



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Senator J. Kalani English
Statement
Property Assessed Clean Energy forum
03 March 2010

There is an important moment in the progress of life-changing ideas where the concept has entered the mainstream, but implementation remains outside the grasp of many who would otherwise provide the critical mass of society who could drive adoption forward. I believe that our community's desire for clean alternative energy sources has reached that point.

Most of us have recognized our individual responsibility to contribute to solutions. We possess the individual inspiration to take action. But we too often lack the individual capability to do all we can.

In order for our state to achieve our renewable energy goals, we will need broad residential participation. We know that the primary obstacle for homeowners to install clean energy systems or to pursue energy efficiency systems is the cost. Legislative efforts to support the Property Assessed Clean Energy movement by establishing a clean energy bond loan program can help bring that capability within the reach of many, many more in our community.

Right now, we have the legislative support it will take to move the bond program forward. In the current 2010 session, the State Senate and House of Representatives together introduced five bills to support PACE efforts by issuing general obligation bonds to finance the program. As is often the case, those have been winnowed down to one measure that we expect to cross over from the House to the Senate this week.

When the process works as it should, passing bills is not a matter of pride of authorship or pride of ownership. Rather, it is a matter of pride of purpose, the recognition that we will move the right bill at the right time, regardless of whether it originated in our chamber or across the Capitol rotunda in the House. Personally, I liked the version of the bill that came out of the Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment, of which I am vice-chair. However, I am equally convinced that we can work with the House version that will cross over, and I am committed to doing all that I can to move it forward and bring the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy to our state.

Just as passing the energy bond initiative will require the cooperation of my colleagues in the Senate and the House, implementing and managing the program that it creates will require the cooperation of state and county governments. That will require both a continued focus on carrying out the vital policy goals that the program represents and a continued commitment to improving the quality of life for Hawaii residents. I believe we can do that, and I am convinced that the energy bond initiative is the kind of forward-thinking, productive effort that brings out the best in our policy-makers and those on the front lines who make those policies a reality.

We have seen how well city and state resources can come together to truly serve our community. Just this past weekend, facing the threat of a tsunami, every level of our federal, state and county governments worked together seamlessly to address the situation before us. We need to view our state's drive toward environmental responsibility and energy independence in

the same terms: a situation that we cannot ignore and that—left unaddressed—could have devastating effects on so much that we hold dear.