



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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

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

**NADINE Y. ANDO**  
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

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

## **Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the**  
**House Committee on Finance**  
**Thursday, February 20, 2025**  
**12:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Room 308**

**On the following measure:**  
**H.B. 977, H.D. 1, RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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

The purpose of this bill is to: (1) authorize the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers; and (2) appropriate funds into and out of the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund.

The Department supports this bill since it would infuse funds into the clean energy and energy efficiency revolving loan fund to provide financing opportunities for “underserved ratepayers” which is defined to including low- and moderate-income homeowners, renters, nonprofits, and other entities to take advantage of renewable energy technology and reduce their energy burden. Low- to moderate-income households pay a disproportionately higher percentage of their income towards energy

bills and do not have the financial means to pursue the installation of renewable energy technologies. This measure seeks to address the financial barrier that has prevented many struggling households and other underserved ratepayers from reducing their energy burdens and moving towards energy independence.

The Department especially appreciates that the funds for the clean energy and energy efficiency revolving loan fund will be infused with monies from the general fund and not through fees assessed on utility customers through their monthly bills. Other programs that seek funding through utility rates do not adequately consider that utility rates are regressive and will increase utility bills for all customers, especially low to moderate income households whose energy burden will only increase. Additional fees to pay for the loan fund through utility rates would further increase the energy bills that many customers have struggled to pay, especially during the pandemic and over the last year when significant bill increases occurred. As currently drafted, this measure avoids placing an additional financial burden on those households that this bill attempts to support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**Testimony of**  
**Gwen Yamamoto Lau**  
Executive Director  
**Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority**  
before the  
**House Committee on Finance**  
Thursday, February 20, 2025, 12:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308  
in consideration of  
**House Bill No. 977, HD1**  
**RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and provide comments on House Bill No. 977, HD1 relating to energy financing. The Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority (HGIA) **strongly supports** this bill which will provide a capital infusion to HGIA's Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving loan fund to continue to provide solar and storage financing for ALICE households and other underserved ratepayers.

While the 2024 ALICE report<sup>1</sup> indicates the percentage of ALICE households decreased slightly from 2022 to 41% (from 44%), the "Electricity Burdens on Hawaii Households: 2022 Update" recently published by DBEDT's Research & Economic Analysis Division, indicates that Hawaii's electricity costs are still the highest in the nation resulting in an average electricity burden per household of 2.1%, as compared to the national average of 1.5%. Further, lower income households spend a disproportionate amount of their income on electricity bills.

The Legislature's approval of loan capital for solar+storage loans in 2023, coupled with the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission approval of HGIA's request to eliminate all credit barriers for underserved ratepayers under its Green Energy Money Saver On-Bill (GEM\$ OB) financing program resulted in a significant spike in demand. The number of applications received in 2017 (pre-GEM\$ OB) aggregated 224. In 2019, with the launch of GEM\$ OB, the number of applications received doubled to 482. However, for the 11-month period ended 11/30/24, with loan capital to finance both solar+storage, as well as the elimination of all credit barriers for underserved ratepayers, HGIA received 1,564 applications - more than 3x the amount received in 2019 and a 598% increase from pre-GEM\$ OB numbers, demonstrating the pent-up demand.

This measure is in direct alignment with the Governor's Executive Order 25-01, accelerating Hawaii's transition toward 100% renewable energy by maximizing distributed solar energy paired with battery storage to low and moderate-income residents.

Additionally, this bill will allow HGIA to finance solar systems for state and local governments, helping Hawaii access an additional 30% in Federal funds under the Inflation Reduction Act's Direct Pay program while lowering electricity costs for Hawaii's taxpayers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and provide comments in strong support of HB977, HD1.

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<sup>1</sup> Published by Aloha United Way in partnership with Bank of Hawaii.



**STATE OF HAWAII  
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION  
COMMISSION  
POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809**

**Co-Chairs:**  
Chair, DLNR  
Director, OPSD

**Commissioners:**  
Chair, Senate AEN  
Chair, Senate WTL  
Chair, House EEP  
Chair, House WAL  
Chairperson, HTA  
Chairperson, DOA  
CEO, OHA  
Chairperson, DHHL  
Director, DBEDT  
Director, DOT  
Director, DOH  
Chairperson, DOE  
Director, C+C DPP  
Director, Maui DP  
Director, Hawaii DP  
Director, Kauai DP  
The Adjutant General  
Manager, CZM

**Testimony of  
LEAH LARAMEE  
Climate Change Coordinator on behalf of  
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission Co-Chair Mary Alice Evans and  
Co-Chair Dawn N.S. Chang**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Thursday, February 20, 2025  
12:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 977 HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING**

HB 977 HD1 authorizes the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers. Appropriates funds into and out of the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request and offers the following comments.**

The Commission is a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 different State and county departments, and Legislative committees. Rooftop solar is a key component in reaching our legislated climate goals. If approved, this will provide additional funding to support underserved ratepayers into HGIA's special fund so that repayments can be recycled, re-lent and re-invested into more Solar + Storage systems for ALICE households. With the highest energy costs and ambitious climate goals this is a win win for the state and its communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**  
465 S. KING STREET, #103  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.**  
CHAIR

**NAOMI U. KUWAYE**  
COMMISSIONER

**COLIN A. YOST**  
COMMISSIONER

Telephone: (808) 586-2020  
Facsimile: (808) 586-2066

Website: [puc.hawaii.gov](http://puc.hawaii.gov)  
E-mail: [puc@hawaii.gov](mailto:puc@hawaii.gov)

## **Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission**

To the  
House Committee on  
Finance

February 20, 2025  
12:00 p.m.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

**Measure:** H.B. No. 977, H.D. 1  
**Title:** RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING.

### **Position:**

The Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") supports this measure and offers the following comments for consideration.

### **Comments:**

The Commission appreciates the intent of this measure to enhance energy financing in Hawaii by providing a capital infusion into the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund. The Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority anticipates the current applications in process will be awarded the remaining funds available for the Green Energy Money Saver on-bill financing program. Without additional funding, this program will be unable to support new applications, potentially leaving many underserved groups, especially those excluded from the federal Solar-for-All funds, without access to the clean energy financing they need.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:10:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** this bill for a Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency revolving loan fund to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers.



## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FEBRUARY 20, 2025

### HB 977, HD1, RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING

#### POSITION: SUPPORT

Coalition Earth **supports** HB 977, HD1, relating to energy financing, which authorizes the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers; and appropriates funds into and out of the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund.

According to a report produced by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by 2100, with more recent projections showing this occurring as early as 2060. In turn, over the next 30 to 70 years, approximately 6,500 structures and 19,800 people statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding. Additionally, an estimated \$19 billion in economic loss would result from chronic flooding of land and structures located in exposure areas. Finally, approximately 38 miles of coastal roads and 550 cultural sites would be chronically flooded, on top of the 13 miles of beaches that have already been lost on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui to erosion fronting shoreline armoring.

As we work to reduce carbon emissions and stave off the worst consequences of climate change, we must begin preparing for the adverse impact of sea level rise on our shores. We are now quantifying the speed at which we must act. We cannot continue to develop the 25,800-acre statewide sea level rise exposure area—one-third of which is designated for urban use—without risking massive structural damage and, potentially, great loss of life.

Just two years ago, we witnessed the impact of the climate emergency on our shores. On August 8, 2023, wildfires swept across Maui and killed at least 100 people, making it one of the nation's deadliest natural disasters. The spread of the fires has been attributed to climate change conditions, such as unusually dry landscapes and the confluence of a strong high-pressure system to the north and Hurricane Dora to the south. The wildfires destroyed over 2,200 structures,

including numerous residential buildings, historic landmarks, and school facilities. In September 2023, a report from the United States Department of Commerce estimated the total economic damage of the wildfires to be roughly \$5.5 billion. Investing in renewable energy generation could not be more urgent, given the growing threat of climate catastrophes to our island home.

Therefore, **our state should take steps to accelerate our transition to a clean energy economy and continue our fight against climate change, including by strengthening clean energy financing mechanisms.** Photovoltaic systems have significantly advanced in their energy savings and storage capacity in recent years, and remain a primary component of our state's path toward 100 percent renewable energy generation. Moreover, the green energy money \$aver on-bill financing program has delivered accessible and affordable financing of rooftop solar plus storage systems to reduce energy-burdened, underserved ratepayers.

**Equity must continue to be a cornerstone of our clean energy investments.** As of January 2025, the Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority (HGIA) had roughly 1,200 applications in process, which are anticipated to consume remaining all available funding. HGIA was awarded \$62,000,000 in federal solar-for-all loan funds, but these funds are restricted to financing only low-income households and a limited number of disadvantaged census tracts, as this bill's preamble states, leaving moderate-income households and other underserved ratepayers, including nonprofits and small businesses, without access to financing for essential energy efficiency upgrades.

In June of last year, the state reached a settlement agreement in the landmark case of *Navahine v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation*, in which Gov. Josh Green acknowledged the constitutional rights of Hawai'i's youth to a life-sustaining climate and confirmed the commitment by HDOT to plan and implement transformative changes to Hawai'i's transportation system to achieve the state's goal of net-negative emissions by 2045. Additionally, on January 28<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Green issued an executive order to promote and expedite the development of renewable energy across our state.

Amidst uncertainty regarding renewable energy policy created by the Trump administration and concerns over grid stability across the state, the order accelerates renewable development for neighbor island communities to hit 100 percent renewable portfolio standards from 2045 to 2035, sets a statewide goal of 50,000 distributed renewable energy installations (such as rooftop solar and battery systems) by 2030, and directs state departments to streamline the permitting of renewable developments to reduce energy costs. We must take action to shore up green financing at the state level, so that federal instability does not imperil our ability to meet our clean economy goals or jeopardize our society's future.

*Coalition Earth is a nongovernmental organization that works to preserve the well-being of people and our planet. We champion policies that advance climate resilience, clean energy, public health, and economic fairness for working families. Contact us at [info@coalitionearth.org](mailto:info@coalitionearth.org).*





To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025, 12pm

**In support of HB977 HD1**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and FIN 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 support of HB977 HD1** that authorizes the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers.

Hawaii will not be able to reach its carbon reduction goals if we do not enact policies that support these outcomes. 350Hawaii fully supports efforts by the legislature to establish social equity as a foundational principle in the State's efforts to strengthen climate resilience, including low-interest loan programs. Without this program, capital constrained households will be unable to switch to lower, cleaner sources of electricity. Furthermore, as solar energy is currently about one-half the cost of oil-fired electricity, underserved ratepayers, including ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households would directly benefit from a program that helps overcome financial challenges such as high electricity costs and inflation.

A Just Transition means leaving no one behind. That includes efforts such as the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund that help to remove barriers and increase access to affordable renewable energy.

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

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:06:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isidro Villaflor	PV Tech	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee and Members,

I strongly support HB977! We have worked with the GEMS program for over 8 years and for a lot of ALICE families this is their only way to get the full benefits of having a solar PV system. To discontinue GEMS is to leave them behind in being able to own their solar PV system so that they can save money immediately. Every dollar saved from solar gets respent back to our local economy. Please support HB977!

Thank you for your time and considerations.

Sid Villaflor

# Northshore Holdings Group Inc.

One Towne Square Suite #180

Southfield, MI 48076

(248) 980-726

February 19, 2025

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025  
State Capitol Conference Room 308  
415 South Beretania Street

Care of the Committee on Finance  
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Rep. Tina Nakada Grandinetti	Rep. Mike Lee
Rep. Daniel Holt	Rep. Tyson K. Miyake
Rep. Ikaika Hussey	Rep. Dee Morikawa
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy	Rep. Shirley Ann Templo
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa	Rep. David Alcos III
Rep. Matthias Kusch	Rep. Julie Reyes Oda
Rep. Rachele F. Lamosao	Rep. Gene Ward

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Northshore Holdings Group Inc., we express our strong support for **HB977, HD1**. We provide administrative services for owners of power purchase agreements with facilities located throughout the United States including in Hawaii. The facilities in Hawaii deliver electricity to single family domiciles, multifamily domiciles, and a small number of commercial businesses.

The HGIA funding has been an absolutely critical component of the construction and permanent financing needed for the deployment of equity capital to develop, own and operate these facilities. Absent this funding source, a number of the facilities were unlikely to be constructed due to the difficulty in obtaining traditional bank financing for these types of assets.

In the aggregate, all of these facilities serve more than 600 Hawaiian citizens.

Approximately 75% of these citizens occupy income restricted apartment units that house seniors and provide other important services for them.

The on-bill mechanism provides extremely low-cost services that result in consistent and timely payments to investors in such systems.

The facilities result in significant cost reductions each month for occupants.

When the facilities were initially energized, the bill savings were forecasted to be in excess of 20% compared to standard tariff rates for electricity. As a result of rate increases from the local utility, these bill savings are now estimated to exceed 30%.

These facilities directly benefit some of the most vulnerable residents of the State. HGIA has soundly administered its programs to benefit those most in need. The leadership has demonstrated excellent stewardship of the resources made available to HGIA and is achieving an important public mission without dehumanizing public assistance or devaluing conservation objectives. The cost savings result in meaningful additional household purchasing power that supplement budgets for food, healthcare and other items without direct general fund support of the state. This is a program that is attracting private investment capital to the State and meeting public policy objectives. For these reasons, we strongly support the passage of **HB977, HD1**.

If we may be of additional assistance please contact us. Until then I remain,

Very truly yours,

/s/ Michael L. Garavaglia

Michael L, Garavaglia, President

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, February 19, 2025  
TIME: 2:30PM  
PLACE: Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
SUBJECT: HB977 - SUPPORT

Josh Powell, AIA  
CEO, RevoluSun Smart Home  
660 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Suite 220A  
Honolulu, HI 96816

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, I strongly support HB977, which seeks to provide additional funds to Hawai'i's Green Infrastructure Authority (HGIA).

My partners and I started RevoluSun in 2009, over that time-period fossil fuel consumption for electricity production in our State has been reduced from 93% to under 70%. This reduction is largely the result of residential solar customers. It has been a great privilege to be part of a team that has made a big impact in Hawai'i. With over 150 employees, RevoluSun has contributed \$140,000,000 in payroll to our local economy and \$25,000,000 in GET since its founding. We have also installed nearly 11,000 solar PV systems throughout the State. Those systems offset over \$65,000,000 a year in energy costs, delivering power at roughly half the current cost of retail electricity rates. All this value stays in Hawai'i instead of being spent overseas on imported fossil fuel.

Many of our residential customers, commercial customers and third-party system owners have used HGIA over the last decade. HGIA provides the lowest cost of capital in the market and has been a major factor in keeping predatory mainland solar loans, leases and power-purchase agreements (PPAs) un-competitive in our market, thus providing the lowest cost of energy to Hawai'i consumers. HGIA is also one of the few funders in the state that will support work on Department of Hawaiian Homelands properties and Low-Income communities. Providing a capital infusion now is critical to helping HGIA continue it's mission.

Hawai'i is in the best position of almost any place on our planet to lead a transition to 100% renewable energy. Doing this will free our economy from the high costs and volatility of imported fossil fuel while building greater resilience as a community. Our current energy system is deeply entrenched in aging and deteriorating investments in fossil fuel technologies that are driving up the cost of energy in Hawai'i such that we now have the highest cost in the nation and we experience energy inflation rates over 2x most markets. HGIA's lending programs have effectively given consumers an alternative to these rising costs for over a decade.

Our industry is facing major challenges this year with the Trump Administration and the Republican Congress. They are focused on eliminating or reducing the Federal ITC and withholding investments in advanced energy technologies such as Virtual Power Plants. They have also slowed or stopped incentives such as Direct Pay of the Federal ITC for Indigenous and Local Governments. With federal clean energy incentives facing uncertainty, Hawaii must take local action to strengthen—not disincentivize—its commitment to renewable energy.

Please support HB977.

Mahalo,

Josh Powell, AIA





Before the House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Testimony in Support of HB 977 HD1: Relating to Energy Financing

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of and provide comments on House Bill 977 HD1.

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.

This bill will provide an infusion of capital to the Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority's (HGIA) Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to continue to provide solar and energy storage financing for underserved ratepayers.

The significant recent spike in the number of applications HGIA has received demonstrates clearly both the pent-up demand for its Green Energy Money Saver On-Bill program and the need for additional funding.

Hawai'i Energy's mission is closely aligned with that of HGIA, as we're both working to improve access to clean energy technologies and lower utility bills for Hawai'i's hardworking families. Importantly, HB 977 HD1 also expands the definition of "underserved ratepayers." By including not only low-income households but also moderate-income families, nonprofits, small businesses, and state and local governments, the bill ensures that a wider range of communities can participate in the clean energy transition.

Given that our residents still face the highest electricity rates in the country, now more than ever HGIA is a critical tool to lower energy costs for underserved communities while making meaningful progress towards the state's climate targets.

Thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill 977 HD1.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Carl  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Energy



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 20, 2025

TIME: 12:00pm

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE & Conference Room 308

Theodore (Ted) Peck

President, Holu Hou Energy

99-1026 Iwaena Street

Aiea, HI 96701

RE: HB 977 RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING.

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committees

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **strongly supporting testimony** on this bill. My name is Ted Peck. I am the former Energy Administrator for the State of Hawaii, and have been working in the energy space for the last 16 years. I have 40 years of education and experience with energy and technology. My company, Holu Hou Energy, develops solar energy projects in Hawaii, focusing on low income, difficult to serve customers, especially in multi-dwelling projects such as rentals (low income and market) and condominium developments.

Since my departure from government service in 2011, I have been spending a great deal of time in clean energy finance. In the last 8 years, I have had a hand in closing over 80 power purchase agreements for commercial, industrial, and multifamily projects, as well as hundreds of single family projects, both low income and otherwise. I am grateful to have been a part of helping make the GEMS Financing Program as an investor, borrower, and contractor. We have used local investors to a great extent, contributing to the Hawai'i economy as both participants and consumers and through their investments increase the benefits that remain within the state.

I am in strong support of this measure, as HGIA is a key champion in providing rooftop solar to low and medium income residents. Of Hawaii's ~494,000 households in 2022, 11% earned below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and 33% were ALICE (in households that earned above the FPL but not enough to afford the basics in the communities where they live) – together, 44% of households in Hawaii were below the ALICE threshold. Households below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) spend 20% of their income on energy, which is over ~9x higher than the state-wide average. HGIA and the **loan** money it provides directly targets these families. HGIA has become a center of excellence nationally and internationally, with agencies across the world looking to replicate the processes and structures built here in Hawaii. Their excellence has been recognized locally as well, to the point that the State Government during the Pandemic asked them to manage the debit card program for the unemployed, a task out of their scope of work but entrusted to them due to their excellence and competence.

This bill also contemplates expanding the scope of markets which HGIA can serve. This would be wise to do, as long as HGIA continues to receive adequate support from the State in terms of available funding and staffing. HGIA is a Center of Excellence, looked upon nationally and internationally for expertise in green banking.

HGIA is a key leader for the state of Hawaii in changing the mantra that solar is only for rich people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your time in considering my comments.

Respectfully,  
Ted Peck  
President, Holu Hou Energy





February 19, 2025

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita  
House Committee on Finance

**RE:** HB977 HD1– Relating to Energy Financing  
**Hearing:** Thursday, February 20, 2025  
**Position:** **STRONG SUPPORT**

Chair Yamashita and members of the committee:

My name is Will Giese. I am the Senior Director of Government Affairs of 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 50 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 SUPPORT of HB977** relating to Energy Financing.

This bill authorizes the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers. Appropriates funds into and out of the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

## COMMENTS

The Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority, or HGIA, is one of the most successfully clean energy financing programs in Hawaii. Through this program, millions of dollars of well-managed financings have been spent to build renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across the state, especially in underserved and low-income communities.

Succinctly, this bill would expand the definition of "underserved ratepayers" to include several entities that might otherwise not benefit from competitive or under market clean energy financing opportunities, which includes low-income communities, small local businesses, and even state and local governments. This expanded definition, combined with an expanded definition of direct pay eligibility under the Inflation Reduction Act, will allow these communities to leverage highly competitive, state-grown financing that will lower energy burdens and raise the living standard of thousands while showing a willingness of the state to invest in itself.



INTER-ISLAND  
**SOLAR SUPPLY**

As a local, employee-owned solar business owned and operated in Hawaii for over 50 years, Solaray is testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB977** and urges the committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Will Giese  
Senior Director, Government Affairs  
Inter-Island Solar Supply

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:31:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian M. Hayashida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Kyle T. Yamashita and Members of the House of Representatives Committee on Finance:

Our company is working with underserved electricity ratepayers on the island of Maui to enable them to afford the high electricity costs which directly translates to supporting a healthy lifestyle in the wake of the tragic wildfires. With the mixed intentions of the new Republican administration in Washington D. C. it is vitally important for the State of Hawaii to step in and alleviate the carnage being wreaked upon the good citizens of Maui by passing HB977 to offset the severe damage the funding cuts to assistance for Low-to-Middle Income taxpayers has done.

Mahalo nui loa,

Brian M. Hayashida

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:36:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**SUPPORT FOR HB (RELATING TO ENERGY FINANCING)**

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee,

**My name is Noel Morin. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB977 HD1,** which *Authorizes the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to be used to provide financial assistance to underserved ratepayers, in addition to other eligible borrowers. Appropriates funds into and out of the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund.*

This will help facilitate our transition to a clean and resilient energy future. Furthermore, the focus on underserved residents will enable more equitable access to renewable energy solutions.

Please pass this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Noel Morin

Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate

Hilo, Hawaii

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:38:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
derek white	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe the GEMS program greatly eases the road to renewable energy for many homeowners, making possible what would otherwise be impossible and allows us to realistically approach 100% renewable energy by 2035. The program is essential to our success as a state.

**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:39:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cameron Davidson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

GEMS is an incredible program that gives homeowners access to clean renewable energy and this program must be kept. For far too long Solar PV has only been an option to those with access to large amounts of disposable funds. Because of this, it only makes it feasible for wealthy individuals to purchase. With GEMS,

- The common household can reduce their monthly energy bill.
- Increase the values of their homes.
- Contribute to the state's promise to be 100% renewable by 2045.
- And reduce their carbon footprint by not utilizing energy from the grid.

Lets work together to keep Hawaii clean and green for future generations.

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB977, which would provide additional funding to the Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority to expand its services for underserved ratepayers. This funding is crucial to making solar energy solutions more accessible to those who need it most, ensuring that more communities benefit from renewable energy options.

Increasing support for this program is a significant step toward achieving energy equity and will help the State of Hawaii meet its goal of reducing reliance on fossil fuels. By enhancing access to solar power and battery storage, this initiative plays a vital role in the state's transition to clean and sustainable energy.

The success of this program thus far is worth noting—few legislative-backed programs have exceeded expectations as this one has. Providing the Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority with additional resources is a simple yet powerful decision that will continue to yield positive impacts for both our communities and the environment.

Thank you for considering this important measure. I strongly urge you to vote in favor of HB977.

Best regards,

Scott J. LaRue



**HB-977-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 9:20:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
wendell jh choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Simplistically, the money is not spent. It is invested. The user repays the loan with interest which should be a net gain. The user reaps savings and that amount is spent in Hawaii. The multiplier effect of local spending is seriously important. Contrast that savings going offshore to stockholders. How does that help Hawaii?

Within years electric vehicles will have bidirectional charging. The EVs have battery sizes grossly over what is needed as applied to almost all Hawaii drivers. This results in the EV battery being able to discharge power to houses and businesses. These are the same users you are now funding. This is the long term home run for Hawaii.

This bill is one step towards a great outcome.