

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

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

**House Committee on Finance**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

**With Comments**

**Senate Bill No. 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of the Governor provides the following comments for S.B. No. 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from catastrophic wildfires; authorizes securitization of certain costs for public utilities; and establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

The Lahaina wildfires resulted in unbearable loss of lives, homes, infrastructure, and businesses. This tragic event is a wake-up call that due to climate changes, the risk of catastrophic wildfires, along with other natural disasters in Hawaii has increased.

The Office of the Governor appreciates that this proposal tries to address how our state and utilities address the financial impacts of catastrophic wildfires, including how we stabilize our electric utility and our energy future. We need to find reasonable ways to finance these improvements and investments; however, the Governor is keenly aware of our state's high electrical rates and the impact that it has on all our residents and hopes that any securitization model will not have a drastic impact on the ratepayers of our state.

We recognize that the recent amendments to this bill have altered the proposed securitization model and contents of the current bill. While the Office of the Governor continues to evaluate the mechanics of this legislation, we do not oppose this bill moving forward so that discussions may continue with the electric utility and other key affected stakeholders.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2, RELATING TO ENERGY.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**DATE:** Monday, March 31, 2025

**TIME:** 3:15 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 308

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Randall S. Nishiyama, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments and proposes some amendments regarding this bill.

This bill:

1. Allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repair, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism.
2. Establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires.
3. Authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities.
4. Establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

This bill establishes a cap on liability that the courts are required to follow. The remainder of the bill addresses the right of an electric utility to charge increased rates that it can securitize for the purpose of financing its costs to implement its wildfire risk mitigation plan and other investments in infrastructure improvements.

**I. Limitation on Aggregate Liability**

Section 2 of the bill, on page 1, line 14, through page 4, line 17, adds a new section to chapter 663, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), entitled "Limitation on aggregate liability; electric utilities."

Subsection (a)(1), on page 2, lines 1-5, provides that the aggregate liability of an electric utility for qualifying damages will never exceed \$1,000,000,000. Even if the electric utility acted negligently or with gross negligence, the legislation as drafted never allows for an increase in liability.

Subsection (a)(2), on page 2, lines 6-12, provides a formula whereby the "average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures" will be used to calculate the limitation on aggregate liability. However, the means for implementation of this provision is unclear. The timeframe for calculating the average is not defined and assessed real estate values do not accurately reflect the replacement costs of the structures.

## **II. Issuance of Bonds for Infrastructure Resilience Costs**

Section 3 of the bill, on page 4, line 19, through page 41, line 12, adds a new chapter to the HRS, including nine new sections. Section -2, of those new sections, entitled "Applications to issue bonds and authorize infrastructure resilience charges," on page 13, line 12, through page 20, line 8, establishes requirements for an electric utility to apply to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), for one or more financing orders to issue bonds to recover any infrastructure resilience costs, as defined in section -1 of the new chapter.

This bill gives the State very little discretion as to who issues the bonds in the case of a securitization. The electric utility applies for a financing order, which application names the entity it proposes to issue the bonds, and the PUC can only accept or deny the application based on certain prescribed criteria. See new section - 2(b)(8), page 15, lines 20-21; (d), page 17, line 19, through page 18, line 2; and (e), page 18, line 3, through page 19, line 20.

## **III. Clarifying Amendments**

We request that the following clarifying amendments be made to the bill  
**(changes to the bill indicated in bold font):**

**A. To new section 663- in section 2 of the bill, at page 2, line 2, through page 3, line 7:**

The changes in this section are needed to provide clarity on the formula used to calculate the aggregate liability of an electric utility.

(a) The aggregate liability of an electric utility for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire shall not exceed the ~~[lesser]~~ least of:

- (1) \$1,000,000,000;
- (2) The ~~[average assessed]~~ value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed, plus the value of personal property lost; or
- (3) The aggregate ~~[assessed]~~ replacement value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, plus the value of personal property lost.

~~[(b) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, joint and several liability shall not apply to any qualifying damages; provided that in any action to recover from a person or an entity in connection with a covered catastrophic wildfire, the person or entity may claim, in defense, apportionment of fault to any other person or entity regardless of whether that person or entity is a party to the action. The exceptions to the abolition of joint and several liability set forth in section 663-10.9 shall not apply to any suit, claim, arbitration, or other civil action arising out of a covered catastrophic wildfire.]~~

~~[(e)]~~ (b) The director of Hawaii emergency management shall determine whether a wildfire is a covered catastrophic wildfire.

~~[(d)]~~ (c) All civil actions arising out of a catastrophic wildfire shall be brought in the circuit in which the catastrophic wildfire occurred. The court shall adopt procedures to equitably apply the limit set forth in subsection (a) to all filed civil claims. All settlements or judgments for claims for qualifying damages shall be subject to approval



by the court. The court shall not approve any settlement or judgment that would cause the aggregate liability of electric utilities to exceed the aggregate liability limit.

~~[(e)]~~ (d) A court may consolidate cases arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire. Any circuit court that is not the consolidating court shall transfer any civil case to facilitate the consolidation.

~~[(f)]~~ (e) For the purposes of this section:

**(The remainder of text from section 663- is omitted because no changes are recommended.)**

**B. To § -1 Definitions, in section 3 of the bill, at page 5, line 3, through page 13, line 11, specifically, the definitions of "Financing costs" and "Infrastructure resilience charges":**

The changes in this section are needed to ensure that the PUC has the financial resources to engage a financial advisor for evaluating the propriety of issuing bonds to fund an electric utility's wildfire risk mitigation plan and infrastructure upgrades.

"Financing costs" means the costs to issue, service, repay, or refinance bonds, whether incurred or paid upon issuance of the bonds or over the life of the bonds, if they are approved for recovery by the commission in a financing order. "Financing costs" may include any of the following:

- (1) Principal, interest, and redemption premiums that are payable on bonds;
- (2) A payment required under an ancillary agreement;
- (3) An amount required to fund or replenish reserve accounts or other accounts established under an indenture, ancillary agreement, or other financing document related to the bonds;
- (4) Taxes, franchise fees, or license fees imposed on a financing entity as a result of the issuance of the financing order; the assignment, sale, or transfer of any infrastructure resilience property; or the sale of the bonds, or imposed on the infrastructure resilience charges, or otherwise resulting from the collection of the infrastructure resilience charge, in any case whether paid, payable, or accrued;
- (5) Costs related to issuing and servicing bonds or the application for a financing order, including without limitation servicing fees and expenses,

trustee fees and expenses, legal fees and expenses, accounting fees, administrative fees, underwriting and placement fees, financial advisory fees, original issue discount, capitalized interest, rating agency fees, and any other related costs that are approved for recovery in the financing order; **[and]**

**(6) Costs related to the engagement of services of a financial advisor by the commission; and**

**[(6)] (7)** Other costs as specifically authorized by a financing order. See page 7, line 3, through page 8, line 13.

"Infrastructure resilience charges" means the nonbypassable charges, including but not limited to distribution, connection, disconnection, and termination rates and charges, that are authorized in a financing order authorized under this chapter to be imposed on and collected from all existing and future consumers of **[a financing entity]** **an electric utility** or any successor to recover principal, interest, and other financing costs relating to the bonds~~[-]~~ **issued by its financing entity.** See page 10, line 19, through page 11, line 5.

**C. To § -2 Applications to issue bonds and authorize infrastructure resilience charges, in section 3 of the bill at page 13, line 12, through page 20, line 8, specifically to subsections (d), (e), and (f):**

The changes in this section are needed to clarify the language concerning the PUC's process for issuing applications for financing orders relating to bond issuances and the implementation of infrastructure resilience charges.

(d) The commission shall issue an approval or denial of any application for a financing order filed pursuant to this section within ninety days of the last filing in the applicable docket **[but no later than one year after the application is filed]**.

(e) In exercising its duties under this section, the commission shall consider:

(1) Whether the **[recovery of costs is] issuance of the bonds, and the imposition and collection of infrastructure resilience charges, are** consistent with the public interest;

**(The remainder of text from subsection (e) is omitted because no changes are recommended.)**

(f) Infrastructure resilience charges and any associated fixed recovery tax amounts shall be imposed only on existing and future consumers in the utility service territory[.] **of the electric utility that is subject to such financing order.** Consumers within the utility service territory of the electric utility that are subject to the financing order shall continue to pay infrastructure resilience charges and any associated fixed recovery tax amounts until the bonds and associated financing costs are paid in full by the financing entity. See page 17, line 19, through page 20, line 8.

**D. To § -3 – Infrastructure resilience financing order, in section 3 of the bill, at page 20, line 9, through page 26, line 9:**

The changes in this section are needed to clarify the language regarding the issuance and implementation of an infrastructure resilience financing order. Included among the recommended amendments for this section is the correction of the phrase "choice in action" with "chose in action." A chose in action is a legal term that refers to a legal right that can only be enforced through legal action such as rights under a contract.

(a) A financing order shall remain in effect until the bonds issued under the financing order and all financing costs related to the bonds have been paid in full or defeased by their terms. The financing order shall be for no greater than \$500,000,000 of the infrastructure resilience costs for a corporate family of the electric utility.

A financing order shall remain in effect and unabated notwithstanding the bankruptcy, reorganization, or insolvency of the electric utility or the commencement of any judicial or nonjudicial proceeding on the financing order.

(b) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, with respect to infrastructure resilience property that has been made the basis for the issuance of bonds and with respect to any associated fixed recovery tax amounts, the financing order, the infrastructure resilience charges, and any associated fixed recovery tax amounts shall be irrevocable. The State and its agencies, including the commission, pledge and agree with bondholders, the owners and assignees of the infrastructure resilience property, and other financing parties that the State and its agencies shall not take any action listed in this subsection. This subsection shall not preclude an action if the action

would not adversely affect the interests of the electric utility ~~[and]~~, of assignees of the infrastructure resilience property~~[-], and of bondholders.~~ The prohibited actions shall be the following:

- (1) Alter the provisions of this chapter, which authorize the commission to create an irrevocable contract right or ~~[choice]~~ chose in action by the issuance of a financing order, to create infrastructure resilience property and make the infrastructure resilience charges imposed by a financing order irrevocable, binding, nonbypassable charges for all existing and future consumers;
- (2) Take or permit any action that impairs or would impair the value of infrastructure resilience property or the security for the bonds or revise the infrastructure resilience costs for which recovery is authorized;
- (3) In any way impair the rights and remedies of the bondholders, assignees, and other financing parties; and
- (4) Except for changes made pursuant to the true-up adjustment authorized under subsection (d), reduce, alter, or impair infrastructure resilience charges that are to be imposed, billed, charged, collected, and remitted for the benefit of the bondholders, any assignee, and any other financing parties until any and all principal, interest, premium, financing costs, and other fees, expenses, or charges incurred, and any contracts to be performed, in connection with the related bonds have been paid and performed in full.

The financing entity may include this pledge in the bonds.

(c) Under a financing order, the electric utility shall retain sole discretion to select the financing entity and to cause bonds to be issued, including the right to defer or postpone the issuance, assignment, sale, or transfer of infrastructure resilience property.

(d) The commission may create, pursuant to an application from an electric utility, a nonbypassable charge referred to as a infrastructure resilience charge, which

shall be applied to recover principal, interest, and other financing costs relating to the bonds. The infrastructure resilience charge shall be a dedicated, discrete tariff rider.

The commission, in any financing order, shall establish a procedure for periodic true-up adjustments to infrastructure resilience charges, which shall be made at least annually and may be made more frequently. Within thirty days after receiving an electric utility's filing of a true-up adjustment, the commission's review of the filing shall be limited to mathematical or clerical errors as determined in accordance with any true-up adjustment formulas set forth in the applicable financing order.

The commission shall either approve the filing or inform the electric utility of any mathematical or clerical errors in its calculation. If the commission informs the electric utility of mathematical or clerical errors in its calculation, the electric utility shall correct its error and refile its true-up adjustment. The timeframes previously described in this subsection shall apply to a refiled true-up adjustment.

**(e) The commission may include in the financing order a requirement that, if the electric utility fails to transfer the wildfire recovery charges it has collected, the commission will order that those funds shall be withheld and paid directly to the applicable financing entity. Any order shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any bankruptcy, reorganization, or other insolvency proceedings with respect to the electric utility.**

**[(e)] (f)** Neither financing orders nor bonds issued under this chapter shall constitute a general obligation of the State or any of its political subdivisions, nor shall they constitute a pledge of the full faith and credit of the State or any of its political subdivisions, but shall be payable solely from the infrastructure resilience property provided under this chapter.

All bonds shall contain on the face thereof a statement to the following effect: "Neither the full faith and credit nor the taxing power of the State of Hawaii is pledged to the payment of the principal of, or interest and premium on, this bond."

The issuance of bonds under this chapter shall not directly, indirectly, or contingently obligate the State or any of its political subdivisions to levy or pledge any form of taxation or make any appropriation for their payment.

~~[(f)]~~ **(g)** Infrastructure resilience charges are infrastructure resilience property when, and to the extent that, a financing order authorizing the infrastructure resilience charges has become effective in accordance with this chapter, and the infrastructure resilience property shall thereafter continuously exist as property for all purposes, and all of the rights and privileges relating to that property shall continuously exist for the period and to the extent provided in the financing order, but in any event until the bonds, including all principal; premiums, if any; interest with respect to the bonds; and all other financing costs are paid in full. A financing order may provide that the creation of infrastructure resilience property shall be simultaneous with the sale of the infrastructure resilience property to an assignee as provided in the application of the pledge of the infrastructure resilience property to secure the bonds.

~~[(g)]~~ **(h)** Any successor to a financing entity shall be bound by the requirements of this chapter and shall perform and satisfy all obligations of and have the same rights under a financing order as, and to the same extent as, the financing entity.

~~[(h)]~~ **(i)** No electric utility approved for a financing order shall increase compensation for its executive officers unless the utility's wildfire risk mitigation plan compliance reports have been approved by the commission for five consecutive years; provided that the commission may consider an alternative symmetric performance incentive mechanism, if the commission deems appropriate. For the purposes of this subsection, "wildfire risk mitigation plan" has the same meaning as in section -1.

~~[(i)]~~ **(j)** As used in this section, "corporate family" means a group of corporations consisting of a parent corporation and all subsidiaries in which the parent corporation owns directly or indirectly a controlling interest.

**(k) The commission, in its discretion, may engage the services of a financial adviser for the purposes of assisting the commission in its consideration of an application for a financing order and a subsequent issuance of bonds pursuant to a financing order. See page 20, line 9, through page 26, line 9.**

**E. To § -4 Bonds; issuance; infrastructure resilience property interests, in section 3 of the bill, at page 26, line 10, through page 30, line 20:**

The changes in this section are needed to ensure that if the electric utility sells, assigns, or pledges its interests in infrastructure resilience property, the PUC will require the electric utility to enter into a contract with the financing entity or its assignees.

(b) To the extent that any interest in infrastructure resilience property is sold, assigned, or is pledged as collateral pursuant to subsection (a), the commission [~~may authorize~~] **shall require** the electric utility to contract with the financing entity or its assignees that the electric utility will:

- (1) Continue to operate its system to provide service to consumers within its service territory;
- (2) Collect amounts in respect of the infrastructure resilience charges for the benefit and account of the financing entity or its assignees; and
- (3) Account for and remit these amounts to or for the account of the financing entity or its assignees.

Contracting with the financing entity or its assignees in accordance with that authorization shall not impair or negate the characterization of the sale, assignment, or pledge as an absolute transfer, a true sale, or a security interest, as applicable. To the extent that billing, collection, and other related services with respect to the provision of the electric utility's services are provided to a consumer by any person or entity other than the electric utility in whose service territory the consumer is located, that person or entity shall collect the infrastructure resilience charges and any associated fixed recovery tax amounts from the consumer for the benefit and account of the electric utility, financing entity, or assignees with the associated revenues remitted solely for the person's benefit as a condition to the provision of electric utility service to that consumer.

Each financing order shall impose terms and conditions, consistent with the purposes and objectives of this chapter, on any person or entity responsible for billing, collection, and other related services, including but not limited to collection of the

infrastructure resilience charges and any associated fixed recovery tax amounts, that are the subject of the financing order. See page 27, line 10, through page 29, line 2.

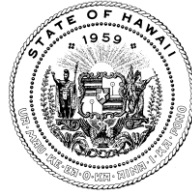
**F. Section -5 – Infrastructure resilience charge, in section 3 of the bill, at page 31, line 1, through page 32, line 7:**

The changes in this section are needed to clarify how the infrastructure and resilience charge is to be collected and managed.

(c) The infrastructure resilience charge shall be collected by an electric utility or its successors, in accordance with section -8(a), in full through a charge that is separate and apart from the electric utility's rates. **The infrastructure resilience charge shall be collected by the public utilities or their successors as collection agents for the applicable financing entity, and such amounts shall be held in trust until transferred to the applicable financing entity.** See page 31, line 19, through page 32, line 2.

We respectfully ask the Committee to amend this bill, as indicated, to address these concerns.





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

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

**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I**  
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## **Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the**  
**House Committee on Finance**  
**Monday, March 31, 2025**  
**3:15 p.m.**  
**Conference Room 308**

**On the following measure:**  
**S.B. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2, RELATING TO ENERGY**

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 offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to: (1) allow electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; (2) establish an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires; (3) authorize securitization of certain costs for electric utilities; and (4) establish a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

The Department hopes that Hawaii will never again suffer the incredible loss and destruction of a major wildfire. The Department notes that the current draft of legislation is significantly preferable to previous drafts of the legislation that would have required

ratepayers to pay more than one billion dollars to establish a Wildfire Recovery Fund to compensate property owners for economic damages if Hawaiian Electric were responsible for starting another wildfire. Put simply, customers did not start the fire that degraded Hawaiian Electric's credit rating, are not responsible for on-going wildfire risk, and should therefore not bear the financial burden of funding Hawaiian Electric's costs to obtain additional private insurance coverage or contributing to a wildfire fund intended to serve as supplemental insurance to address its wildfire risk.

The Department appreciates that recent versions of this bill seek to address both Hawaiian Electric's on-going high cost of capital for the foreseeable future and restore its credit rating by enabling securitization as a means for Hawaiian Electric to access lower cost financing to invest in infrastructure to reduce its risk of wildfires, which is a credit positive action for Hawaiian Electric, while also including appropriate and necessary public interest protections such as requiring the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") to approve any financing order authorizing securitization and requiring Hawaiian Electric to also seek federal funding to offset costs to the maximum extent possible. The legislation also includes an aggregate liability cap on economic damages, which is another component identified in comments provided by Hawaiian Electric from Moody's credit rating agency representing that to protect utility credit quality and retain investor confidence, a policy framework is needed that includes:

- limits on liability,
- a sufficiently large wildfire fund to cover the costs of a catastrophic event, and
- transparent guidelines or certification requirements for fire mitigation.

The Department offers that Hawaiian Electric's credit rating will likely be below investment grade status for the foreseeable future. For Hawaiian Electric to return to investment grade status, it will need to pay off its substantial existing liabilities in addition to establishing aspects of the policy framework noted above.

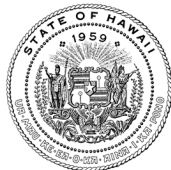
Hawaiian Electric is on record as having committed to paying off its liabilities. The Commission has opened Docket No. 2025-0156 to review Hawaiian Electric's Wildfire Mitigation Plan. Additionally, using securitization for infrastructure investments as contemplated by the current legislation, may help both customers and Hawaiian Electric

because it could serve as a bridge for Hawaiian Electric to access low-cost capital while it planned and built the infrastructure needed to decrease its risk from wildfires, and other substantial threats such as hurricanes and pay off its wildfire liabilities, and ultimately improve its credit rating. That leaves open the question of whether and to what extent a wildfire fund would be needed to help restore Hawaiian Electric's credit rating to investment grade status. The bill also contemplates addressing that question by establishing a working group to examine the reasonableness of establishing a wildfire recovery fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR



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

To the  
House Committee on  
Finance

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.

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

**Measure:** S.B. No. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2  
**Title:** RELATING TO ELECTRIC UTILITIES.

### **Position:**

The Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") offers the following comments for consideration.

### **Comments:**

The Maui wildfires are tragic reminders of the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires in Hawaii and the tremendous harm such a risk can inflict upon the state. This increased risk of catastrophic wildfires affects not just the public but also the state's public utilities, and any solution must involve fairly balancing between the public and the public utilities the benefits and costs associated with lowering the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

The Commission appreciates the amendments to this measure that establish an aggregate liability limit and authorize securitization to recover the costs of infrastructure investments needed to reduce wildfire risk and increase reliability and resilience to natural disasters and weather-related events. By including both an aggregate liability limit and authorization for securitization, this measure appears to apportion the risk of catastrophic wildfires and the benefits of this measure in a balanced manner between public utilities and their ratepayers. Ratepayers benefit from more reliable and resilient public utility infrastructure, financed through low-cost securitization, while public utilities benefit from having certainty about the maximum level of financial exposure they might have to any damages they may incur because of a catastrophic wildfire.

The Commission notes that while this measure allows a public utility to seek a financing order from the Commission to securitize costs related to a public utility's "wildfire risk

mitigation plan and other investments in infrastructure improvements, modernization, and replacement needed to reduce wildfire risks and increase reliability and resilience to natural disasters and weather-related events”, this measure does not mandate that public utilities develop and submit any wildfire risk mitigation plans to the Commission for review.

To address this concern, the Commission recommends that the Committees amend this measure so that it mirrors SB 2922, SD2, HD3 from the 2024 Legislative Session to require electric utilities to have wildfire mitigation plans but limit the costs that can be securitized to infrastructure investments that would reduce wildfire risk. Such an approach would benefit both ratepayers and the electric utilities by detailing the requirements that a public utility’s wildfire mitigation plan must have but also create a regular periodic process for those wildfire mitigation plans to be iterated upon and reviewed.

The Commission appreciates the intent to protect ratepayers by limiting the amount public utilities can securitize to \$500 million. The Commission believes this limitation may constrain a public utility’s ability to make use of the low-cost financing afforded by securitization to lower its wildfire risk to the fullest reasonable extent, and therefore respectfully requests the removal of this cap. It is difficult to determine the precise amount of infrastructure investments needed to lower wildfire risk to the lowest reasonable level, by limiting the amount of securitization now may result in a public utility having to resort to higher cost forms of financing later to make all those needed infrastructure investments. Any concerns the Legislature may have about the amounts ultimately borne by ratepayers are adequately addressed by this measure’s requirement that all securitized amounts must first be approved by the Commission through a financing order. The Commission would review any financing application to ensure securitized infrastructure investments would lower wildfire risk at the lowest available cost of financing.

The Commission offers the following technical amendment(s).

The Commission notes that this measure, on page 4 line 13, as written, applies to all public utilities and not just electric utilities. HRS §269-1’s definition of a public utility is very broad and includes electric utilities, gas utilities, telecommunications utilities, water utilities, wastewater utilities, water carriers, and motor carriers. The Commission recommends changing most instances of the term “public utility” to “electric utility” to limit the applicability of this measure to just electric utilities as the risk of catastrophic wildfires is largely concentrated with electric utilities rather than other utilities.

The Commission supports the intent of a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund, noting the House companion bill, H.B. 982 H.D. 3, S.D.1, was recently amended to remove all substantive text and focus on the working group. The Commission will participate in any and all working group meetings as described to provide subject matter expertise and support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

**Before the**  
**House Committee on Finance**  
**Monday, March 31, 2025**  
**3:15 p.m.**  
**Conference Room 308**

**On the following measure:**  
**S.B. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2, RELATING TO ENERGY**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nadine Ando, and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (Department). The Department offers comments for this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to: (1) allow electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; (2) establish an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires; (3) authorize securitization of certain costs for electric utilities; and (4) establish a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

The Department notes that the current draft of legislation is preferable to previous drafts of legislation that would have required ratepayers to pay more than one billion dollars to establish a Wildfire Recovery Fund to compensate property owners for economic damages if Hawaiian Electric were responsible for starting another wildfire.

Additionally, using securitization for infrastructure investments as contemplated by the current legislation, may help both customers and Hawaiian Electric because it could serve as a bridge for Hawaiian Electric to access low-cost capital while it planned and built the infrastructure needed to decrease its risk from wildfires, and other substantial threats such as hurricanes and pay off its wildfire liabilities, and ultimately improve its credit rating. The Department believes a Wildfire Recovery Fund can potentially serve the public interest by creating a mechanism for efficient compensation for property damage caused by future catastrophic wildfires while also safeguarding the financial integrity of Hawaii's regulated utilities. The bill contemplates addressing that question by establishing a working group to examine the reasonableness of establishing a wildfire recovery fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



## International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 50

2240 Young Street  
Honolulu, HI 96826

Phone

808.941.0991

Fax

808.955.9091

Email

info@dc50.org

Website

www.dc50.org

PAINTERS

808.941.0991

GLAZIERS,

ARCHITECTURAL

METAL AND

GLASSWORKERS

808.946.3329

CARPET, LINOLEUM

AND SOFT TILE

808.942.3988

DRYWALL TAPERS,

FINISHERS

808.946.6621

March 28, 2025

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
House Committee on Finance  
415 South Beretania Street, Rm 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: House Bill 897, SD3, HD2 (Relating to Energy)  
Hearing Date: March 31, 2025  
Time: 3:15 p.m.

Chair Yamashita and Committee Members:

Thank you for hearing this bill and for this opportunity to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 897, SD3, HD2.

The International Union of Painters and Allied trades, District Council 50, is an organization that consists of five (5) local unions: the Painters, Local 1971; the Glaziers Architectural and Glass Metal Workers, Local 1889; the Carpet Linoleum and Soft Tile, Local 1926; the Drywall, Tapers Finishers, Local 1944; and the Pearl Harbor Metal Trades Specialty Workers, Local 1941 – in all, approximately two thousand (2000) members statewide.

This measure will encourage long-term infrastructure improvements to help prevent or limit the extent of damage caused by future wildfires. The securitization and liability limit components of the bill are important to ensuring that utilities can leverage borrowing power to make the necessary improvements without unnecessarily harsh impacts on customers. As we believe that it is critical for us to begin preparing as soon as possible for any future wildfires, we also urge the Committee to reinsert language creating a trust fund to provide for the immediate compensation of victims of future wildfires.

We therefore ask for your support in amending and passing this measure, and we thank you again for this opportunity to voice our **support** for this measure.





P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, Hawai`i 96837-0158  
Phone: 927-0709 [henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com](mailto:henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com)

#### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, March 31, 2025

TIME: 3:15 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 308

S.B. NO. 897 SD3 HD2 Energy

SUPPORT

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

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for 55 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

This bill has undergone numerous amendments.

**The requirement that ratepayers fork over \$1,000,000,000 to a wildfire fund that might never be used was eliminated.**

The bill authorizes securitization, an industry-wide financing mechanism that can lower the interest rate for borrowing funds and isolates repayment from any bankruptcy.

The bill creates a government, regulator, utility working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund that will address payments to victims of a future utility-related wildfire mindful of the need for utilities to maintain financial integrity.

The bill also allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism.

Mahalo

Henry Curtis,  
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SB 897 SD3 HD2 - Relating to Energy**

**In Support**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 PM; Agenda #3

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Plus Power

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

On behalf of Plus Power, I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897 SD3 HD2, Relating to Energy, which allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires, and authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities. Given various factors affecting our environment, including extreme weather events, SB 897 SD3 HD2 is a proactive approach to address the economic threat of a future catastrophic wildfire. This bill protects customers and the state from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability.

While we hope nothing like what happened in West Maui ever occurs again, this bill is necessary to put protections in place to address such risks. The economic viability of our state's largest electric utility is in the public interest.

The Plus Power team is accelerating the deployment of transmission-connected battery energy storage throughout the United States. Plus Power develops, owns, and operates standalone

battery energy storage systems that provide capacity, energy, and ancillary services, enabling the rapid integration of renewable generation resources. We now have 7 operating projects, with 1 in Hawaii, 4 in Texas, 2 in Arizona, and 2 more coming online this year in Maine and Massachusetts, totaling over 4000 MWh. Behind those, we have 10 GW of projects in 28 U.S. states, including Hawaii, and Canada in development. Plus Power wants to continue to help Hawaii meet its energy and reliability needs, and this legislation helps unlock the financing required.

We support SB 897 SD3 HD2 and request its passage. Thank you.

Brian Duncan

Senior Vice President, Origination & Commercial

Plus Power

**TESTIMONY OF EVAN OUE ON BEHALF OF THE HAWAII  
ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE (HAJ) IN OPPOSITION OF  
SB 897 SD3 HD2**

Date: Monday, March 31, 2025

Time: 3:15 p.m.

My name is Evan Oue and I am presenting this testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Association for Justice (HAJ) in **STRONG OPPOSITION** of **SB 897 Relating to Energy**. The measure has been amended to reward negligence at the expense of consumers by revictimizing citizens that suffer a loss of their property and making it impossible for them to rebuild. The amendments seek to

1. Remove the establishment the Hawaii Wildfire Liability Trust Fund (the “Fund”) to provide compensation for property damage resulting from catastrophic wildfires in the State;
2. Establish a limit on aggregate liability for economic damages from catastrophic wildfires **at the lesser of:**
  - **\$1,000,000,000; or**
  - **The average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed, plus the value of personal property lost; or**
  - **The aggregate assessed replacement value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the**

**covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, plus the value of personal property lost.**

3. Amend the authorization of securitization, limiting it to the costs of implementation of wildfire mitigation plans and other investments in infrastructure improvements, modernization, and replacements needed to reduce risk and increase reliability and resiliency; and
4. Delete language related to the Hawaii Electricity Reliability Administrator and renewable portfolio standards.

SB 897 limits liability of contributing public utilities and caps the total amount of property damage that can be paid through litigation by participating public utilities. HAJ is concerned that this measure penalizes victims who seek full recovery for property damages should another catastrophic wildfire occur.

**I. SB 897 Limits Recovery for Future Wildfire Victims:**

**Liability limits on damages is bad public policy and Hawaii would be the first state to set this dangerous precedent by implementing an aggressive limitation on liability for economic damages.** HAJ is concerned that the proposed measure will limit not only economic damages for property and business losses, but as currently drafted, the measure undercuts the rights of victims to seek compensation for other types of damages resulting from future disasters.

HAJ strongly opposes this measure which imposes a cap on the aggregate liability to be the lesser of : 1) \$1,000,000,000; or 2) the average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic

wildfire occurred, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed, plus the value of personal property lost; or 3) the aggregate assessed replacement value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, plus the value of personal property lost.

As proposed, the measure contemplates “the average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire ignited, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed” as a liability limit. This language only includes the assessed value of structures and does not include valuation of the land. This is extremely concerning because in Hawaii the value of a majority of property is attributed to the land and not the assessed valuation of the structure. This is especially true for many of our older homes in the state.

This proposed liability limitation fails to account for future victim’s costs to repair their structures, remediate the land and replace personal property lost in a fire. After a wildfire, the cost of repairing or replacing a home in Hawai`i will almost always exceed the pre-fire fair market value of the home, let alone the tax assessed value of the structure. Homeowners will be left to cover the difference themselves or sell if they cannot recover the cost to repair and/or rebuild their homes because it exceeds the proposed liability limitation. Victims would be left in a position where they cannot re-build their homes and are forced to sell and likely leave the state.

## **II. Removing a Fund Negates the Intent of the Measure**

The original motivation behind this measure was to promote quick compensation for fire victims so they may be able to rebuild their homes and businesses. This requires not only realistic valuation caps that truly accommodate the cost to repair or rebuild structures, it also requires an adequate source of immediately available funds. Without an available fund, victims have no expeditious path for recovery.

## **III. SB 897 Rewards Negligence**

This measure, as drafted, encourages negligent utilities to continue their malfeasance and does nothing to encourage safe practices to prevent future catastrophic events. By removing a fund and employing a cap on liability, the burden of any future negligence is shouldered entirely by fire victims and acts as a legislative rubber stamp of the kind of negligence that led to the Maui Fires.

The current amendments remove all incentives for participating utilities to take proactive steps to prevent future wildfires by limiting their exposure without any skin in the game. The amendments provide a windfall and fail to foster accountability.

## **IV. Limitations on Recovery must be realistic**

If Hawaii decides to limit the recovery of victims, the limitations must accommodate the realistic cost to repair and/or rebuild a burned structure.

**To rectify these concerns, HAJ recommends amending the measure to remove Section 2 to eliminate any cap on liability for victims of future wildfires.** Alternatively, HAJ recommends amending Section 663- \_\_ (a) to state:

(a) The aggregate liability of a public utility for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire shall not exceed the greater of:



“(1) Two times the average county tax assessed value of the land and residential and commercial buildings, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures that were damaged; or

(2) The cost of repair and/or replacement value of commercial or residential real property lost in the catastrophic wildfire plus the value of personal property lost.”

Property owners should be able to recover damages sufficient to put them in the same position as they were before—including the ability remediate and rebuild their homes—even if that requires recovery in excess of the loss of pre-fire fair market value. Most states allow a property owner to recover either the loss in value or the cost of repair, and where the cost of repair exceeds the loss in value, a property owner must have a good reason for wanting to repair the home—like using it as a residence.

This amendment ensures that victims are appropriately compensated for their property damage and that Hawaii does not set a dangerous precedent which will harm our residents.

In sum, SB 897: 1) impairs the rights of victims to be made whole; 2) subsidizes public utility liability through securitization by raising customer rates; and 3) promotes future negligence of utilities by removing incentives to take pro-active safety measures.

Thank you very much for allowing me to testify in **OPPOSITION** of the current draft of SB 897. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or desire additional information.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
SB 897 SD3 HD2**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SB 897 SD3 HD2- Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 PM; Conference Room 308

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 897 SD3 HD2 Relating to Energy. My name is Eric Wright and I serve as President of Par Hawaii. Par Hawaii is the largest local supplier of fuels, including various grades of utility fuels, as well as diesel, jet fuel, gasoline and propane.

SB 897 SD3 HD2 is a proactive approach to dealing with economic losses from a wildfire. The process that SB 897 SD3 HD2 would put in place would help ensure that Hawaiian Electric can attract investors in the capital markets. It would address the uncertainty associated with wildfire risks, an issue that is well documented by rating agencies such as Fitch<sup>1</sup> and Moody's<sup>2</sup>. Other states have taken similar measures.

One of the underappreciated benefits of this legislation is the positive impact it has on Hawaii's local companies. In the case of Par Hawaii, we are a fuel supplier to Hawaiian Electric. We depend on Hawaiian Electric's ability to access capital and make timely payments on its obligations.

Similarly, there are several independent power producers<sup>3</sup> who are critical to our daily lives because they produce and sell power to Hawaiian Electric. Additionally, there are potentially hundreds of local contractors and vendors who do business with Hawaiian Electric. These companies all depend on Hawaiian Electric to pay its bills on time. In turn, these companies are able to cover the cost of their business, including salaries and wages for their employees, as well as payments to local contractors and vendors.

The benefits of SB 897 SD3 HD2 go well beyond Hawaiian Electric by providing assurance to many local companies, and their employees, who do business with Hawaiian Electric.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fitchratings.com/research/corporate-finance/fitch-affirms-hawaiian-electric-industries-hawaiian-electric-co-at-b-removes-negative-watch-25-10-2024>

<sup>2</sup> <https://events.moody.com/2024-miu22138-investor-breakfast-briefing/liability-reform-will-be-key-to-support-credit-quality-of-utilities-in-wildfire-prone-states>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/about-us/power-facts>



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Monday, March 31, 2025 — 3:15 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 897 SD\_3 HD\_2, Relating to Energy.**

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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

**Ulupono supports SB 897 SD\_3 HD\_2**, which allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires; authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities; and establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the legislature.

This bill provides necessary mechanisms to ensure electric utilities can proactively mitigate wildfire risks, repair infrastructure, and efficiently recover from catastrophic wildfire events. This measure also establishes sensible provisions for electric cooperatives to recover commission-approved wildfire mitigation and restoration costs, enabling proactive risk management and strengthening community resilience. The proposed securitization approach is a forward-thinking financing mechanism that supports significant investments in infrastructure resilience without imposing excessive immediate rate increases on consumers.

Additionally, setting an aggregate liability limit is a reasonable approach to balancing the need for accountability with the fiscal sustainability of utilities, ensuring continued reliable service while providing a measure of foresight to address the sizeable financial risk of catastrophic wildfires. This measure is a crucial step in enhancing Hawai'i's preparedness and resilience against devastating wildfires, aligning with the state's broader goals for sustainability and energy security.

Looking forward, the establishment of the Hawai'i Wildfire Liability Trust Fund has the potential to help provide much-needed support and relief to those affected by wildfires in

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

our state. By offering a reliable source of compensation, the Fund will enhance the resilience of our communities, enabling quicker recovery and rebuilding efforts while minimizing the long-term socio-economic impacts of wildfires.

Ulupono applauds the Legislature's efforts to utilize unique methods to finance much-needed investments that will mitigate customer impacts to the extent possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs



# Sustainable Energy Hawai'i

sustainableenergyhawaii.org  
noel@sustainableenergyhawaii.org

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March 30, 2025

## Testimony for SB897 SD3 HD2 - RELATING TO ENERGY

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee members.

I'm testifying on behalf of **Sustainable Energy Hawai'i**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to improving the quality of life for Hawaii Island residents. Our mission is to enable an economic, social, and environmental revival in Hawaii through a just transition to sustainable, 100% locally sourced renewable energy.

**Sustainable Energy Hawai'i supports SB897 SD3 HD2.** This measure *'Allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism. Establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires. Authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities. Establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.'*

As described, **SB897 SD3 HD2** now proposes something different from the original, which called for the creation of a "wildfire recovery fund." HD2 now calls for a study to determine viability of a recovery fund, establishes liability limits for electric utilities, and enables securitization for wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

Electric utilities deliver critical public services that are essential to our economy, safety, health, and environment. Utility obligations ultimately impact the costs that everyone pays for its services. By addressing unlimited wildfire liability risk and prioritizing support for wildfire mitigation and resilience projects, we're able to ensure that services are not interrupted, and ratepayer costs are managed.

We encourage passage of **SB897 SD3 HD2**.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.  
Respectfully,

Noel Morin, Chairman, Board of Directors, on behalf of the Sustainable Energy Hawai'i Board of Directors: Peter Sternlicht – Treasurer | Kanani Aton – Secretary | David De Luz – Director | Desmon Haumea – Director | Jerry Chang - Director | Stanley Osserman - Director

**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 9:17:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Enos	Kaʻala Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,  
On behalf of Ka'ala Farm (mālama 'āina). I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating

to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects. The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to share my support.



*Mālama Learning Center is a non-profit organization based in West Oahu. Our mission is to inspire communities to care for Hawai'i by perpetuating conservation, culture, and sustainability through education.*

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2

### Relating to Energy

#### Committee on Finance

Hearing Date: Monday, March 31, 2025 at 3:15 p.m.

Conference Room 308

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

On behalf of Mālama Learning Center, I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. Mālama Learning Center is a private, non-profit environmental education organization serving schools and communities in West O'ahu.

This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects. The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities. I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline M. Sato", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pauline M. Sato



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**

**Monday, March 31, 2025, at 3:15PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

**RE: SB897 SD3 HD2 Relating to Energy**

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

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 897 SD3 HD2 which allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism. Establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires. Authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities. Establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

SB897 SD3 HD2 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Business Services. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Hawaii's utilities face growing wildfire hazards that endanger both the safety of communities and the stability of the energy sector. The delivery of electric service is an essential public service vital to public health, safety, and the State's economic well-being. However, recent weather events and the impact of climate change have made the delivery of these services increasingly difficult. As a result, cost impacts to customers could rise if safeguards are not established to address the risks facing public utilities and shield them from unlimited liability in catastrophic wildfire scenarios.

This measure addresses wildfire-induced risks by clarifying cost recovery for mitigation and restoration expenses, establishing a liability cap for catastrophic wildfires, and creating a securitization tool to fund infrastructure resilience. The measure provides protection against unlimited risk that, if left unaddressed, could ultimately burden consumers with higher rates. The Chamber supports this legislation because it promotes financial stability for utilities, fosters investment in wildfire resilience, and protects customers from spiraling costs over the long term.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 897 Senate Draft 3 House Draft 2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





**SanHi**

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES  
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: March 31, 2025

TO: Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita  
Chair, Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan M. Toyomura / Matthew Tsujimura (State Farm Insurance)

RE: **S.B. 897 S.D.3 H.D. 2 – Relating to Energy**

---

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

My name is Ryan M. Toyomura and I am submitting testimony on behalf of State Farm Insurance in **OPPOSITION** to the amendment related to the limits on the aggregate liability for economic damages from catastrophic wildfires and providing **COMMENTS** concerning the amendment related to joint and several liability. State Farm is concerned that the arbitrary limit to aggregate liability may ultimately harm the victims of a catastrophic wildfire by preventing them from recovering the full amount of their losses. State Farm also provides comments and offers clarifying language relating to the section on joint and several liability.

The purpose of the S.B. 897 S.D.3 H.D. 2 is to (1) authorize electric cooperatives to recover, if approved by the PUC, wildfire mitigation, repair, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment clause or other tariff recovery mechanism, (2) establish an aggregate limit for liability of economic damages from a catastrophic wildfire, and (3) authorize a public utility to securitize costs to implement the public utility's wildfire risk mitigation plan and other investments in infrastructure improvements, modernization, and replacement needed to reduce wildfire risks and increase resiliency to other natural disasters.

**A. Opposition to amendment limiting aggregate liability.**

State Farm opposes the language under Section 2(a) of the bill, which provides that:

(a) The aggregate liability of a public utility for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire shall not exceed the lesser of:

(1) \$1,000,000,000;

(2) The average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed, plus the value of personal property lost; or

(3) The aggregate assessed replacement value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, plus the value of personal property lost.

Although this amendment may limit the exposure of public utilities, it does so at the potential cost of preventing victims of catastrophic wildfires from being made whole. The amendment arbitrarily sets a cap at the lesser of (a) \$1,000,000,000.00, (b) the average assessed value of the destroyed structures, or (c) the aggregate replacement value of the destroyed structures. However, the amendment fails to account for the value of land, which may require substantial and costly remediation before a structure can be rebuilt. Additionally, rebuilding a structure may be substantially higher than the original costs. Therefore, the land and replacement costs may far exceed the \$1,000,000,000.00 cap, leaving victims to cover the excess amounts.

**B. Comments on amendment related to joint and several liability.**

Section 2(b) provides the following regarding joint and several liability:

(b) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, joint and several liability shall not apply to any qualifying damages; provided that in any action to recover from a person or an entity in connection with a covered catastrophic wildfire, the person or entity may claim, in defense, apportionment of fault to any other person or entity regardless of whether that person or entity is a party to the action. The exceptions to the abolition of joint and several liability set forth in section 663-10.9 shall not apply to any suit, claim, arbitration, or other civil action arising out of a covered catastrophic wildfire.

The amendment starts by exempting a cause of action related to qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire from recovery under the joint and several liability theory. However, it does allow a person or entity (who a claim is made against) to seek apportionment of any fault arising out of the claim. The amendment then states that exceptions to joint and several liability under existing statute (HRS § 663-10.9) shall not apply to any action arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire. Under HRS § 663-10.9 (Abolition of joint and several liability), joint and several liability is generally abolished except under the limited circumstances contained therein (e.g., torts relating to environmental pollution, toxic and asbestos-related torts, and aircraft accidents, etc.).

To the extent that Section 2(b) intends to broadly exempt an action arising from catastrophic damage from joint and several liability, inclusive of any exceptions under HRS § 663-10.9, the first sentence is sufficient as it contains the following conditional catchall phrase, “Notwithstanding any law to the contrary . . . .” Therefore, State Farm suggests Section 2(b) be amended by deleting the second sentence which will then read as follows:

(b) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, joint and several liability shall not apply to any qualifying damages; provided that in any action to recover from a person or an entity in connection with

a covered catastrophic wildfire, the person or entity may claim, in defense, apportionment of fault to any other person or entity regardless of whether that person or entity is a party to the action. The exceptions to the abolition of joint and several liability set forth in section 663-10.9 shall not apply to any suit, claim, arbitration, or other civil action arising out of a covered catastrophic wildfire.

For these reasons, State Farm offers this testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SanHi Government Strategies  
A Limited Liability Law Partnership

By */s/ Ryan Toyomura*  
Ryan M. Toyomura, Esq.



## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

### STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2 with Amendments Relating to Energy

March 31, 2025

3:15 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

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

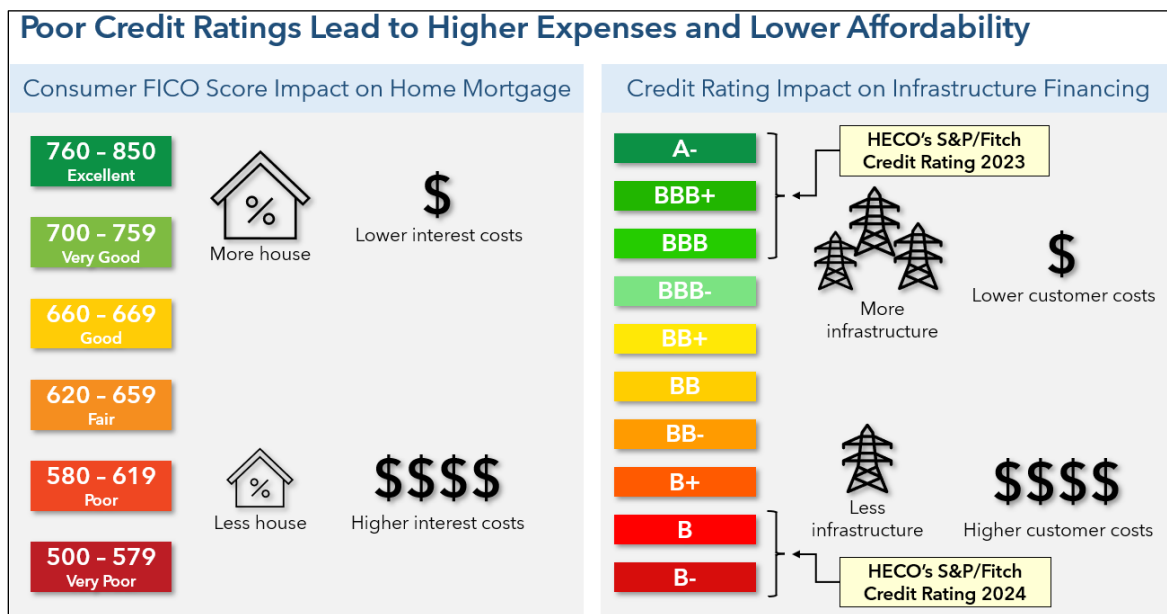
Hawaiian Electric is testifying **in strong support of SB 897, SD3, HD2 and requesting one amendment**. The HD2 version of SB 897 proposes a study of a wildfire recovery fund coupled with an aggregate limitation of liability for electric utilities for property damages from a catastrophic wildfire. It is a forward-looking bill, which would not apply in any respect to claims arising out of the August 2023 Maui Fires, or to the global settlement agreement of those claims. We agree that this bill is a crucial measure that would benefit customers. We propose a small clarifying amendment that we believe is consistent with the intent of the bill and important to ensure its desired benefits and outcomes are properly achieved. The amendment as explained below would change the text as follows:

The aggregate liability of a public utility and its affiliates, collectively, for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire shall not exceed the lesser of:

Creating forward-looking financial protection for potential future catastrophic wildfires is a key part of restoring Hawaiian Electric's credit rating. Lawmakers across the Western United States are recognizing the need for bills that create significant

liability reforms to protect regulated utilities and their ratepayers from the risk of unlimited damages from a wildfire. Those include Utah, Oregon, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Arizona, North Dakota, Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas. These measures demonstrate that enacting a limitation on liability now is an appropriate and crucial measure to protect ratepayers and utilities, even as we study how best to create a recovery fund in the future.

Utility credit rating and cost of capital are directly correlated to wildfire risk. Cost of capital is accounted for in the rate making process and directly impacts customer rates. As illustrated below, just as credit score affects consumers in buying a home, a utility's credit rating and cost of capital directly results in higher costs to customers, all else being equal.



Addressing the problem of unlimited wildfire liability thus protects customers.

Without some financial protection in place to eliminate unlimited liability from future wildfires, regulated utilities like Hawaiian Electric risk losing access to capital on reasonable terms or at all, even as they need such capital to provide essential services

and to make critical infrastructure investments in wildfire safety, resiliency, reliability, and the advancement of state energy policy.

To protect customers from these negative effects, the bill would reasonably mitigate the risk of unlimited financial liability from wildfires. It would do so by means of an aggregate cap on payments by any given public utility for property damages from a catastrophic wildfire. An aggregate cap reflects a reasonable balance between the interests of those who suffer losses from a wildfire and the interests of everyone in obtaining reliable, safe, and affordable electricity. And it reflects the modern reality that even when a utility's facilities ignite a fire, whether it is immediately extinguished, or spreads depends on many factors that are outside the utility's control. This bill is necessary for the utility to begin the stepwise process of restoring its credit rating to pre-fire levels.

HD2 also authorizes the Public Utilities Commission to approve securitization of capital expenditures consistent with wildfire mitigation plans. Securitization is a well-established financing vehicle that has been used by many states, and that has the potential to reduce customer costs.

We note again that this bill does not apply to claims arising from the August 2023 event. Hawaiian Electric has entered a global settlement to resolve those claims, including a commitment to make almost \$2 billion in payments funded entirely by shareholders, not customers. The aggregate liability cap would apply only if there were to be a future catastrophic wildfire.

**We are requesting one amendment to SB 897, SD3, HD2:**

We are requesting one amendment to the aggregate liability cap that clarifies what we understand to be the intent: the aggregate limit is a single limit that applies to affiliated utilities, meaning it would apply collectively to Hawaiian Electric, Maui Electric Company and Hawaiian Electric Light Company. The amendment also would align with the language in HD2 that clarifies that the \$500 million authorization for securitization applies to the three affiliated electric utilities collectively. As noted above the amendment would change the text as follows:

The aggregate liability of a public utility and its affiliates, collectively, for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire shall not exceed the lesser of:

**Conclusion**

We believe this bill is in the public interest and protects the people of Hawaii, while reasonably balancing stakeholder interests. Please pass SB 897, SD3, HD2 with our suggested amendments. Thank you for your consideration.

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**Senate Bill 897 SD3 HD2 – Relating to Energy**  
**TESTIMONY**

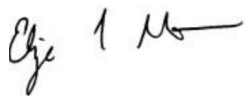
Hawai'i State House of Representatives  
House Committee on Finance  
Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB 897 SD3 HD2, relating to Energy**. AES Hawai'i is the State's largest renewable energy provider. We share the State's vision for a 100% renewable energy future to enhance energy resilience, decarbonization, and promote energy equity. We are working to accelerate and support Hawai'i's transition toward a carbon-free energy future with renewable projects across the Hawaiian Islands totaling over 405 MW of solar, solar plus storage, and wind resources in operation or under contract, with 102.5 MW of Stage 1 projects and 37 MW of Stage 2 projects. Additionally, AES Hawai'i has two Stage 3 projects, which recently signed PPAs and were submitted to the PUC for review and approval.

The purpose of SB 897 SD3 HD2 is to establish a wildfire recovery fund to provide compensation for property damage resulting from future catastrophic wildfires in the State. Following the Maui Wildfires that resulted in tragic losses of life, personal injuries and property damage, AES Hawai'i fully appreciates and supports the **intent** of this measure, as stated, as well as the proposal's intent to address the future stability of the electric utility. Hawai'i needs a stable utility to meet the ambitious renewable energy goals embedded in our state energy policy.

Mahalo for your consideration.



**Eliza Talbot Manchester**  
**Manager Government and Regulatory Affairs**  
AES Hawai'i





# HAWAII TEAMSTERS & ALLIED WORKERS LOCAL 996

Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

[Local996@hawaii.teamsters.com](mailto:Local996@hawaii.teamsters.com)

1817 Hart Street  
Honolulu, HI 96819-3205

Telephone: (808) 847-6633  
Fax: (808) 842-4575

**March 30, 2025**

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

### **SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2 Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Hawaii Teamsters & Allied Workers Local 996

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

On behalf of Hawaii Teamsters Allied Workers Local 996. My name is Kevin Holu and I am the President/Principal Officer. I am submitting testimony in **Strong support** of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Respectfully,

~~Kevin~~KH0u

Kevin K. Holu  
President/Principal Officer  
HTAWL 996

01/2025

**KEVIN HOLU**  
President/Principal Officer

**JOELLE HUSSEY**  
Secretary – Treasurer

**WALTER FOX III**  
Vice President

**BEVERLY TUSI**  
Recording Secretary

**FELIPE "PACO" ANGUIANO**  
Trustee

**TAVESI AUGAFA**  
Trustee

**JONATHAN LEO REED**  
Trustee

March 30, 2025

RE: SB 897 SD3 HD2: Relating to Energy

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee on Finance,

Founded in 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to enhance the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. With 460 member businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber **supports** SB 897 SD3 HD2: Relating to Energy.

This bill offers an alternative to the originally proposed wildfire recovery fund by committing to study the feasibility of establishing such a fund for future catastrophic events, addressing the issue of unlimited risk faced by electric utilities, and allowing securitization to be used for wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

Electricity service is a critical public utility, essential not only for public health and safety but also for the economic stability of our state. Utilities must provide this service under all conditions, even amid increasing threats from climate change and extreme weather events. These growing risks make it more difficult and costly to ensure reliable service. Without appropriate protections, utility customers could face rising costs due to the utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire-related liability.

Please vote in favor of SB 897 SD3 HD2: Relating to Energy.

Sincerely,



Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO  
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Hawai'i Island Economic Development Board (HIEDB)

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

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2 Relating to Energy, on behalf of the Hawai'i Island Economic Development Board (HIEDB) incorporated in 1984 is a private, member based, non-profit 501(c)3 whose mission is to provide and promote private sector support and expertise for balanced growth in Hawai'i County in partnership with Federal, State, County, and private resources

We support committing to study the viability of a wildlife recovery fund for future catastrophic events; addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and allowing securitization as a tool for use for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience programs.

The economic viability of Hawai'i, overall safety, health and well-being of our residents and visitors, requires dependable, consistent delivery of electricity and electric services. This essential component of life-safety is dependent on our utilities who must provide this service regardless of hazards and risks which are growing exponentially by a combination of factors including and not limited to, environmental such as climate change, demographics and population moving into areas where infrastructure is not available.

We have witnessed catastrophic socio-economic impacts in Hawai'i and other jurisdictions due to wildfire and without safety nets established to prioritize wildfire mitigation, resilience, and address utilities' risk exposure, customers including the most vulnerable of our communities and residents will likely be subject to increased costs both monetarily and socially.

We humbly request the committee pass SB 897, SD3, HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of this important matter.

Hawaii Island Economic Development Board, Inc.  
**Jacqui Hoover, Executive Director & COO**  
67-1185 Mamalahoa Hwy., Unit D104 #353  
Kamuela, HI 96743  
Office: (808)935-2180  
Mobile: (808)960-7503  
E-mail: [jhoover@hiedb.org](mailto:jhoover@hiedb.org)



Charter Communications  
Testimony of Rebecca Lieberman, Director of Government Affairs

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Monday, March 31, 2025

**COMMENTS ON S.B. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2 – RELATING TO ENERGY**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2, a bill that establishes an aggregate limit for liability for qualifying damages from catastrophic wildfires and authorizes securitization of certain costs for public utilities.

While Charter understands the intent of the bill and the desire to quickly and efficiently resolve claims stemming from catastrophic wildfires, without several important amendments, this bill does not strike the right balance in protecting the interests of Charter and its customers and, as a result, we cannot support the bill.

We believe the amendment we propose is necessary to create an efficient and comprehensive process to resolve claims in several important ways and is therefore fundamental to creating good public policy and a fair outcome for all involved.

**Indemnity and Contribution Rights**

The plain language of Section 663 establishes a \$1 billion cap on aggregate liability for qualifying damages. This limitation on liability could override existing indemnity obligations and negate existing contract rights that parties hold against contributors, including the multitude of existing indemnity obligations that Hawaiian Electric Company (“HECO”) has in its contracts with Spectrum Oceanic and other parties.

Specifically, we suggest including the below language in Section 663:

(g) Claims of any person or entity (or their affiliates) in any way involving the shared use of electrical facilities or infrastructure, pole attachments, or related agreements, shall not be impaired or otherwise restricted by the limitation on the aggregate liability of an electric utility for qualifying damages

arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire described in section 663(a).

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide suggested amendments to S.B. 897, S.D. 3, H.D. 2.



**LOCAL UNION NO. 126**

OF THE

# **International Union of Elevator Constructors**

AFFILIATED WITH THE AFL-CIO

50 S. BERETANIA ST. C211-E • HONOLULU, HI 96813 • TELEPHONE (808) 536-8653 • FAX (808) 537-3779

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

### **SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2 Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

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

My name is Marc Yamane, and I am the Business Representative of the International Union of Elevator Constructors, Local 126 and I am submitting testimony on behalf of Local 126 in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



# PLUMBERS AND FITTERS LOCAL 675 UNITED ASSOCIATION



## WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

SUPPORT OF SB897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Re: **Testimony in Support of SB897**  
RELATING TO ENERGY

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

The Plumbers & Fitters Local 675 was founded in 1919 and received its charter from the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States. Our members provide quality and reliable work on projects including, but not limited to, power plants, water treatment plants, oil refineries, hospitals, government and commercial buildings, hotels and luxury resorts, high-rise condominiums, and single-family homes in residential neighborhoods across the State.

The Plumbers & Fitters Local 675 **supports SB897**, which proposes an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

It is for the aforementioned reasons that we respectfully request you pass this measure. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Valentino Ceria

Business Manager / Financial Secretary - Treasurer  
Plumbers and Fitters Local 675





# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025

House Committee on Finance

HEARING DATE: Monday, March 31, 2025

TIME: 3:15 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room 308

RE: Senate Bill 897 SD3 HD2- **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members;

**The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 (IBEW 1260) offers the following comments in strong support of Senate Bill 897 SD3 HD2.**

IBEW Local 1260, is comprised of approximately 3,000 members throughout Hawaii and Guam and consists of a diverse and highly-skilled workforce that supports the electric utility infrastructure across our state as well as government service contracts and broadcasting. We are committed to protecting the well-being of the members we serve and the community at large.

SB897 SD3 HD2 allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism, establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires, authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities related to wildfire mitigation, and establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund.

**IBEW1260 greatly appreciates *thoughtful* opposing dialogue from parties that genuinely intend to discuss the merits of SB897 SD3 HD2 and make it a better bill for all concerned, but let's be absolutely clear... SB897 SD3 HD2 is NOT A BAILOUT BILL for the utility" as it has been unfairly mischaracterized by certain uninformed and misguided opposition under the guise of community concern.**

**SB897 SD3 HD2 is a carefully crafted piece of legislation that provides the utility with tools to minimize risk, access working capital at preferred rates, and study the costs and benefits of a wildfire recovery fund to address future liability resulting from wildfires.** Recent local and national events have magnified the tremendous impact catastrophic wildfires can have on a community. Without proactive policies, regulated electric utilities can face insurmountable financial hardship.<sup>1</sup>

SB897 SD3 HD2 is a positive "forward thinking" piece of legislation that is aimed squarely at "benefitting" the rate payer. **A healthy utility is good for rate payers! A distressed utility is BAD for rate payers!**

We believe measures that aim to produce a net benefit to ratepayers, minimize risk, explore possible solutions that provide relief to those who suffer property damage or loss in the event of a future catastrophic wildfire, and provide low cost capital to perform the necessary work to prevent another horrific disaster from ever occurring again, is not only a *GOOD* thing for the community and for the rate payers, but extremely vital to the health of our electric utilities and the communities they serve. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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<sup>1</sup> [What the Eaton fire could mean for Edison's bottom line - Los Angeles Times, Caroline Petrow-Cohen, Feb. 11, 2025](#)





**DAMIEN T.K. KIM**  
*President*  
IBEW 1186

**MARC YAMANE**  
*Vice President*  
Elevator Constructors  
Local 126

**PETER IRIARTE**  
*Secretary/Treasurer*  
Operative Masons &  
Plasterers Local 630

**DOUGLAS FULP**  
*Sergeant-At-Arms*  
Insulators Local 132

**VALENTINO CERIA**  
*Trustee*  
Plumbers & Fitters  
Local 675

**KEVIN HOLU**  
*Trustee*  
Hawaii Teamsters Local 996

**ART TOLENTINO**  
Sheetmetal Workers, I.A.  
Local 293

**JACOB EVENSON**  
Boilermakers Local 627

**JEFF ORNELLAS**  
Bricklayers Local 1

**LEROY CHINCIO**  
IBEW Local 1260

**ANA TUIASOSOPO**  
Operating Engineers Local 3

**JOSEPH O'DONNELL and  
T. GEORGE PARIS**  
Ironworkers Local 625

**PETER GANABAN**  
Laborers Local 368

**RYDEN VALMOJA**  
District Council 50  
Painters & Allied Trades  
Local 1791  
Carpet, Linoleum & Soft Tile  
Local 1926  
Drywall, Tapers & Finishers  
Local 1944  
Glaziers, Architectural Metal  
&  
Glassworkers Local 1889

**VAUGHN CHONG**  
Roofers, Waterproofers, &  
Allied Workers Local 221

March 30, 2025

Chair Kyle Yamashita  
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi  
House Committee on Finance

RE: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Building & Construction Trades Council (HBCTC) represents 18 construction trade unions here in the State of Hawaii. The HBCTC is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB897 which is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

The Hawaii Building & Construction Trades Council is in strong support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



March 29, 2025

Via Electronic Submittal

Committee on Finance  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Monday, March 31, 2025, 3:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

**RE: SB 897 SD3 HD2 – Relating to Energy - Support the Intent**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee,

Clearway Energy Group ("Clearway") supports the intent of SB 897 SD3 HD2, which addresses utility wildfire liability and wildfire mitigation costs. Clearway is one of the largest suppliers of renewable energy to Hawaiian Electric and its customers. Our projects provide clean, reliable power to Hawaiian Electric's customers at a fixed price and at a lower cost than electricity from fossil fuel sources.

In supporting the intent of SB 897 SD3 HD2, Clearway wishes to underscore the importance of a financially stable utility in enabling continued construction of affordable, clean energy resources to meet Hawaii's electricity needs. Hawaiian Electric's credit rating remains significantly below investment grade, and financial analysts consistently point to wildfire litigation risk, as well as SB 897 SD3 HD2 and other legislation addressing that risk, as primary drivers of the utility's credit outlook. When Clearway and other independent power producers seek financing for our clean energy investments in Hawaii, lenders rely on these credit ratings and reports to determine whether, and at what cost, they will invest in a project contracted with Hawaiian Electric. In the current environment, Clearway has determined that it is currently not possible to secure financing at a reasonable cost for projects relying on revenue from Hawaiian Electric.

In addition to SB 897 SD3 HD2, Clearway also supports SB 1501/HB 974, which allows independent power producers to enter into a step-in agreement with the Department of Budget and Finance, giving lenders near-term assurance that payments for delivered energy will continue even if the utility were to become subject to a bankruptcy proceeding. Both proposals are needed to support continued financing of clean energy projects. The step-in agreement is a temporary mechanism to allow project financing to continue in the near term while Hawaiian Electric works toward an investment-grade credit rating, whereas SB 897 SD3 HD2 is important as a mechanism to support Hawaiian Electric's long-term credit recovery.

Hawai'i has an urgent need for new electric generation and storage resources to stabilize the grid and keep the State on track toward its clean energy goals. We encourage the Legislature to adopt measures that create a constructive path forward for Hawaiian Electric.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Nicola Park  
Director, Hawaii  
Clearway Energy Group



Testimony Before the House Committee on Finance  
By David Bissell  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative  
4463 Pahe'e Street, Suite 1, Lihu'e, Hawai'i, 96766-2000

Monday, March 31, 2025; 3:15 pm  
Conference Room #308 & Videoconference

**Senate Bill No. 897 SD3 HD2 - RELATING TO ENERGY**

To the Honorable Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) is a not-for-profit utility providing electrical service to more than 34,000 commercial and residential members.

**KIUC supports the intent of this measure and requests amendments.**

KIUC recognizes that it is in the best interest of the state to minimize negative impacts to electric utility ratepayers for wildfire risk mitigation, disaster relief, and litigation costs. Public utilities are very capital intensive, and maintaining access to low-cost financing is of utmost importance to utilities. KIUC believes it is in the best interest of all to provide a limitation of aggregate liability for a public utility for qualifying damages arising from a covered catastrophic wildfire; while providing mechanisms such as securitization to recover, finance, or refinance financing costs of infrastructure resilience costs.

Limitations on aggregate liability and definition of "catastrophic wildfire"

KIUC supports the liability limitations provided in this Bill. However, KIUC is concerned that the limitations appear to only apply if a covered catastrophic wildfire destroys more than 500 commercial or residential structures. This high eligibility threshold would severely limit the applicability of the liability limits for smaller utilities and/or smaller service areas of larger utilities (e.g., an island other than O'ahu). KIUC's suggests linking the definition of a catastrophic wildfire to a metric that relates to the relative size of the utility and/or utility service area in which the fire occurred. For example, it could be tied to the total number of structures impacted or an aggregate dollar value of losses incurred.

Securitization

As a not-for-profit cooperative, KIUC could have access to funding assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following a declared disaster. It is reasonable to expect FEMA would cover 75% of KIUC's eligible rebuilding costs following a wildfire. However, FEMA would not reimburse all losses, and there could be additional third-party liability claims not covered by insurance resulting from a wildfire event. Additionally, FEMA has been mentioned by the Trump administration as an agency targeted for potential changes which could impact future availability of funding.

Securitization of wildfire related claim costs is potentially the most cost-effective method of financing if it is available, as debt can be issued in the capital market at investment grade levels often at the highest investment grade. The PUC's recently issued *2024 Inclinations on the Future of Energy in Hawaii* states "... creative new mechanisms, such as securitization, are likely necessary to secure the timely availability of funds and reduce ratepayer impact."

Definition of "infrastructure resilience costs"

As currently drafted, this bill does not provide for securitization of civil claim costs related to a catastrophic wildfire. Electric cooperatives are owned by ratepayers and have no shareholders to share in recovery of wildfire related costs including claims. Insurance coverage is prohibitively expensive for wildfire related liability.

KIUC suggests an expansion of infrastructure resilience costs eligible for securitization to include electric cooperatives costs related to wildfire claims and damages.

Thank you for your consideration.



March 30, 2025

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance (FIN)

**Support of SB 897, SD3, HD2 RELATING TO ENERGY (Allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism. Establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires. Authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities. Establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000. [SD3, HD2])**

**FIN Hearing: Monday, March 31, 2025, 3:15 p.m.**  
**Conference Room 308; VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth, housing, and renewable energy, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural, cultural, and agricultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF and its members support all forms of renewable energy and for over one hundred years, our members have led the state in energy research, development, installation, generation, transmission, and delivery of renewable energy.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support for SB 897, SD3, HD2**, which allows electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; establishes an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires; authorizes securitization of certain costs for electric utilities; establishes a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

**LURF's Position.** This bill does not provide for the originally proposed proactive creation of a wildfire recovery fund, but it proposes positive alternatives, including:

- committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event;
- addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and
- allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

LURF believes that, like other states challenged by wildfires have done, Hawaii still needs to establish a recovery fund that can pay victims' claims faster after a future catastrophic wildfire. While this bill does not propose a wildfire recovery fund as part of the solution to address the economic threat of a future catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by a regulated utility's infrastructure, the proposed study could provide guidance for establishing a future wildfire recovery fund.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports** **SB 897, SD3, HD2**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this measure.



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

**LOCAL UNION NO. 1186 • Affiliated with AFL-CIO**

1935 HAU STREET, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor • HONOLULU, HI 96819-5003  
TELEPHONE (808) 847-5341 • FAX (808) 847-2224

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing on Monday, March 31, 2025 at 3:15 p.m., Conference Room 308

RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT** OF SB 897 SD3 HD2

Honorable Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186 (IBEW 1186), is comprised of over 3,000 men and women working in electrical construction, telecommunications, civil service employees, and educator and faculty associations.

IBEW 1186 **SUPPORTS** this bill which offers a balanced approach to the complex challenges of wildfire risks and the resiliency of electric utilities. As both union members and taxpayers, we have a dual interest in ensuring a reliable and affordable energy future for Hawaii.

The delivery of electric service is nothing short of an essential public service. It is the lifeblood of our communities, and critical for not only public health and safety, but also the economic vitality and ability of local businesses to operate. Electrical workers are committed to this service, often under challenging conditions and serious hazards.

Without the protections and mechanisms stated in this bill, the financial risks to the electric utilities will translate directly into increased costs and additional burdens that our members, both as workers and residents, cannot afford.

Furthermore, provisions of this bill prioritize wildfire mitigation and resilience projects. These projects will not only reduce the risk of wildfires, but also create good-paying jobs for IBEW members, contributing to the overall economic health of our State.

IBEW 1186 **SUPPORTS** this important legislation for the safety of our members and their communities, the stability of our electric grid, and the well-being of all of Hawaii's working families.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony.

Sincerely,

Damien T.K. Kim  
Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary





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Hawai'i State Legislature  
House Committee on Finance

March 30, 2025

*Filed via electronic testimony submission system*

**RE: SB 897, SD3, HD2, Electrical Utilities - NAMIC's Testimony in Opposition to civil liability cost-shifting onto consumers**

Thank you for providing the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) an opportunity to submit written testimony to your committee for the March 31, 2025, public hearing. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the public hearing, because of a previously scheduled professional obligation.

The National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies consists of nearly 1,500 member companies, including seven of the top 10 property/casualty insurers in the United States. The association supports local and regional mutual insurance companies on main streets across America as well as many of the country's largest national insurers. NAMIC member companies write approximately \$391 billion in annual premiums and represent 68 percent of homeowners, 56 percent of automobile, and 31 percent of the business insurance.

NAMIC is opposed to the provision on "Limitations on Aggregate Liability" for the following legal and public policy reasons:

- 1) Reducing wildfire risk exposure is a high-priority public policy safety concern that should be focused upon requiring greater risk prevention and mitigation, not civil liability responsibility shifting from an at-fault party to the citizens of the state;
- 2) The proposed provision will reduce electrical utilities' legal and financial incentive to be vigilant in their wildfire vegetation management and investment in electrical transmission safety upgrades designed to reduce wildfire exposure. Reducing electrical utilities' civil liability exposure will not make their business models more wildfire risk prevention and mitigation proactive. It will have the exact opposite effect, because the electrical utilities will have less legal and financial "skin in the game";
- 3) The "Limitations on Aggregate Liability" for electrical utilities is unfair from a legal equal protection standpoint because only electrical utilities (one business industry) receives this statutory financial benefit from the state (reduced civil liability) when other businesses and citizens don't receive any civil liability protection;
- 4) The proposed provision is arguably an unconstitutional "taking" of individual property rights by the state establishing arbitrary civil liability caps on aggregate damages that may be collected from a negligent electrical utilities company. If an electrical utility causes billions of dollars in damages, they should be legally responsible for all their damages just like every other business is in the state; otherwise, the injured citizens and businesses in the state will end up being deprived of some, if not all, of their legal property rights without just compensation.



- 5) The proposed provision establishes a dangerous public policy precedent of providing legal protections and benefits to a politically influential industry to the detriment of the general welfare of the citizens of the state – the very thing most consumers believe is a systemic problem in the legislative process.
- 6) The proposed limitation would change the joint and several liability law and create a civil procedure mechanism beneficial to only electrical utilities companies (designating a non-party at-fault) for catastrophic wildfire events. Not only does the proposed provision in the bill cap civil liability damages for electrical utilities and shift the cost of the damages onto everyone else in society, the bill also provides electrical utilities with legal civil procedure process tools to help them avoid their legal responsibility. This proposed provision is an excessive “stacking of all the cards” in favor of electrical utilities and against everyone else in the state, including tragic victims of their legal negligence.

In closing, NAMIC believe that the entire provision on “Limitations of Aggregate Liability” should be removed from the bill, because it would be detrimental to the general welfare of all citizens of the state and rings of political favoritism to a business industry that has the technical ability, financial resources, and legal responsibility of being conscientious wildfire risk prevention and mitigation professionals.

**From a public policy standpoint - Why reward wildfire prevention and mitigation irresponsibility by electrical utilities and discourage proactive vigilance by them in consumer safety protection?**

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me at 303.907.0587 or at [crataj@namic.org](mailto:crataj@namic.org), if you would like to discuss NAMIC’s written testimony.

Respectfully,

Christian John Rataj, Esq.  
NAMIC Senior Regional Vice President  
State Government Affairs, Western Region



# HAWAII REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

March 31, 2025

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: **STRONG OPPOSITION TO SB897 – A COSTLY BURDEN ON  
HAWAI’I’S WORKING FAMILIES**

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

On behalf of the Hawai’i Regional Council of Carpenters (HRCC), I submit this testimony in **strong opposition of SB897**, which seeks to 1) allow electric cooperatives to recover wildfire mitigation, repaid, and restoration costs through an automatic rate adjustment or other mechanism; 2) establish an aggregate limit for liability for economic damages from covered catastrophic wildfires; 3) authorize securitization of certain costs for electric utilities; and 4) establish a working group to examine the establishment and implementation of a wildfire recovery fund and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

As these bills continue to advance through the legislative process, it begs the question: **why are we continuing to take what HECO says at face value?** The time has come to question the validity of all of these assumptions that the utility continues to put forward. What are the avenues being pursued or not pursued to increase the utility’s financial stability before prioritizing a cost-of-living increase and making ratepayers pay first? Is the utility entering into negotiations with other entities for investments? The scenario that the utility must have securitization and a limit on liability to boost their credit rating by increasing cost to ratepayers or be bought out by non-local entity must be challenged. There are other options available to the utility, and these options, for the sake of the working families of Hawai’i must be revealed in these committee hearings.

In committee hearings on similar measures, statements have been made that whether or not a bill on securitization and a limit on liability pass, the following is true: 1) ratepayers will experience a rate increase; and 2) there is no guarantee or indication from the insurance industry that the legislation will boost the utility’s credit rating. This sounds like a bad deal for our working families.

## STATE HEADQUARTERS & BUSINESS OFFICES

OAHU: 1311 Houghtailing Street, Honolulu Hawaii 96817-2712 • Ph. (808) 847-5761 Fax (808) 440-9188  
HILO OFFICE: 525 Kilauea Avenue, Room 205, Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3050 • Ph. (808) 935-8575 Fax (808) 935-8576  
KONA OFFICE: 75-126 Lunapule Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96740-2106 • Ph. (808) 329-7355 Fax (808) 326-9376  
MAUI OFFICE: 330 Hookahi Street, Wailuku, Maui 96793-1449 • Ph. (808) 242-6891 Fax (808) 242-5961  
KAUAI OFFICE: Kuhio Medical Ctr Bldg., 3-3295 Kuhio Hwy, Suite 201, Lihue, Kauai 96766-1040 • Ph. (808) 245-8511 Fax (808) 245-8911

## **Limiting Liability Penalizes Future Wildfire Victims**

Liability limits on damages is bad public policy. Should this measure pass, Hawai'i would be the first state to set this dangerous precedent by implementing an aggressive limitation on liability for economic damages.

Other states have implemented less aggressive alternatives to liability caps (i.e. California's A.B. 1054, enacted in 2019, created a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for electrical utilities that have valid safety certifications, as part of a process to recover costs and expenses from ratepayers and access a state wildfire fund to cover excess liabilities) which have resulted in improvement of credit ratings for CA utilities.

As proposed, the measure contemplates the liability limit of the utility being the lesser of the following: 1) \$1 billion; 2) "the average assessed value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire ignited, multiplied by the number of commercial structures or residential structures designed for habitation that were destroyed;" or 3) the aggregate assessed replacement value of commercial structures and residential structures designed for habitation in the county in which the covered catastrophic wildfire occurred, plus the value of personal property lost.

This language only includes the assessed value of structures and does not include valuation of the land. This is extremely concerning because in our state, the value of a majority of property is attributed to the land and not the assessed valuation of the structure. This is especially true for many of our older homes in the state.

## **If Electrical Utilities Do Not Take Reasonable Care To Avoid Igniting Wildfires, They Should Be Responsible for the Damage Caused.**

Property owners—many of whom lose everything in the resulting fires—should be able to make their case to a jury and, if successful, recover damages from the utility to put them in the position they were in before the fire. In many cases, this will be measured by the cost to repair a home, not merely the loss of fair market value.

Homeowners are left to cover the difference themselves or sell if they cannot recover the cost to repair their homes because it exceeds the loss in fair market value. After a wildfire, the cost of repairing a home will almost always exceed the loss in fair market value. Loss in value can be up to 100% of the pre-fire value of a home, whereas the cost of repair can easily be 300- 400% of the pre-fire value. The cost to repair is exacerbated by the surge in demand for construction services and materials after a fire.

## **Property Owners Should Be Able To Recover Damages Sufficient To Make Them Whole Again—including The Ability To Stay In Their Homes—even If That Requires Recovery In Excess of the Loss of Fair Market Value**

Most states allow a property owner to recover either the loss in value or the cost of repair, and where the cost of repair exceeds the loss in value, a property owner must have a good reason for wanting to repair the home—such as using it as a residence. At a time when we are experiencing a housing crisis, allowing a limit of liability would simply push victims of a future wildfire disaster out of our beloved state.

### **Enough Is Enough—Reject SB897**

For years, HECO has failed to make the necessary investments to ensure affordable, reliable energy for the people of Hawai'i. Instead, they have funneled millions into executive compensation, stock buybacks, and shareholder dividends—all while leaving our communities vulnerable.

Hawai'i's working families should not be forced to bail out a utility company that has repeatedly failed them. We strongly urge the committee to **reject SB897** and **protect the people of Hawai'i from skyrocketing energy costs**.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mitchell Tynanes

Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters



**International Association of  
Heat & Frost Insulators  
& Allied Workers Local 132**

1019 Lauia Street Bay #4  
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707  
Phone: (808) 521-6405 Fax (808) 523-9861  
Email: [awl132@insulatorslocal132.org](mailto:awl132@insulatorslocal132.org)  
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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by the International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators & Allied Workers Local 132

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

On behalf of the International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators & Allied Workers Local 132 I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Douglas Fulp  
Business Manager / Financial Secretary  
International Association of Heat & Frost  
Insulators & Allied Workers Local 132



T. George Paris  
Managing Director

# Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
SUPPORT OF SB897, HD2  
Relating to Wildfires  
Monday March 31, 2025  
3:15 P.M.

State Capitol, Conference Room 229  
Submitted by Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

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

The Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund, is in strong support of SB897, HD2, Relating to Wildfires, which proposes a solution in the event of a future catastrophic wildfire that could be caused by a regulated utility's infrastructure. Given various factors affecting our environment, including extreme weather events, this bill is a proactive approach to address the economic threat of future catastrophic wildfires.

Like other states challenged by wildfires have done or are in the process of doing, Hawaii needs to establish this study to mitigate after a future catastrophic wildfire.

Additionally, recent fires in Los Angeles magnifies the importance of such legislation. This bill would create a future wildfire recovery fund for potential victims with an efficient option for recovering property damage claims from a future catastrophic wildfire. In addition, this bill would protect the creditworthiness of the participating regulated utilities that contribute to the fund. This bill's purpose is to reduce the financial uncertainty created by the risk of future catastrophic wildfires and to help support Hawaii's economy. We request your support of SB 897, HD2.

T. George Paris  
Managing Director





LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

# United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers

AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO AND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES DEPARTMENT

Local Union No. 221

P.O. Box 17250, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817  
(808) 847-5757 Fax (808) 848-8707

Vaughn W. Chong  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer-Business Manager

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

### SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2 Relating to Energy

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 221

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

On behalf of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 221, I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely yours,

Vaughn W Chong  
Financial Secretary/Treasurer/Business Manager



March 31, 2025

House Committee on Finance  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair



*Working together for Kapolei*

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m. Conference Room #308 and via videoconference

**RE: SB897 SD3 HD2– Relating to Energy**

Dear Chairs Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, members of the Committee,

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Nānakūli, Wai'anae and Mākaha. The Chamber works on behalf of its members and the business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and help West O'ahu businesses thrive. We are a member-driven, member-supported organization representing the interests of all types of business: small, medium or large, for profit or non-profit businesses or sole proprietorship.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports SB 897 SD3 HD2**, which provides an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by committing to a study of the viability of a wildfire recovery fund, addressing the unlimited risk of public utilities and allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

Public utilities are required to deliver essential public services equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risk. This bill is in the public interest, as it provides a safeguard against the increasing financial exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. Without these protections, there could be a significant impact on our state, consumers, and businesses, placing an undue burden on our economy.

Reliable and affordable electricity is vital to the economic growth and sustainability of our state. With the increasing challenges posed by climate change and extreme weather events, proactive measures must be taken to maintain the stability of our energy infrastructure.

**There are portions of West O'ahu that are specifically vulnerable to devastating wildfires in a very similar manner to how West Maui was impacted, and we continue to prepare our West O'ahu community, including preparation, mitigation, and the consideration of funding mechanisms like this measure provides.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.  
Respectfully,

Kiran Polk  
Executive Director & CEO



# Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

1321 Kino'ole Street - Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Phone (808) 935-7178 - Fax (808) 961-4435 - Email [exec@hicc.biz](mailto:exec@hicc.biz) - [www.hicc.biz](http://www.hicc.biz)

## **Executive Officer**

Carla Kuo

## **2024-2025 Board of Directors**

### **President**

Keith Marrack

### **President-Elect**

David Kurohara

### **Vice President**

Dennis Lin

### **Treasurer**

Joshua Vierra

### **Immediate Past**

#### **President**

Randall Kurohara

### **Directors**

Kehau Amorin

Mary Begier

Vanessa Carlson

Rebecca Choi

Jeremy Chong

Chelsey Chow

Mark Chun

Kapaelani Comstock

Dean Fuke

Larisa Hamamoto

Bonnie Irwin

Daniel Kea

Tyson Klask

Geoli Ng

Lisa Shiroma

James Staub

Jase Takeya

Nimr Tamimi

Irene Yamanaka

Tracie Yoshimoto

## **TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE SB 897 SD3 HD2 - Relating to Energy – IN SUPPORT**

Monday, March 31, 2025 3:15 PM

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

On behalf of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, which represents over 300 businesses and individual members primarily on the East side of Hawai'i Island, I submit this written testimony in strong support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy.

This bill presents an alternative approach to the originally proposed wildfire recovery fund by:

1. Committing to study the feasibility of establishing such a fund for future catastrophic events.
2. Addressing the unlimited liability risks faced by electric utilities.
3. Allowing securitization to be used for wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

Reliable electricity service is not only essential to public health and safety but also critical to the economic stability of our state, particularly for businesses. Electric utilities must continue to provide this vital service despite increasing challenges from severe weather and climate change. Without proper safeguards, customers may bear rising costs due to utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. This bill helps protect consumers from these potential cost increases while prioritizing wildfire mitigation and resilience efforts to reduce risks for electric utilities.

For these reasons, I strongly support SB 897, SD3, HD2, and urge the committee to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Carla Kuo

Executive Officer

Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



## Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii

**Hearing on SB897, SD3, HD2 (Relating to the Wildfire Recovery Fund; Securitization)**  
**Committee Hearing: House Finance Committee**  
**Date: March 31, 2025, 3:15PM**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am submitting testimony in **support of SB 897, SD3, HD2**, Relating to Energy on behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Hawai'i (JCCIH). JCCIH has been incorporated since 1951 and represents over 340 members of the business community with a mission of promoting the well-being of our community through business and personal relationships advancing the values of *Kahiau* - giving without expectation - and *Okage Sama De* - thanks to you, we are who we are.

This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important to, not only, public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the State, including operating and running a business. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service regardless of hazards or risks. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill also prioritizes wildfire mitigation and resilience projects and further mitigation risks for our electric utilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. This bill will help to ensure the protection of our communities in case of a minor or massive wildfire.

Sincerely,

Ka'iu Kimura  
President, Board of Directors



**LATE** \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

# LiUNA!

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

SUPPORT OF SB897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy

RELATING TO ENERGY

**PETER A. GANABAN**  
*Business Manager/  
Secretary-Treasurer*

**ALFONSO OLIVER**  
*President*

**JOBY NORTH II**  
*Vice President*

**TONI FIGUEROA**  
*Recording Secretary*

**MARTIN ARANAYDO**  
*Executive Board*

**ORLANDO PAESTE**  
*Executive Board*

**JOSEPH YAW**  
*Executive Board*

**ESTHER AILA**  
*Auditor*

**RUSSELL NAPIHAA**  
*Auditor*

**MARK TRAVALINO**  
*Auditor*

**YUGAN HOTTENDORF**  
*Sergeant-At-Arms*

Monday, March 31, 2025 3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

**Re: Re: Testimony in Support of SB897**  
Relating to Energy

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

The Laborer's International Union Local 368 represents 5000+ members working in construction, environmental remediation, maintenance, food service, health care, clerical, and other occupations, as well as in state, local, and municipal government jobs and as mail handlers in the U.S. Postal Service across the State.

The Laborer's International Union Local 368 **supports SB897**, which proposes an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities; and (3) allowing securitization to be used for projects related to wildfire mitigation and resilience projects.

The Laborer's International Union Local 368 supports this measure, in conjunction with many other unions, to support the members of IBEW 1260.

We respectfully request you pass this measure. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Peter A. Ganaban

Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer  
Laborers International Union of North America - Local 368  
1617 Palama Street  
Honolulu, HI 96817

LiUNA Local 368  
1617 Palama Street  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
Phone: (808) 841-5877  
Fax: (808) 847-7829  
[www.local368.org](http://www.local368.org)

## Feel the Power

# Hawai'i Construction Alliance

P.O. Box 179441  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
(808) 220-8892

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Finance  
House State House of Representatives  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

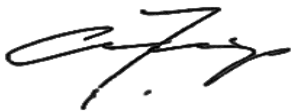
RE: STRONG SB897 SD3 HD2: RELATING TO ENGERGY

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

The Hawaii Construction Alliance submits this testimony in support of SB897 SD3 HD2 relating to energy. We stand in solidarity with all our fellow unions and look forward to working with Hawaiian Electric on future endeavors.

Mahalo,

Ana Tuiasosopo,



President  
Hawaii Construction Alliance

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Joanne Williamson

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

My name is Joanne Williamson and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Joanna Markle

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

My name is Joanna Markle and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Karen Hirota

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

My name is Karen Hirota and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Brianne Nitahara

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

My name is Brianne Nitahara and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Everett Lacro

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

My name is Everett Lacro and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Lori Tsue

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

My name is Lori Tsue and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 2:01:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kurt Tsue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kurt Tsue and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Michelle Chang

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

My name is Michelle Chang and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Gary Hanaoka

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

My name is Gary Hanaoka and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Darren Ishimura

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

I am submitting written testimony **in support** of SB 897 SD3 HD2. This bill proposes an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities have a duty to serve all customers – they are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers will likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities.

It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. This bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

**This bill is in the public's best interest and must not be considered a bailout for electric utilities. We cannot delay critical actions that will protect the State against the economic threat caused by unbounded wildfire liability risk.**

Please pass SB 897 SD3 HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Christine Jade Fe Benito

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

My name is Christine Jade Fe Benito and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change have made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a customer, I strongly support this bill because it demonstrates foresight and accountability in addressing the risks posed by climate-related disasters. Proactively putting protections in place benefits the greater good, shielding customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. By recognizing the potential consequences of such disasters, this legislation underscores the importance of taking responsible and preventive action to safeguard both the public and the state's economic future. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 5:00:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayne Okahara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE****SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2****Relating to Energy**

**Monday, March 31, 2025**

**3:15 p.m.**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**Submitted by Kayne T. Okahara**

**Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,**

**My name is Kayne T. Okahara and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.**

**The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change have made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a customer, I strongly support this bill because it demonstrates foresight and accountability in addressing the risks posed by climate-related disasters. Proactively putting protections in place benefits the greater good, shielding customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. By recognizing the potential consequences of such disasters, this legislation underscores the importance of taking responsible and preventive action to safeguard both the public and the state's economic future. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.**

**I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025  
3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Lorie Nagata

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

My name is Lorie Nagata and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Robert Young

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

My name is Robert Young and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Ellaham Toko

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

My name is Ellaham Toko and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Alex Dale

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

My name is Alex Dale and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Lorrie Iwanaga

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

My name is Lorrie Iwanaga and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Chad Asato

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

My name is Chad Asato and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Ronald Cox

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

My name is Ronald Cox and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Rodney Chong

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

My name is Rodney Chong and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Jason Anzai

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

My name is Jason Anzai and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Ken Fong

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

My name is Ken Fong and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by David Kurohara

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

My name is David Kurohara and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Keith Kobuke

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

My name is Keith Kobuke and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Patsy Nanbu

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

My name is Patsy Nanbu and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 9:21:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danielle Canfield-Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,  
My name is Danielle Canfield-Jones and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 10:10:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Reynolds	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

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

My name is Lynne Unemori and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities.

Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks. The delivery of electric service is critical not only for public health and safety, but also for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change have greatly increased the challenges of delivering this essential service. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address this risk to public utilities as they carry out their required responsibility to deliver this essential service. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides vital protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Leslie Malasa

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

My name is Leslie Malasa and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Chris Benjamin

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

My name is Chris Benjamin and I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

Hawaii residents need a strong electric utility that has the resources to implement wildfire mitigation plans and invest in/support the state's transition to a clean-energy future. We should provide our electric utility with the tools it needs to deliver the electric services essential to public health and safety and the economic viability of the state. One of those tools is a cost of capital that allows it to invest in the safety and efficiency of the electric grid. While many perceive that Hawaii's residents will benefit if costs are shifted to the utility, including unlimited liability, such actions will only hurt customers and the state in the long run.

It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. I also believe it is important that we advance our understanding of disaster relief funds and be positioned to create one as soon as possible. I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 2:50:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERRIE-LYN LAU	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2

Relating to Energy

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by TERRIE-LYN LAU

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

My name is TERRIE-LYN LAU and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by [INSERT YOUR NAME]

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

My name is [INSERT YOUR NAME] and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Jamie Lee

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

My name is Jamie Lee and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Dave Okamura

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

My name is Dave Okamura and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by John DiGiovanni

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

My name is John DiGiovanni and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Kelsey Ito

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

My name is Kelsey Ito and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

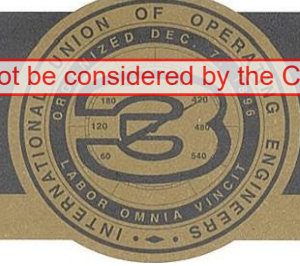
Submitted by Ken Aramaki

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

My name is Ken Aramaki and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

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I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.



March 31, 2025

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Finance  
House State House of Representatives  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Strong SB897 SD3 HD2: RELATING TO ENGERGY

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

My name is Ana Tuiasosopo, and I am a Trustee and District Representative for the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 3, representing heavy equipment operators, mechanics, surveyors, and other skilled tradespeople in Hawai'i's construction industry.

I submit this testimony in support of SB897 SD3 HD2 relating to energy. We stand in solidarity with all our fellow unions.

Mahalo,

Ana Tuiasosopo,

Trustee/District Representative  
International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 3

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD3, HD2  
Relating to Energy**

Monday, March 31, 2025

3:15 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Submitted by Lyanne Hiromoto

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

My name is Lyanne Hiromoto, and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 897, SD3, HD2, Relating to Energy. This bill is proposing an alternative to the originally proposed creation of a wildfire recovery fund by: (1) committing to study the viability of a wildfire recovery fund for a future catastrophic event; and (2) addressing the unlimited risk of electric utilities. Electric utilities are required to deliver an essential public service equitably to all state citizens, regardless of hazards or risks.

The delivery of electric service is an essential public service that is important not only for public health and safety, but for the economic viability of the state. Recent weather events and the impact of climate change has made the delivery of such essential services challenging. As a result, cost impacts to customers may likely increase if protections are not put in place to address such risk to public utilities. It is important to protect customers from cost increases caused by utilities' exposure to unlimited wildfire liability. The bill provides protection against unlimited risk that could hurt customers in the long run.

I support SB 897, SD3, HD2 and request that the committee pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

**SB-897-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 11:29:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2025 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ross Wilson Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i support SB 897 SD3 HD2 and mahalo for your kokua to pass this bill.