



All four Hawai'i counties formally join Drive Electric Hawai'i

HONOLULU June 13, 2018 – Hawai'i's four counties have formally joined Drive Electric Hawai'i (DEH) to promote electric transportation for a clean energy future goals, and the county mayors' commitment to eliminate fossil fuels from ground transportation across the state by 2045.

By signing DEH's memorandum of understanding, county leaders agreed to collaborate on electrification of ground transportation in Hawai'i as an essential part of achieving the state's clean energy goals. They join the founding coalition of public, private, and nonprofit organizations: Blue Planet Foundation; Hawaiian Electric, Hawaii Electric Light and Maui Electric Companies; Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative; Rocky Mountain Institute; Hawai'i State Energy Office, Department of Transportation, and Division of Consumer Advocacy; and Ulupono Initiative.

"We welcome the counties, their mayors, and sustainability coordinators, to Drive Electric Hawai'i," said Brennon Morioka, Hawaiian Electric general manager for electrification of transportation. "This is an affirmation and reminder that getting to a clean energy future for Hawai'i – in ground transportation as well as electricity – will require participation and cooperation of a range of individuals, private organization and government agencies."

In December, leaders of the four counties met onboard the traditional Hawaiian sailing canoe Hōkūle'a to pledge to eliminate all fossil fuels from both public and private ground transportation by 2045, aligning the ground transportation goals of each county with state goal of achieving 100 percent renewable energy generation by 2045. A seat at the DEH table provides the counties with a venue to advance that goal. Hawai'i's four counties became the first in the United States to announce such a commitment.

"The primary focus of the Drive Electric Hawai'i Initiative is to accelerate the cost-effective electrification of transportation in all passenger vehicles, public transit vehicles, and fleet vehicles..." the memorandum states. "This effort will play a meaningful part toward the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative objective of increasing energy security and self-sufficiency by eliminating Hawai'i's dependence on imported fuels for both electricity and ground transportation."

Statement of Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell:

"Our administration is committed to a 100 percent renewable future for O'ahu. All four of Hawai'i's mayors stood on Hōkūle'a with Nainoa Thompson in December of 2017 and pledged that the Mālama Honua voyage would continue with a commitment to eliminate fossil fuels in ground transportation for our islands. Being part of Drive Electric Hawai'i is an important part of this future, along with all-electric rail, increasing bike lanes, and ensuring that transit-oriented development allows people to avoid the expense of a car altogether."

Statement of Maui Mayor Alan Arakawa:

"This MOU reaffirms my goal of steering us away from fossil fuel use and carbon emissions in our ground transportation. Over time the county will also benefit from cost savings because the electric buses are easier to maintain and use much less fuel."

Statement of Kaua'i Mayor Bernard Carvalho:

"Vehicle electrification is an important part of a much broader effort we are making towards our clean transportation goals. Our strategy is to provide diverse transportation choices for Kaua'i residents and visitors – biking, walking, transit, car share, electric cars, electric bikes, you name it. From our coastal path to our complete streets projects, we're focused on achieving our 100 percent renewable transportation goals by 2045. This year, we are tripling the number of EVs in our fleet and adding public and fleet charging infrastructure on island. We are also testing electric busses and looking for ways to accelerate their adoption within our fleets. Joining Drive Electric Hawai'i is a great opportunity for us to work with partners statewide whose goals are aligned with ours on this important work."

With some 7,000 electric vehicles registered statewide, Hawai'i is second in the nation (after California) in per capita vehicles and a leader in charging facilities, including publicly accessible fast chargers. Despite relatively low gasoline prices, plug-in passenger vehicles registered in the state have increased at a higher percentage than gasoline and diesel vehicles.

Formed in 2016, Drive Electric Hawai'i seeks to promote the use of electric vehicles, reduce fossil-fuel-powered transportation, and enable more renewable energy through collaboration on education, promotion, advocacy, and infrastructure to make electric mobility easier for all. For more information, visit driveelectricchi.com.

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