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Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
3:20 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

In SUPPORT of
SB 233

RELATING TO CLIMATE RESILIENCE.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 233, requiring the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative Program (HCEI) to design and implement a plan to increase jobs that strengthen emergency preparedness and climate resilience, and authorizes the use of the Energy Security Special Fund (ESSF) to advance the State's goals of strengthening emergency preparedness and climate mitigation.

As the State's primary government entity for supporting HCEI under HRS 196-71, HSEO administers a jobs program entitled the Clean Energy Sector Partnership (CESP) with the Hawai'i Chamber of Commerce and University of Hawai'i Community Colleges. The CESP was established in October 2023 under Good Jobs Hawai'i to facilitate the development of workforce education and training programs, pre-job experience, and job placement. The CESP meets quarterly and is a partnership of over 120 energy and skilled trades employers and organizations, facilitating recruitment and on-the-job training, and connecting Hawai'i educators with the energy industry to learn about careers in the field. This measure could provide another resource for HSEO and the CESP to develop workforce development initiatives for Hawai'i's energy sector.

SB 233 is consistent with recent federally-funded work by HSEO to increase jobs in the Clean Energy and Skilled Trades sector under Good Jobs Hawai'i. From January 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024, 729 participants enrolled in a Good Jobs Hawai'i training course in the clean energy and skilled trades sectors: 494 completed the trainings and 255 participants received job placements or advancements at an average wage of \$27/hour. The clean energy sector has been focused on solar, electric vehicles, and energy efficiency, and the skilled trades sector includes heavy equipment operators, landscapers, carpenters, commercial drivers, and other industries that support utilities and the energy sector.

Enrolled courses for the clean energy and skilled trades sector include 8-Hour Excavation and Trenching Safety for Skilled Trades (67 enrolled); Hawai'i Landscaping Certification Prep (51 enrolled); Carpenter Pre-Apprenticeship (37 enrolled); Renewable Energy Certificate (24 enrolled); Habitat Maui's Volunteer Academy (16 enrolled); Native Hawaiian Homestead Builders (15 enrolled); HAZWOPER 40-Hour (14 enrolled); LEED Green Associate Credential (13 enrolled); Forklift Operator Training (11 enrolled); and, Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment (8 enrolled). Windward Community College plans to add two new courses: Certified Energy Auditor and Certified Energy Manager.

Some of the federal funds under which these programs operate are ending in 2025 (e.g., Good Jobs Challenge, U.S. Economic Development Administration), and HSEO is seeking additional support to maintain these valuable programs. The ESSF, as contemplated in SB 233, would be an appropriate means of supporting these programs in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



To: The Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIG)
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 3:20pm

In strong support of SB223

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the EIG committee,

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 SB223** that requires the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative Program to design and implement a plan to increase jobs that strengthen emergency preparedness and climate resilience. This measure further authorizes the use of the Energy Security Special Fund to advance the State's goals of strengthening emergency preparedness and climate mitigation.

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. A Just Transition means greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities, and leaving no one behind.

In 2021 the legislature passed SCR44 SD1 HD1 declaring a climate emergency and requesting statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate. As part of this declaration, it was resolved that entities statewide pursue climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, with a statewide commitment to a just transition toward a decarbonized economy that invests in and ensures clean energy, quality jobs, and a statewide commitment to a climate emergency mobilization effort to reverse the climate crisis, which, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from state authorities, will transform the economy. SB223 is an effective step towards this commitment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important measure.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 11th, 2025

SB 233, RELATING TO CLIMATE RESILIENCE

POSITION: SUPPORT

Coalition Earth **supports** SB 233, relating to climate resilience, which requires the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative Program to implement a plan to increase jobs that strengthen emergency preparedness and climate resilience; and authorizes the use of the Energy Security Special Fund to advance the state's goals of strengthening emergency preparedness and climate mitigation.

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 establishing programs that increase so-called “green jobs” that advance our climate mitigation and adaptation goals.**

In a 2024 report entitled “Characterizing Hawai‘i’s Natural Resources Management Sector: Jobs, Education, Salaries, and Expenditures” Hau‘oli Mau Loa, The Nature Conservancy, and SMS Research found that natural resource management (NRM) jobs in Hawai‘i are growing, with at least 4,994 jobs in 2023, 6.3 percent higher than reported for 2018, which is equivalent to an annual growth rate of approximately 1.3 percent.

Additionally, the report found that Starting salaries continue to increase, with 90 percent of NRM administrative salaries and 82 percent of field technician salaries being \$41,000 or higher, 91 percent of professional or managerial salaries being \$51,000 or higher, and 90 percent of executive salaries being \$61,000 or higher. Finally, the report noted that paid internships were offered by 50 percent of agencies surveyed compared to 47 percent in 2018, while paid fellowships were offered by 23 percent of agencies surveyed compared to 17 percent in 2018.

These trends show progression in the conservation and climate resilience sectors. We must continue to invest in these areas, however, to ensure that our state’s workforce is equipped to achieve our 100 percent clean energy goal and able to advance our ongoing transformation to a diversified, decarbonized, and sustainable economy.

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.