



Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute Research Highlights

Energy Policy & Analysis Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum

OBJECTIVE AND SIGNIFICANCE: Through this project, HNEI supports and manages the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum (HEPF) in its mission to advance Hawai'i's energy transition through energy stakeholder engagement in fact-finding, analysis, information sharing, and advocacy that enables informed decisions.

BACKGROUND: The HEPF was established in 2002 by the University of Hawai'i's College of Social Sciences (CSS) Public Policies Center (PPC) as a collaborative energy planning and policy group consisting of Hawai'i's electric utilities, oil and synthetic natural gas suppliers, environmental and community groups, renewable energy industry, academia, and federal, state, and local government. In its first five years, the Forum was instrumental in promoting funding and needed reform for the State's utility regulatory agencies (i.e., the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the Division of Consumer Advocacy), and commissioned studies, reports, and briefings to raise the level of dialog concerning energy issues for legislators and the general public.

In past years, the Forum has sponsored and organized Legislative Briefings at the Capitol at the opening of each legislative session, an annual Hawai'i Clean Energy Day event, and sponsors programs to develop reliable information and educate and raise awareness in the community.

The Forum's mission is to share ideas and information, recommend and advocate policies and initiatives, and promote civic action to achieve a clean and sustainable energy future for Hawai'i. To this end, it conducts research, briefings, forums for informative and deliberative dialogue and policy development, annual legislative briefings, outreach, and public education.

PROJECT STATUS/RESULTS: Following the departure of HNEI faculty who managed the Hawai'i Energy Policy Forum (HEPF) activities through the 2023 legislative briefing, HEPF activities were temporarily paused. However, with the hiring of new faculty, these activities have resumed.

In the third quarter of 2024, the HEPF Steering Committee, consisting of over 23 members, convened to identify priority topics for the Forum. The Steering

Committee includes representatives from electric utilities, oil and natural gas suppliers, environmental and community groups, the renewable energy sector, academia, and various levels of government. This group plays a crucial role in setting the Forum's research and policy priorities for the coming year and will meet monthly to prioritize key research topics for HNEI faculty to focus on. Their input will support independent, unbiased research to help policymakers and industry leaders address critical issues facing our state.

In 2024, the HEPF took the following actions:

- Relaunched and reconvened the HEPF, focusing on increasing membership, reorganization, and new objectives for the Forum;
- Created a Steering Committee comprised of over 23 members from industry, state and local government, environmental groups, developers, academia, and utilities to direct HEPF activities for the coming year; and
- Developed a list of research topics and priorities for the upcoming year that the Steering Committee is currently vetting.



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