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Statement from Hawaii Public Utilities Commission on COVID-19 Emergency

On March 13, 2020, the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission (“PUC” or “Commission”) issued an order initiating emergency procedures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and we have completed our transition to an all-electronic filing system and telework for all of our staff. These steps are necessary to protect employees while maintaining service to the public and oversight of regulated utilities. We are monitoring the PUC email (puc@hawaii.gov) and main phone line (808-586-2020), and updating the Commission’s website (<https://puc.hawaii.gov>). In addition, we continue to process regulatory filings at the Commission. As all parties adjust to these new procedures, please have patience as we troubleshoot any problems that arise.

During this emergency period, the Commission, in coordination with other State and Federal agencies, is closely monitoring the impact of the COVID-19 virus on essential utility services and customers. We expect this to be a highly dynamic environment where urgent needs are likely to develop on short notice. The Commission is also working through our extensive regulatory agenda for the approximately 1,800 regulated entities in Hawaii during this time. However, as the Commission responds to events during this emergency, in addition to the health and safety of our staff, we are prioritizing actions and requests in the following areas:

- *Ensure Reliable and Affordable Essential Services* – These are fundamentals to utility regulation and always a core focus of the Commission. In this emergency, we anticipate regulated entities may experience new and rapidly evolving challenges to maintaining reliable service. The PUC will prioritize urgent requests that threaten provision of essential services and balance the need for flexibility with transparency. In addition, as economic conditions continue to deteriorate, we expect utility customers will face increasing difficulties in paying their bills. Regulated entities are modifying their disconnection policies, which is an important initial step. The PUC encourages new proposals, requests, and partnerships that can help residents and businesses better manage their utility bills in this emergency.
- *Achieve Clean Energy and Climate Goals* – The Commission remains committed to the State’s aggressive goals and will continue to prioritize high impact regulatory activities that support achieving near-term targets and long-term transformation of

the energy system. These include policy investigations and procurement efforts that are currently underway. In addition, clean energy development can accelerate Hawaii's recovery from this crisis. Therefore, the Commission invites creative proposals and new programs that can support and expand clean energy job opportunities.

- *Support Economic Recovery from COVID-19 Emergency* – The Commission recognizes the severe economic disruption that is currently underway and likely to continue after the immediate crisis subsides. As noted above, the State's long-term energy transformation can help support near-term economic recovery and the Commission is encouraging opportunities where these important public policy objectives clearly align. Several ongoing initiatives and upcoming decisions will support clean energy development and economic recovery. The PUC will also prioritize new proposals and ideas for all regulated utilities that can promote recovery and are ready to implement.

The Commission is working diligently to maintain our services during this period. We will periodically update parties and the public on our operational status as this emergency continues. Please contact our office by email or phone, or check the Commission's website at <https://puc.hawaii.gov>, whenever you have any questions.