

Bill 22 Testimony



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HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday May 4, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

UluPono Initiative supports Bill 22 (2022), Relating to Building Benchmarking.

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the Council:

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; and better management of freshwater and waste.

UluPono supports Bill 22 (2022), which establishes a Better Buildings Benchmarking and Transparency Program ("Program") to further advance Honolulu's goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. The Program will establish a system for large commercial and multifamily buildings within the City and County of Honolulu to measure and report on their energy and water consumption annually.

UluPono is supportive of energy efficiency measures to lower our electricity consumption across the State. As proposed, the Program will provide a way to monitor progress toward the State's renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainability goals.¹ Additionally, the Program will help to reduce Hawai'i's high electricity costs, with anticipated electricity bill savings of \$282 million over the next decade. As Hawai'i's electricity costs are expected to rise in the near-term², UluPono sees the value of measuring and tracking energy usage as a first step to reduce energy consumption, lower overall electricity costs and eliminate energy "waste".

As Hawai'i's energy issues become increasingly complex and challenging, we appreciate the City and County of Honolulu's efforts to look at policies that reduce the overall energy demand, which in return will result in lower electricity bills, improve tenant comfort, reduce asthma rates, and increase overall productivity.

This bill is also aligned with recent Council legislation and efforts to expand energy efficiency

¹See Act 155, Sessions Laws of Hawai'i 2009 (Act 155), codified under 269-96 Hawai'i Revised Statutes, which established the State's energy efficiency goals into an Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (EEPS). As specified in HRS 269-96, the statewide EEPS goal is 4,300 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity savings by 2030.

²See Hawaiian Electric Newsroom, 'Driven up by Russian invasion, oil prices will push electric bills higher in coming months', March 10, 2022. <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/driven-up-by-russian-invasion-oil-prices-will-push-electric-bills-higher-in-coming-months>

initiatives throughout and promotes climate positive opportunities that support a more resilient Hawai'i. Meeting the State's clean energy goals will require everyone's commitment. As such, the County should establish policies, such as the Better Buildings Benchmarking and Transparency Program, to best support Hawai'i's clean energy future.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

***Note:** Ulupono Initiative values this measure before the Council today and appreciates the opportunity to testify; however, we are unable to attend in person due to concerns around COVID-19. Thank you for your understanding.