HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE, 2010  
STATE OF HAWAII

H.R. NO. 134

HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO DETERMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AND USING A SOLAR POWERED HIGHWAY LIGHTING SYSTEM ALONG HAWAII'S HIGHWAYS.

WHEREAS, Hawaii currently relies on imported oil for over 90 percent of its electrical generating power; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's unique global position makes its environment one of the most diverse and fragile environments in the world; and

WHEREAS, this same global positioning provides Hawaii with a diverse array of natural resources including continuous trade winds, vast ocean swells, brilliant sunshine, and intense heat from geothermal vents, which if properly harnessed, can supply our state with a large portion of its energy needs; and

WHEREAS, solar panels (arrays of photovoltaic cells) make use of renewable energy from the sun, and are a clean and environmentally sound means of converting the sun's light energy into electrical energy; and

WHEREAS, the placement of solar panels along state highways is an excellent means to provide electrical power for highway lighting systems or nearby residential neighborhoods, and will help promote the widespread use of solar energy; and

WHEREAS, the concept of generating solar power along roadsides for use to power highway lighting systems, as well as supply additional energy to an area's electrical grid, is not new with such systems existing in Europe for almost 20 years and the first solar highway project in the nation being launched in 2008 by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); and
WHEREAS, the initial success of Oregon's solar highway demonstration project, which supplied about 128,000 kWh per year, has stimulated ODOT to investigate other opportunities to increase solar highway project development, with many of these projects being considered in collaboration with Oregon's investor owned utilities; and

WHEREAS, solar highway projects offer transportation agencies a means of supplying clean energy for the powering of highway lighting systems, and may offer the benefits of reduced electrical costs; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's year-round sunshine makes it an ideal location to attempt to establish a solar highway project on our state's highways; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the Department of Transportation (DOT) is requested to determine the feasibility of establishing and using a solar powered highway lighting system along Hawaii's highways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED DOT is also requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including a cost-benefit analysis of the establishment and use of a solar powered highway lighting system in Hawaii and any necessary legislation, to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Department of Transportation.

OFFERED BY: