

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11th FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-2277 • EMAIL: resilientoahu@honolulu.gov • INTERNET: www.resilientoahu.org



RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

MATTHEW GONSER, AICP, CFM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER

August 23, 2022

The Honorable Brandon Elefante, Chair
and Members
Committee on Zoning and Planning
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Elefante and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Bill 46 (2022) Relating to Height Limits for Rooftop Structures

The Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR) supports Bill 46 (2022), which expands existing height limits to allow solar panels above existing rooftop equipment, and ensures that the area beneath rooftop solar panels not count towards floor area, to encourage creation of more rooftop gathering spaces. CCSR additionally supports Councilmember Elefante's Proposed CD1 to Bill 46.

Hawaiian Electric's Power Supply Improvement Plan assumes a need for three and half times more distributed solar photovoltaic (PV) power than currently exists¹, which means the vast majority of our rooftops will need solar PV in order to meet our climate and energy equity goals. Through past policy discussions, CCSR has heard from industry stakeholders about the challenges existing building owners face when attempting to make meaningful contributions to our collective climate change mitigation targets and bring costs savings to building occupants, including limitations on the ability to place solar panels on a building's rooftop when they exceed current height limits.

The proposed height limit amendments in Bill 46 are consistent with policies and objectives of the O'ahu General Plan, as well as both the City's O'ahu Resilience Strategy² and Climate Action Plan³, which further define the importance of rooftop

1 Hawaiian Electric. 2016 Power Supply Improvement Plan: <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/clean-energy-hawaii/integrated-grid-planning/power-supply-improvement-plan>.

2 Ola: O'ahu Resilience Strategy, Action 32: Deploy Sustainable Roof Systems to Manage Urban Heat and Rainfall: https://www.resilientoahu.org/s/Ola_Oahu_Resilience_Strategy-lfrm.pdf#page=49.

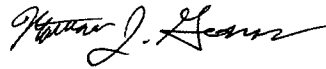
3 City and County of Honolulu Climate Action Plan, Strategy 7: Expand Renewable Energy Planning and Expedite Permitting: <https://www.resilientoahu.org/s/2020-2025-Climate-Action-Plan.pdf#page=78>.

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spaces in meeting our sustainability and community resilience goals. These amendments will encourage the installation of more, much needed rooftop solar PV, particularly for older buildings that may not have previously considered it prior to design and construction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments in support of Councilmember Elefante's Proposed CD1 to Bill 46 (2022). Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 768-2277 or via e-mail at resilientoahu@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by Gonser,
Matthew
Date: 2022.08.23 12:54:28
-10'00'

Matthew Gonser
Executive Director and
Chief Resilience Officer

APPROVED:



Michael D. Formby
Managing Director