and processed as provided in subsection (b)~~] denied.

This proposed amendment aims to streamline the solar water heater variance process by requiring applicants to submit variance requests at the same time as their building permit applications. This proactive and efficient approach ensures transparency and adherence to the initially stated intention of utilizing solar water heating technology in the construction project.

HSEO also has comments on two of the gas tankless water heater amendments.

- (1) Item (7) on page 2, lines 20 - 21, requires a home to be located in a low- or moderate-income district. While HSEO agrees with the intent of this amendment, there needs to be a clear metric and/or map to determine whether the home is located in a low- or moderate-income district.
- (2) Item (8) on page 3, lines 1 - 2, requires a home be in a community facing the highest risk of wildfires identified by the State. In communities facing the highest risk of wildfires, the installation of gas tankless water heaters that rely on propane or natural gas as a fuel source is questionable since it may add risk to public safety.

HSEO urges the committee to support the transfer of authority over solar water heater variances from the state to the counties as proposed in SB 2677, SD1. This shift promotes efficiency, community engagement, and the ability to craft policies that are appropriate and better suited to the diverse needs of individual counties.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 9:34:58 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Lowen , Vice-chair Cochran, and members of committee,

Green Party of Hawai'i stands in strong Opposition to SB2677 SD2. This is a loophole bill that gives priority to Hawai'i Gas profits, and not your constituents. Please do not take your orders from a company that puts our people in harms way. The last thing we all want are exploding gas tanks attached to our homes, in fire prone areas. To oppose this bill is the right thing to do for the future of our people, and the memory of those we lost in Lahaina. DO NOT FORCE GAS UPON US, WHEN SOLAR MAKES MORE SENSE.

Green Party of Hawai'i, asks for a Solid , Nay vote, on SB2677 SD2.

Maholo nui,

Susan RobertsEmery

Co-Chair GPH



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

March 14, 2024

9:00 AM

CR325

In OPPOSITION to SB2677 SD2: Relating to Energy Efficiency

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **OPPOSES SB2677 SD2**, which would needlessly saddle future residents with the ever-escalating costs of fossil fuels, jeopardize the health and safety of low- and moderate-income residents and first responders, and walk back our islands' commitment to a renewable and just energy future.

Hawai'i's longstanding solar water heater requirement for single-family residences has been a remarkable and important policy that has helped our residents reduce their utility costs, protect the health of their families and neighbors, and demonstrate Hawai'i's commitment to a renewable energy future. Given the financial incentive for developers to otherwise install fossil-fuel based heaters due to their slightly cheaper up-front cost, this policy ensures that our residents and our islands are not saddled with the long-term financial, health, and environmental consequences of ever-more expensive fossil fuel consumption, due to the desire for greater short-term profits by corporate housing developers. Notably, existing law already provides for variances where solar resources are insufficient or where a solar heater would not be cost-beneficial over its lifetime.

This bill's proposed additional variances to our solar water heater policy could result in a significant regression of the benefits this policy has provided to our people and our environment over the last 15 years. Residents of new single-family households whose developers choose to pursue these variances, including the variances authorized for low- or moderate-income districts, would be forced to pay higher and higher utility costs over the ensuing years and decades – exacerbating the financial instability that too many Hawai'i families face. The proliferation of gas heaters in such districts would also lead to potential environmental justice concerns, given the documented pollution and attendant health impacts that gas appliances such as gas water heaters have on both outdoor¹ and

¹ Sierra Club, New Report Shows Heating Equipment in Buildings Major Source of Outdoor Air Pollution, September 27, 2023, available at <https://www.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2023/09/new-report-shows-heating-equipment-buildings-major-source-outdoor-air>.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

indoor² spaces. Variances allowing for gas heaters in wildfire-prone areas would also vastly increase the risk of explosions in the event of a wildfire, or the risk of a wildfire itself, threatening the safety of both area residents and first responders including firefighters.³ Finally, needlessly expanding the situations where non-solar water heaters such as gas heaters may be utilized would walk back our commitment to a fossil fuel free future, diminishing Hawai'i's national reputation as a climate policy leader.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club respectfully urges the Committee to **HOLD** SB2677 SD2. Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify.

² Sierra Club, Gas: A Major Source of Indoor Air Pollution, December 2019, *available at* <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/sce-authors/u6902/Gas%20appliances%20indoor%20air%20pollution.pdf>.

³ Occupational Health & Safety Online, Faulty Water Heater Sparked California Wildfire, August 20, 2015, *available at* <https://ohsonline.com/articles/2015/08/20/faulty-water-heater-sparked-california-wildfire.aspx?admgarea=ht.BehavioralSafety>.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 1:04:29 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
P Kuromoto	Sunaru Inc dba Solar Help Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:

Sunaru Inc dba Solar Help Hawaii stands in *opposition to SB2677 SD2*, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element. Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony in *opposition to SB2677 SD2*.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 3:25:22 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Parsons	Kauai Climate ACTION Coalition, Small Biz Owner	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Trusted Hawaii Lawmakers,

We strongly oppose this bill! Hot Water Heat Pumps cost about a 1/3 to 1/6 of solar hot water so consider switching this bill to HP-HWH (Heat Pump Hot water heaters), have solar as the exception and BAN all gas hot water heaters and you will do a lot more good and save Builders, homeowners, and utility companies! Furthermore, when the sun is not shining these so called "Solar HWH" use 5500w heating elements that are old and very inefficient technology taxing the energy companies at the exact wrong time. For perspective, HP-HWH only draws about 500 watts. This technology has been around for a long time and is sold off the shelf at home depot and many plumbing supply stores on all islands! As a "Cool-By product", these expel Air Conditioned air and can help keep people cool during heat waves. Please make this a HP-HWH bill or kill it! I've attached 4 links that backup my statements.

<https://cleantechnica.com/2022/04/08/a-heat-pump-water-heater-is-the-energy-saving-equivalent-of-7-solar-panels-costs-%E2%85%99-the-price/>

<https://cleantechnica.com/2023/10/05/why-electrifying-everything-is-not-just-for-elites/>

<https://cleantechnica.com/2023/09/23/25-states-agree-to-quadruple-number-of-heat-pumps-in-america/>

<https://cleantechnica.com/2023/10/06/a-heat-pump-water-heater-will-save-all-the-electricity-youll-need-to-power-your-electric-vehicle/>

Steve parsons, Hanapepe Kauai

KCAC, Surfrider foundation member, Hawaii EV member, Sm Biz owner.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

March 14, 2024 at 9:00 AM

Room 325

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF SB 2677 SD2

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the Committee:

Blue Planet Foundation **opposes SB 2677 SD2**, a measure to amend the Hawai'i solar water heater law and broaden the variance criteria for installing a gas water heater in new home construction.

Blue Planet Foundation is a Hawai'i-based nonprofit organization committed to help Hawai'i cut its carbon emissions and avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Through our advocacy for renewable energy, energy efficiency, and clean transportation, we seek to make our communities stronger, our energy more secure, our environment healthier, and our economy more robust.

In 2008, Hawai'i codified HRS § 196-6.5 to ensure that the vast majority of new single-family homes come equipped with a solar water heating system, which is a foundation block in building Hawaii's clean energy future. A solar water system is the most basic renewable energy device to harness the clean energy from the sun and provides the greatest energy savings per dollar for reducing residential energy demand.

Blue Planet opposes this bill, as it would allow homeowners and developers to install a new gas water heater based on an overly broad set of criteria. **Fossil gas water heaters should only be allowed under limited circumstances, which already exist under HRS § 196-6.5.** The homes that we build today will be with us for decades—it is critical that they have the capacity to be fully powered by cleaner, cheaper solar energy and not be saddled with soon-to-be-outdated fossil fuel systems.

Furthermore, while currently removed from the SD2, we maintain the belief that the application process for variances from the solar water heater law should remain under the management of the Hawai'i State Energy Office, instead of moving oversight to our already backlogged county permitting offices. The State Energy Office is the most appropriate reviewer for these variances. If counties were given the responsibility to approve variance applications and set their own county-specific procedures and standards for granting variances, this would further delay permitting and add confusion to the process.

Solar hot water systems have proven to be successful in increasing the efficiency and affordability of new homes built, reducing the high electricity burdens that residents endure, and assisting Hawai'i's transition to clean energy. The variance process has become effective in recent years under the Hawai'i State Energy Office and does not warrant an amendment via SB 2677.

For these reasons, we respectfully request the committee hold this measure.



To: The House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024, 9am

In strong opposition to of SB2677 SD2

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and Energy and Environmental Protection Committee members,

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 opposition to SB2677 SD2** that would amend the solar water heater law. We **especially oppose the SD1 amendments** added which creates harmful loopholes for solar water heater variances.

The Solar Water Heater law applies to all new single-family residences. The purpose of this law is to promote the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out, including when installing a solar water heater is found not to be cost effective in the context of a life cycle that does not exceed fifteen years. In other words, the current law works and is in the best interests of Hawaii's families.

Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

This measure creates several harmful loopholes, including which entities are allowed to submit the variance application, as well as what justifies for the variance, all of which undermine the intent of this law. Creating these loopholes is not in the best interests of anyone but Hawaii Gas who suggested these amendments to begin with, and who once again is putting their desire for profit over people and the planet. We know that **gas-powered water heaters are more polluting and more costly than solar alternatives** and we should have phased them out of new home construction years ago. Studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.**¹ The fact that one of the new variances is targeted for low-income districts raises serious environmental justice concerns given these health impacts, not to mention that it will hook low-income families to expensive gas bills into the future.

¹ <https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>

At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. A previous Committee that heard this measure accepted Hawaii Gas' factually inaccurate testimony and incorporated it into the current version of the measure. But let's be clear. These amendments are not intended to improve the law. They are about expanding Hawaii Gas' customer base. Period. It is particularly shameful and egregious that Hawaii Gas is exploiting the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement!** We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 3:38:31 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Hamilton	Inception Financial LLC	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:

I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Ryan Hamilton

Managing Partner

Inception Financial LLC



Green Power Projects LLC
Alan Lennard, Managing Director
P.O. Box 818
Haleiwa, HI 96712
T 808.381.3447
E. alan.lennard@greenpowerprojects.com

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Testimony of Alan Lennard
Managing Director of Green Power Projects LLC
e-mail: alan.lennard@greenpowerprojects.com

In Opposition to SB2677 SD2 RELATING to Four New Exemptions in the State's Solar Hot Water Law

Before the
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

[COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION](#)

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair

Rep. Elle Cochran, Vice Chair

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates

Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa

Rep. Gene Ward

Rep. Amy A. Perruso

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Thursday, March 14, 2024
TIME: 9:00am
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:

My name is Alan Lennard. I am the Managing director of Green Power Projects LLC. Green Power Projects LLC is a Solar project facilitation company working towards 100% Renewable Energy capacity in Hawaii. Our vision is a Hawaiian energy economy based 100% on renewable sources indigenous to Hawaii.

I am compelled to voice my **opposition to SB2677 SD2**, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in **opposition to SB2677 SD2**.
Respectfully,

Thank you for supporting clean solar energy and giving me the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Alan Lennard –dig signature

Alan Lennard
Managing Director
Green Power Projects LLC
P.O. Box 818
Haleiwa, HI 96712-0818

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 5:55:43 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jake Millan	Meyer Burger	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:

Despite Meyer Burger not manufacturing solar hot water products, we are still in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law.

The goal is to get off of natural gas and considering Hawaii has zero native natural gas reserves, it makes no sense to hook up new homes to new gas lines- especially when Hawaiians pay twice as much as the mainland US.

Moreover, Hawaii has abundant sunshine and there is nothing less risky or dependable than the sun coming back up each morning. Meyer Burger supports all efforts to electrify loads from fossil fuels in Hawaii and decarbonize the State through the generation of clean, renewable and dependable solar power.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Jake Millan
Business Development
Meyer Burger (Americas) Ltd.
1685 S. Litchfield Road
Goodyear, Arizona 85338 US

Jake.Millan@meyerburger.com

Mobile: (206) 409-5606
www.meyerburger.com/en



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

Testimony of the Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA) Regarding SB2677 SD2, Relating to Energy Efficiency, Before the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and committee members,

The Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA) **opposes SB2677 SD2**, which expands the eligibility for variances from the State's solar hot water law to four (4) new categories.

HSEA members include the majority of locally owned and operated solar and 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 and 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.

The current SD2 of the bill represents a significant departure from existing law and would mark a concerning regression for Hawaii's economic, resilience and sustainability policies. By introducing four (4) new ambiguous and overly broad loopholes, it would permit instant gas water heaters and other gas infrastructure to replace solar-powered systems in new single-family homes. These exemptions will unfairly burden low-to-moderate income (LMI), off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, shackling them to high and volatile gas bills, locking-in dependence on foreign fossil fuel imports, and stripping away the advantages of clean, resilient, and economical solar-powered hot water systems.

Instant gas heaters, which would be the likely replacement for solar under these new loopholes, are less resilient than solar water heating because they rely on a continuous fuel supply to function, with the majority if not all available models requiring an electric connection to operate a pilot light. Notably, Hawaii lacks an indigenous, consistent supply of natural gas or propane, yet enjoys a steady abundance of solar energy. Solar water heating systems are resilient because they perform their main functions even when the electric grid goes down. Allowing for installation of propane gas tanks and other gas infrastructure in wildfire-prone areas as a resilience or disaster protection measure is inherently flawed because it increases risk and could inadvertently fuel wildfires and act as an accelerant rather than a deterrent.



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

Solar hot water stands as a tried-and-true, cost-effective remedy that slashes energy costs for Hawaii's households by 40% or more. Once a builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater).

Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most impactful initiatives for greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it supports.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify in **opposition to SB2677 SD2**.

Respectfully,

/s/ Rocky Mould

Executive Director



**Testimony to the House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
March 14, 2024, 9:00 AM
Conference Room 325 & VIA videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol**

SB 2677 SD2

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the committee,

Hawaii Gas **offers comments on SB 2677 SD2** Requires a copy of a solar water heater system variance application be provided to the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits and authorizes the authority to provide comments. Authorizes applicants to submit the variance request concurrently with the building permit. Expands qualified attestations for a variance application.

Since 1904, Hawaii Gas has been a pioneer in the gas industry and continues as an industry leader integrating both renewable natural gas (RNG) and hydrogen into our fuel supply and distribution system. Hawaii Gas plays a vital role in Hawaii's energy portfolio by providing clean, reliable, and cost-effective energy to over 70,000 customers on all islands, all of whom depend on the company for health and safety uses such as sanitation, water heating, cooking, drying, showers, and other economy driving commercial and industrial applications. Hawaii Gas continues to look towards new, innovative, and economic ways to incorporate renewable energy sources while also reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

While solar water heaters have their merits, gas water heaters offer several key advantages that can make them more beneficial, in some circumstances, to many residents in our communities. Section 196-6.5 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes reflects an approach to incentivizing the adoption of solar water heater systems when it needed policy supports. However, the addition of gas tankless water heaters as an approved alternative offers a reliable and efficient solution for providing hot water on demand, particularly in areas where the electric grid may be unreliable or cost-prohibitive to access. We appreciate the inclusion of provisions allowing for variances under certain conditions, such as poor solar resource availability, cost-prohibitive installation expenses, and the need for alternative energy sources for resilience, reliability, or redundancy during emergencies or disasters.

The variance process is cumbersome and costly for homeowners when they must submit for a variance by only utilizing architects and engineers. We appreciate the amendment to allow homeowners and homebuilders the opportunity to apply for a variance without the additional cost of utilizing an architect or engineer.

While the legislature contemplates the authority to approve the variances, we would appreciate consideration of consistency in the approval process per the statute. As a practical matter, the acceptance of variances should be allowed at any time during the building process.

Inclusion of provisions allowing for variances under certain conditions, that consider concerns of homeowners reflect today's current energy resource constraints and concerns of residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 8:54:18 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Mulinix	Greenpeace Hawaii	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and Energy and Environmental Protection Committee Members,

My name is Dave Mulinix, Co-Founder of the Hawaii state 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 and supporters statewide, we stand in STRONG OPPOSITION to SB2677 SD2 that would amend and undermine our current solar water heater law and expand the use of climate killing gas water heaters. We especially oppose the SD1 amendments that were suggested by Hawaii Gas, aka Argo Infrastructure Partners, which creates harmful loopholes to the solar water heater law.

Given this committee's focus on a clean environment, I know that you are aware that climate scientists have reported that 2023 was the hottest year in human history and that each following year is projected to be hotter than the previous due to global warming from greenhouse gas emissions. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, after reviewing climate scientists' reports on the status of global warming, stated that "We are on a highway to climate Hell!" This body recognized this growing climate crisis and asserted in 2021 that we are in a "Climate Emergency," and has committed to cutting Hawaii's greenhouse gas emissions.

SB2677 SD2 undermines the legislature's goals to cut Hawaii's greenhouse gas emissions, especially as a result of a previous Committee's decision to accept Hawaii Gas' (aka Argo Infrastructure Partners of New York City) factually inaccurate testimony, and incorporated it into the current version of this measure. These amendments are not intended to improve the law. They are about expanding Hawaii Gas' customer base and Argo Infrastructure Partners' profits.

It is important to note that even Hawaii Gas' name is misleading, as it implies they are a local company. They are being less than candid in their testimony suggesting these amendments are for the benefit of their Hawaii customers. They are owned by Argo Infrastructure Partners, a large multi-billion dollar independent infrastructure investment firm based in New York City. And as can be gleaned from their website, their main goal is to garner the greatest profit possible for their investors.

Please keep this in mind when Hawaii Gas is testifying in support or opposition to any bill, and when they are suggesting amendments; that they are doing so to increase the profits of their parent company Argo Infrastructure Partners, which can often be at odds with the legislature's clean energy goals.

In summary, please do not be misled by Hawaii Gas' attempt to increase their customer base and to increase the profits of their parent company Argo Infrastructure Partners in New York City. Please HOLD SB2677 SD2 to prevent Argo Infrastructure Partners from undermining Hawaii's clean energy goals.

Mahalo,

Dave Mulinix, Co-Founder & Statewide Organizer

Greenpeace Hawaii



Before the House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Testimony in Opposition of SB2677 SD2: Relating to Energy Efficiency

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition and provide comments on Senate Bill 2677 SD2.

Hawai'i Energy works to empower island families and businesses on behalf of the Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to make smart energy choices to reduce energy consumption, save money, and pursue a 100% clean energy future. Energy efficiency – the energy we do not use – is the cheapest option to help us achieve our 100% clean energy goal by eliminating waste and being more efficient.

Solar water heaters can save Hawai'i residents up to 40% on their overall electric bills, which is why Hawai'i codified HRS § 196-6.5 in 2008 to ensure that the vast majority of new single-family homes come equipped with a solar hot water system. Because the energy savings opportunity is so massive, Hawai'i Energy has actively supported the installation of solar hot water systems since the Program's inception in 2009.

This bill would allow for homeowners and developers to install a gas water heater based on a broad set of criteria, an option that is already provided for under limited circumstances under HRS § 196-6.5. The loosening of the criteria relating to gas water heaters is unnecessary and, more importantly, has the potential to permanently burden Hawai'i homeowners, including our low-to-moderate income communities, with volatile gas bills. Further, as we continue to strive for a 100% clean energy Hawaii, it makes little sense to replace energy & cost-efficient solar hot water systems in new homes with fossil fuel systems.

By enabling and encouraging Hawai'i homeowners and developers to install gas water heaters, Senate Bill 2677 SD2 proves counter-productive to both our state's 100% clean energy goals and affordability for our residents. For these reasons we oppose it.

Sincerely,
Caroline Carl
Executive Director
Hawai'i Energy

March 14, 2024

Representative Nicole Lowen
House Committee on Energy and environmental Protection

RE: SB2677 – Relating to Energy Efficiency
Hearing: Thursday, March 14, 2024, 9:00 a.m.
Position: **IN STRONG OPPOSITION**

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the committee:

My name is Brian Gold. I am the President and CEO of Inter-Island Solar Supply and 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.

I am testifying **IN STRONG OPPOSITION of SB2677**, relating to Energy Resiliency.

This bill requires a copy of a solar water heater system variance application be provided to the appropriate county authority having jurisdiction over building permits and authorizes the authority to provide comments. Authorizes applicants to submit the variance request concurrently with the building permit. Expands qualified attestations for a variance application. (SD2)

COMMENTS

Solar water heaters are an essential part of Hawaii's energy landscape and provide millions of gallons of hot water heated by the sun to thousands of homes and businesses throughout Hawaii each year, while supporting a diverse local installer network. In fact, Hawaii has one of the most successful solar water heating industries in the United States, with almost 1 in 3 single family homes having installed solar water heaters for over 40 years. Because of the abundant solar resources available in the state, Hawaii rightly recognized over 15 years ago that the most cost effective and efficient way to heat water *and* reduce or almost entirely eliminate one of the largest single energy loads in a home was to require solar water heaters as part of all new home construction.

Unfortunately, this law was circumvented by the fossil fuel industry for years in order to install inefficient instant gas heaters, in a state where there is no reliable or readily available supply of natural gas or propane. Up until 2019 the Hawaii State Energy Office, within DBEDT, approved 99.8% of all variance requests, with 94% of them being for gas water heaters.¹ In that same year the court ruled that the state was not following the legislative intent of this law, requiring the state to carefully review every variance request to ascertain whether the request made sense economically in the context of a home mortgage. The result is that, by law and by fact, solar water heaters remain the most cost-effective way to heat water in the state.

SB2677 is a shameless attempt to circumnavigate the progress by both the legislature and clean energy advocates to ensure that the people of Hawaii are not burdened with the volatile pricing and lack of readily available fossil fuels. The variance process as it exists in statute already allows homeowners and builders a path to alternative water heating technologies, such as instant gas, in the case of poor solar resources or where solar hot water is otherwise impracticable.

In fact, the only water heaters that might actually work under amended sections (6), (7), and (8) would likely be solar water heaters, as they are capable of working without connection to an electric grid, are economic for low and moderate income homes as they require minimal gas or electric payments and the cost of the system is subsumed in the cost of a mortgage, and they are resilient to wildfires as they do not utilize combustible fuel, like gas in tanks or pipelines.

Other issues and comments about SB26787 include:

- *SHW are one of the most effective ways to save on energy costs*, and Hawaii has one of the most robust and diverse SHW installer bases in the United States. The costs of a typical SHW heater after rebates and tax credits are comparable to that of other highly efficient water heaters, such as heat pumps, and they last longer (20 years on average according to the Department of Energy)². Once they are paid off, they require no additional expenses other than operations and maintenance costs.
- *Solar water heaters require minimal electricity to operate* (most electric load of a typical SHW heater is to circulating pumps, which can be run from solar PV, or to backup electric elements). All other water heaters require a constant supply of electricity or gas to function.
- *Instant gas heaters are not resilient*. They rely on a constant supply of fuel (gas) to function, and many gas heaters require an electric connection to operate a pilot light. There is no natural, consistent supply of natural gas or propane in the state of Hawaii, but there is an endless supply of solar energy.

¹ <https://www.civilbeat.org/2019/02/court-ruling-on-water-heaters-will-help-protect-the-climate/>

² <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/solar-water-heaters>

- *Instant gas heaters do not produce hot water where there is no gas*, like during a wildfire or a grid outage. SHW heaters are typically installed with an 80–120-gallon insulated tank, which functions like a battery for hot water storage.
- At the commercial level SHW heaters are even more cost effective due to the low-income and domestic content adders in Section 48 and are highly effective at providing a low-cost energy savings for low-income housing, as demonstrated in places like California through programs like the California Solar Initiative Thermal program.

While there are limited cases in which solar water heaters do not make sense for the average new home build, buy and large solar water heating is the most cost-effective and resilient way for the average home in Hawaii to heat water. This is why there is a variance process, and also why variances should “rarely, if ever” be granted. SB2677 renders this important policy moot and burdens the average home buyer with expensive, polluting, inefficient water heaters with no factual or economic basis for doing so. As a result, we urge the legislature to defer this measure and let the solar water heating law continue to be an effective policy to save money and reduce fossil fuel use across the state.

As a local, employee-owned solar business owned and operated in Hawaii for over 40 years, we again express our **STONG OPPOSITION for SB2677** and urge the committee to defer this measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Brian Gold
President and CEO
Inter-Island Solar Supply

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 12:37:05 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
L. Osterer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, with its loopholes, seriously undermines efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. This bill will not improve the law. What it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is noted that in their testimony, Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But in truth, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything. **Instead of creating exceptions designed to perpetuate the dependence on fossil fuels which will run out, we should be taking FEMA's offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster, with up to 75% reimbursement!** We strongly urge the committee HOLD off this misguided measure. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with more expensive utility costs just because it's cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heaters. In wildfire prone areas, it adds significantly more risk to life and property from gas tank explosion.

The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on electricity and continue Hawaii's clean energy goals. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases.

In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.** (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>)

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 3:06:48 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Someone else wrote the testimony I am using. I have read all the relevant materials and agree with his/her arguments dealing with the issues of Solar Hot Water Heaters.

- I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

- The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

- This bill raises environmental justice concerns as gas appliances including gas water heaters have now been shown to have negative health impacts on residents including those in the "low-to moderate- income" districts targeted by this measure. In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.** (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>) Given these health impacts, this bill will serve to create more environmental justice concerns for our communities, not to mention that it will hook families to expensive gas bills into the future.

- At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil

fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement!** We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 6:46:54 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Camp	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel, threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 7:19:23 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Thompson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I strongly OPPOSE THIS BILL.

The Hawai'i Gas lobbyists are winning at BLNR level, don't let them win at the Legislative level.

Please hold the line. The Solar Water Heater law took a lot work, your work, to create. Please hold your ground, stay strong on the climate change laws and goals.

OPPOSE this measure.

The Solar Water Heater law promotes the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. This bill will gut this law by creating several harmful loopholes, including who can submit the variance application, as well as justifications for the variance that are not only baseless, they are down right harmful, all of which undermine the intent of this law.

Creating these loopholes is not in the best interests of anyone but Hawaii Gas who suggested them to begin with, and who once again is putting their desire for profit over people and the planet. We know that **gas-powered water heaters are more polluting and more costly than solar alternatives** and we should have phased them out of new home construction years ago. Studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.**

Mahalo,

Kate Thompson

350.org member

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 8:12:05 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Culbertson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives!

Please hold SB2677 SD2!

This is a badly crafted piece of legislation that attempts to carve out more loopholes for the fossil fuel industry here in Hawaii. We should be moving forward with renewable energy sources and innovative technologies such as *electric powered heat pumps and water heaters*. We should not be compromising our vision of the future and existing laws with respect to climate change momentum.

Mahalo for your time and diligence!

R A Culbertson

Honokaa

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 8:41:14 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniela Escontrela	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 11:18:56 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Glenn Choy, from Honolulu. I strongly OPPOSE this bill.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 12:40:49 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement!** We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 2:19:54 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I live in Mō'ili'ili. I'm writing in to STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2.

This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

- The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan. Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

- This bill raises environmental justice concerns as gas appliances including gas water heaters have now been shown to have negative health impacts on residents including those in the "low-to moderate- income" districts targeted by this measure. In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death. (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>) Given these health impacts, this bill will serve to create more environmental justice concerns for our communities, not to mention that it will hook families to expensive gas bills into the future.

- At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that

occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement! We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili, O'ahu

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 2:44:52 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roy Skaggs	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee,

I am writing in my **strong opposition to SB2677 SD2**, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in **opposition to SB2677 SD2**.

Mahalo!
Roy Skaggs

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 2:51:46 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my **opposition** to SB2677 SD2, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in **opposition to SB2677 SD2**.

Respectfully,

Weilun lian

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 2:55:10 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Solar water heating saves consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases, which come from fossil fuels which have caused our climate crisis. We need to let this bill die as it ignores these truths and is the opposite of climate justice, as low and moderate income families will suffer from it. Thank you

Bobbie Best, Wailuku

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 3:01:15 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey Lum	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

aloha, Jeff Lum

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 3:22:21 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yuko Ahina	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Yuko Ahina

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 3:35:14 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Radford Nakamura

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 4:05:54 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathan A Sparks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

- The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

- This bill raises environmental justice concerns as gas appliances including gas water heaters have now been shown to have negative health impacts on residents including those in the "low-to moderate- income" districts targeted by this measure. In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.** (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>) Given these health impacts, this bill will serve to create more environmental justice concerns for our communities, not to mention that it will hook families to expensive gas bills into the future.

- At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add**

clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement! We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 4:41:08 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Grandinetti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do not support this anti-solar legislation

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 6:02:51 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

- The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

- This bill raises environmental justice concerns as gas appliances including gas water heaters have now been shown to have negative health impacts on residents including those in the "low-to moderate- income" districts targeted by this measure. In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.** (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>) Given these health impacts, this bill will serve to create more environmental justice concerns for our communities, not to mention that it will hook families to expensive gas bills into the future.

- At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add**

clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement! We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 9:37:59 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 9:49:10 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Miles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:

I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Miles Yoshimoto

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 6:42:12 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani Schultz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Leilani Schultz

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 7:25:23 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Justin Furuta

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 7:49:51 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Texeira	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose SB2677

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 8:43:14 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacy K. Tang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low and moderate income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel based utilities. It also threatens the lives of firefighters and residents with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas and sets us back, in terms of becoming fossil fuel free.

It is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost and pass the long term costs of fossil fuels, to homeowners and tenants. The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution and make housing more affordable.

Variances are already provided for the granted, when solar won't work efficiently, based on uncontrollable variables. Solar should, however, always be the first choice. It is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on electric bills while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against climate crisis. Solar water heating also pays for itself, many times over during a 20+ year lifespan. The current law, saves consumers money, while saving on fossil fuel emissions.

This bill raises environmental concerns. Hawaii Gas seems to be exploiting the tragedies that occurred in Lahaina, to make their case to change the solar water heater law, to ensure new construction will install gas, rather than solar. This is pure capitalism at it's UGLIEST!

At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead towards 100% renewable carbon-free future, this measure and the loopholes it creates, will only drag us back to the fossil fuel past and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster, with up to 75% reimbursement!

Please DO NOT PASS THIS BILL! It will not improve the law, all it can do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base!

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 9:28:04 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nadine Ferraro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's past the time to get away from using gas especially in our homes!

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 10:31:16 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

oppose

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 10:31:56 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Thompson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would hurt the Solar Industry.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 1:37:58 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and esteemed members of the committee:
I am compelled to voice my ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***, which aims to introduce four new exemptions in the State's solar hot water law. While low cost options are important, these broad and vague exemptions targeting low-to-moderate income, off-grid, and wildfire-prone communities like Lahaina, would unfairly burden residents with ongoing high and volatile gas expenses, lock-in reliance on foreign fossil fuel imports, and strip away the advantages of clean, resilient, and cost-effective solar energy solutions. Solar hot water stands as a proven, budget-friendly remedy that alleviates energy costs by as much as 40% or more for Hawaii's families. Once the builder installs an instantaneous gas heater, the future owner of the house will most likely not be able to convert to solar hot water. That opportunity is taken from them due to the lack of a place for a storage tank and electrical infrastructure for the back-up element (30A circuit for the heater). Let us not regress on one of Hawaii's most successful initiatives in greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, nor jeopardize the local solar industry and the livelihoods it sustains.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to present my testimony in ***opposition to SB2677 SD2***.

Respectfully,

Lori Ann Saunders

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 6:35:05 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Diane Ware living in Ka'u and I respectfully oppose SB2677 SD2.

This measure would vastly expand the number of development projects that would be allowed to avoid our solar water heater requirement for single-family residences. By throwing the door open for developers to install non-solar alternatives such as gas heaters, this bill would thereby saddle residents with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs; raise the risk of wildfires from gas heater malfunctions while also threatening residents and firefighters with potential gas explosions in the event of a wildfire; and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future. In addition, the gas water heaters likely to be utilized as an alternative to solar heaters have been shown to significantly increase both indoor and outdoor air pollution, raising significant human health and environmental justice concerns.

*Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **HOLD SB2677 SD2**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.*

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 7:01:13 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB2677 SD2. This bill would saddle low- and moderate-income households with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs (it is cheaper for developers to avoid installing solar water heater infrastructure as an up-front cost, and pass the long-term costs of fossil fuels to homeowners and tenants), threaten residents and firefighters with gas tank explosions in wildfire prone areas, and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future.

- The solar water heater law promotes both the environmental and consumer benefits of solar water heating, with a goal to increase the use of renewable energy to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and make housing more affordable. Variances are already provided for and granted when justified and solar doesn't pencil out. Solar hot water is one of the most cost-effective ways to save money on your electric bill while at the same time contributing to Hawaii's clean energy goals and the fight against global boiling. **Solar water heating pays for itself many times over during a 20-year lifespan.** Bottom line: Solar water heaters and this law save consumers money while saving on greenhouse gases --which helps save the planet.

- This bill raises environmental justice concerns as gas appliances including gas water heaters have now been shown to have negative health impacts on residents including those in the "low-to moderate- income" districts targeted by this measure. In addition to gas water heaters contributing to climate breakdown, studies have shown how **air pollution from gas-fired furnaces, water heaters, and stoves increases rates of respiratory illness, cardiovascular diseases, and premature death.** (<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-of-residential-gas-appliances-on-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-in-california/>) Given these health impacts, this bill will serve to create more environmental justice concerns for our communities, not to mention that it will hook families to expensive gas bills into the future.

- At a time when Hawaii needs to move full speed ahead to a 100% renewable, carbon-free future, this measure, and the loopholes it will create, will only drag us back to the fossil past, and seriously undermine efforts to move us forward with our clean energy goals. Let's be clear. This bill will not improve the law. All it will do is expand Hawaii Gas' customer base. It is particularly shameful and egregious that in their testimony Hawaii Gas exploits the tragedy that occurred in Lahaina to make their case for changes to the law. But the truth is, burning fossil fuels is not 'clean,' nor is it 'cheaper' for consumers or the state, especially with the climate crisis already threatening everything we love. **Instead of creating loopholes designed to perpetuate our dependence on fossil fuels, we should be taking FEMA up on its offer to add**

clean energy to rebuild facilities after a major disaster with up to 75% reimbursement! We strongly urge the committee HOLD this misguided measure.

SB-2677-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 9:37:58 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/14/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Hartmann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Hannah Hartmann and I respectfully oppose SB2677 SD2.

This measure would vastly expand the number of development projects that would be allowed to avoid our solar water heater requirement for single-family residences. By throwing the door open for developers to install non-solar alternatives such as gas heaters, this bill would thereby saddle residents with ever more expensive fossil fuel-based utility costs; raise the risk of wildfires from gas heater malfunctions while also threatening residents and firefighters with potential gas explosions in the event of a wildfire; and walk back our islands' commitment to a fossil fuel free future. In addition, the gas water heaters likely to be utilized as an alternative to solar heaters have been shown to significantly increase both indoor and outdoor air pollution, raising significant human health and environmental justice concerns.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to HOLD SB2677 SD2.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify,

Hannah

96781 Pāpa‘ikou

Hawai‘i Island