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Thursday, June 3, 2004

## **Lingle signs renewable energy bill into law**

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### **By 2020, 20 percent of isle power must be from alternate sources**

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By Richard Borreca  
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Electric companies in Hawaii must get 20 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2020, under a bill signed into law yesterday by Gov. Linda Lingle.

The law was a campaign promise and part of Lingle's administrative package this year.

At a bill-signing ceremony yesterday at the Hawaiian Electric fuel cell testing center, Lingle said the original idea was to set out a series of goals, but that in the end, the goal became a requirement that the electric company get more power from alternative energy.

Jeff Mikulina, Hawaii Sierra Club executive director, praised the bill yesterday.

Lingle noted, however, that the new law won't work if both the electric company and the state don't cooperate.

"The bill has a lot of escape hatches, if everyone's intentions are not good," she said. "I am convinced the intentions of Hawaiian Electric are good and I am telling you that the intentions of the state are not just good, we are committed to seeing this come about."

Under the new law, electric companies have until next year to get 8 percent of their net electricity sales from renewable sources such as solar, wind and wave power.

That rate increases until 2020, when 20 percent of the energy must come from renewable sources.

An estimated 7 percent to 8 percent of Hawaii's electricity already comes from renewable sources, officials said.

Robbie Alm, a spokesman for Hawaiian Electric, said the bill would have its challenges, though, because the number of customers and the amount of electricity they use continues to rise, reducing the proportion from renewable energy.

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