

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1475

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21 , 2025

RE: S.B. No. 191  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which  
was referred S.B. No. 191, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ENERGY ASSISTANCE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish and appropriate funds for the Hawaii Home Energy Assistance Program to assist eligible households in paying for their energy bills; and
- (2) Require the Public Utilities Commission Public Benefits Fee Administrator to provide certain information and assistance to recipients of the Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Department of Human Services; Public Utilities Commission; City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency; Hawaiian Electric; Hawai'i Workers Center; Catholic Charities Hawai'i; Coalition Earth; Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group; Hawai'i Energy; Ohana Unity Party; and four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from Tax Foundation of Hawaii.

2025-2831 SB191 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that Hawaii households face significant energy burden. In 2024, over twenty percent of households in the State reported foregoing critical expenses such as food or medicine to pay their energy bill in full. The State ranked fifth in the nation for highest average household electricity burden. Furthermore, households living below the federal poverty level spent approximately twenty percent of their income on electricity costs, over nine times higher than the state average. Relatedly, disconnections rates have more than doubled from approximately five thousand nine hundred in 2018 to roughly twelve thousand eight hundred in 2023.

Your Committee further finds that the existing federal program for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) remains woefully inadequate for the State's needs. Despite having the nation's highest household electricity costs, the State receives the lowest LIHEAP funding nationwide, as the funding formula heavily favors states with high heating needs. Only about six percent of federally income-eligible households have received LIHEAP heating assistance over the past four years. This measure addresses this gap in assistance by establishing a state program to assist eligible households in paying for their energy bills.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$5,000,000.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 191, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Consumer  
Protection & Commerce,



---

SCOT Z. MATAYOSHI, Chair



