



STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM,
OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, STATE OF HAWAII
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Rachel Sprague

Draft MINUTES

State of Hawai'i Environmental Advisory Council
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 702, Honolulu, HI 96813
Tuesday, February 3, 2026, 1:00 PM

Members Present

Dawn Hegger-Nordblom, Jay Stone, Michele Lefebvre, Rachel Sprague

Members Absent

Mark Gordon

Staff

Mary Alice Evans (OPSD Director), Tom Eisen (Environmental Review Program [ERP] Staff), Daniel Pham (ERP Staff), Isabelle Sholes (Special Plans Branch [SPB] Staff)

Public Present

Emma Yuen (Department of Land and Natural Resources [DLNR]), Zachary King (DLNR), Andrea Suzuki (Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's [HHSC]), Eric Takamoto (Department of Water Supply [DWS]), Allan Simeon (DWS)

Note: **Bolded** items indicate text from the agenda.

Materials for this agenda and minutes of this meeting will be available at specific links indicated below or at:
<https://planning.hawaii.gov/erp/ec-meetings/>

1. Call to order, Roll Call, Introductions, Quorum

With a quorum of four members present, Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

2. Review and adoption of minutes from Tuesday, December 2, 2025 and Tuesday, January 6, 2026

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2025-12-02-Environmental-Advisory-Council-Minutes-draft.pdf

MOTION: Member Lefebvre moved to approve the December 2025 meeting minutes. Member Sprague seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or public testimony. The EAC voted to approve the motion (4-0-1).

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2026-01-06-Environmental-Advisory-Council-Minutes-draft.pdf

MOTION: Member Lefebvre moved to approve the January 2026 meeting minutes. Member Sprague seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or public testimony. The EAC voted to approve the motion (4-0-1).

3. Exemptions Committee

a. Proposed Environmental Assessment Exemption List Revisions for the Department of Land and Natural Resources

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2026-02-03-DLNR-Exemption-List-2026-01-27.pdf

The Council discussed the revisions made to the DLNR exemption list and had no questions or concerns. The Council appreciated the inclusion of definitions.

MOTION: Member Lefebvre moved to publish the DLNR exemption list for public review. Member Stone seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or public testimony. The EAC voted to approve the motion (4-0-1).

The Council discussed next steps with the DLNR staff.

b. Proposed Revised Environmental Assessment Exemption List Revisions Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2026-02-03-HHSC-Exemption-List-2026-01-22.pdf

The Council discussed the revisions made to the HHSC exemption list and had no questions or comments. The Council appreciated the removal of school facilities and reorganizing exemptions related to administrative real estate actions.

The Council requested that the document be identified as a "draft" prior to submission.

c. Proposed Environmental Assessment Exemption List Revisions for the County of Hawai'i, Department of Water Supply

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2026-02-03-COH-DWS-Agency-Exemption-List-2026-01-14.pdf

The County of Hawai'i Department of Water Supply presented their exemption list.

Type 3, Part 1, Number 8: The Council suggested moving to Part 3 to be consistent across the document.

Type 6, Part 2, Numbers 3, 4, & 6: The Council discussed the activities and suggested they be moved to Part 1 if the environmental effects are minimal.

Type 6, Part 1, Number 1: The Council asked for clarification on "bridging."

The Council discussed the term "slope stabilization" and its various uses throughout the list. The Council recommended reviewing the exemption list for consistent use of the term and making corrections as needed.

The Council recommended adding specificity to exemption notices as needed.

Type 5, Part 1, Number 5: The Council recommended including examples of study types for easier identification by those referring to the exemption list.

4. Legislative Committee

a. Recap of meeting with Senator Gabbard on January 20, 2026

Chair Hegger-Nordblom and Member Stone met with Senator Gabbard to discuss the state of the Council, including the number of Council members, the identification of additional members, and potential existing Council candidates.

Senator Gabbard named five bills that may be relevant to the Council. Bill topics included recycling, climate education, deposit beverage container recycling, and Red Hill. OPSD Director Evans informed the Council that these bills relate to a specific environmental goal, not specifically Chapter 343.

b. Environmental Review Program Staff briefing on bills being tracked by the Program

Director Evans announced that ERP is tracking eight bills that are relevant to Chapter 343. OPSD staff provides testimony on these bills when appropriate.

HB1979 (SB2834) relates to actions that propose the use for, or construction of, affordable housing projects or clean energy projects. The bill would shorten the challenge period for exemptions and the acceptance of EISs. The bill would also require judicial proceedings to be filed directly through the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court would also be prohibited from awarding attorney fees. ERP provided testimony on the bill.

HB1650 (SB2997) proposes the removal of historic sites in the Waikiki Special District as a trigger for environmental assessment. ERP provided testimony on the bill.

HB1543 (SB2329) specifies a time limit for the validity of a finding of no significant impact on environmental assessment or acceptance of a filed EIS statement. It would require the agency or applicant to commence a new environmental review process if the original acceptance expired. ERP provided testimony on the bill and DBEBT has concerns that it will delay valuable projects, including housing projects.

HB1544 (SB2322) proposes an expansion of the trigger related to historic sites. The bill has not been scheduled for a hearing.

GM614 nominates Mark Gordan as member of EAC. The Council will provide testimony.

Member Stone will be tracking the bills.

5. Review of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Repeal of Chapter 11-200.1 and Adoption of Chapter 15-20 Hawai'i Administrative Rules

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/Proposed-HAR-15-20-Rules-DRAFT-REVISIONS-3-Nov-2025.pdf

Tom Eisen discussed HB1543, regarding the expiration date on EAs and EISs. DLNR provided testimony on the bill, explaining that a process currently exists for agencies to determine if additional environmental

reviews are appropriate. DLNR recommended including criteria to help an agency determine if an existing environmental review is needed in the statutes.

Eisen suggested developing guidance for agencies to use when determining if additional environmental reviews are necessary.

6. Announcements

Next Meeting TBD

Member Lefebvre and Member Sprague will reach the end their respective terms in June 2026. Member Lefebvre will reapply for Boards and Commission. Member Sprague will be staying on the Council until the end of the year.

Ka Huli Ao is hosting a free Native Hawaiian Law Training from May 11 to May 12.

Chair Hegger-Nordblom thanked ERP's new staff and thanked former ERP staff Kayli Yoshioka for her service.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

7. Public Comments: Participants may provide comments about issues not on the agenda for possible inclusion on a future agenda.

There were no public comments.

8. Adjournment

Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom adjourned the meeting at 2:12 PM.

This meeting will be held via interactive conference technology (ICT) as authorized by Act 220, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2021 and Section 92-3.7, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS).

Members of the public are invited to participate through Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89508183160?pwd=SxxycTPx5aGQlThQJH8MwOqHg5W6BP.1>

Meeting ID: 895 0818 3160

Passcode: EAC

+16694449171,,89508183160# US

Persons may attend via interactive conference technology by coming, in person, to: Leiopapa 'A Kamehameha, 235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 702, Honolulu, HI 96813, telephone (808) 586-4185. See below for more information on entering government buildings.

INDIVIDUALS REQUIRING SPECIAL ASSISTANCE OR AUXILIARY AIDS OR SERVICES (e.g., sign language interpreter, captioner, computer-assisted note taker, wheel chair accessibility, parking designated for the disabled or other accommodation): Any individual needing an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, contact the Environmental Review Program office at 808-586-4185 and dbedt.opsd.erp@hawaii.gov as soon as possible, preferably at least three working days prior to the meeting. Requests made as early as possible have a greater likelihood of being fulfilled. Upon request, this notice is available in alternate/ accessible formats.

Note: The Committee may go into an executive session on an agenda item for one of the permitted purposes listed in Section 92-5(a), HRS, without noticing the executive session on the agenda where the executive

session was not anticipated in advance. The executive session may only be held, however, upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present, which must also be the majority of the members to which the board is entitled. The reason for holding the executive session shall be publicly announced and the vote of each member on the question of holding a meeting closed to the public shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the meeting. HRS Sections 92-4, 92-5(a) and 92-7(a).

Note: Public testimony will be accepted on each agenda item.

Members of the public may submit written testimony on any agenda item via e-mail to dbedt.opsd.erp@hawaii.gov or via postal mail to: Environmental Advisory Council, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, 235 S. Beretania St., Room 702, Honolulu, HI 96813. Please include the word "testimony", the agenda item number, and subject matter following the address line. All written testimony should be received no later than 9:00 am one business day prior to the meeting date so that it may be distributed to EAC members prior to the meeting. Testimony received after that time will be distributed to the EAC members at the meeting.

For Public Internet access: To view the meeting and provide live oral testimony during the meeting, please use the above link. You will be asked to enter your name in order to access the meeting as an attendee. The Committee requests that you enter your full name, but you may use a pseudonym or other identifier if you wish to remain anonymous. You will be asked for an email address. You may fill in this field with an entry in an email format, e.g., ***@**mail.com. As an attendee, your microphone will be automatically muted during the meeting unless you are providing testimony. The Chair will call for public testimony during the meeting. For each agenda item you wish to testify on, please click the Raise Hand button found on your Zoom screen. Committee staff will individually enable each testifier to unmute their microphone. When recognized by the Chair, please unmute your microphone before speaking and mute your microphone after you finish speaking in order to prevent audio feedback. When testifying, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization, if any, that you represent. Each testifier will be limited to two minutes of testimony per agenda item.

For Public Phone access: You may get audio-only access by calling the Zoom Phone Number listed above on this agenda. Upon dialing the number, you will be prompted to enter the Meeting ID which is also listed above on this agenda. After entering the Meeting ID, you will be asked to either enter your panelist number or wait to be admitted into the meeting. When the Chair asks for public testimony, you may indicate that you want to testify by entering "*" and then "9" on your phone's keypad. After entering "*" and then "9", a voice prompt will let you know that the host of the meeting has been notified. When recognized by the Chair, you may unmute yourself by pressing "*" and then "6" on your phone. A voice prompt will let you know that you are unmuted. Once you are finished speaking, please enter "*" and then "6" again to mute yourself.

For both internet and phone access, when testifying, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization, if any, that you represent. If you wish to remain anonymous, you may state this. *Each testifier may be limited to two minutes of testimony per agenda item.*

If connection is lost, the meeting may reconvene when either audiovisual communication or audio-only communication is established within thirty minutes. The public may access the reconvened meeting by clicking the link again or calling (808) 586-4185.

If it is not possible to reconvene the meeting within 30 minutes after an interruption, then check the agency's website for information as to whether the meeting will be continued to an alternative date and time, or the meeting may be terminated.