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HR 109

REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE LAND CORRIDOR NEEDED TO TRANSPORT
GEOTHERMAL POWER BETWEEN THE ISLANDS OF HAWAII, MAUI, AND OAHU

Statement for
House Committee on
Planning, Energy, and Environmental Protection
Public Hearing - March 10, 1988

By
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center

HR 109 directs the Governor to instruct the various concerned agencies and government entities to study the overland transportation facilities necessary for the conveyance of geothermal power to a designated export center.

Our statement on this resolution does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

While we concur with the intent of the resolution to encourage broad involvement in the decision making process with regard to the siting of overland transmission systems for geothermal energy, we believe that the sixth WHEREAS clause is somewhat inaccurate. While no specific route has as yet been designated, as is indicated in the clause, certainly routes have been and continue to be considered. It is our understanding that substantial efforts have been made by state agencies, counties, and the private developers to examine various overland routes, so the implication that no plan has been proposed seems inappropriate.

To better fulfill the intent of the resolution we suggest that several amendments to the resolves be considered.

First "BE IT RESOLVED" paragraph:

This resolve directs the governor to instruct the various concerned agencies, bureaus, and study commissions to immediately begin work on the plans for the overland transportation facilities needed to convey geothermal power. No specific responsibility for the production of the

plan is provided. The Department of Planning and Economic Development has been a lead agency along with input from the Department of Land and Natural Resources. The designation of a single lead agency to assume responsibility for the requested coordination of input from other sources and for the production of the requested plan would reduce duplication of efforts and assure accountability.

Second and Fifth BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED paragraphs:

The second resolve directs that the transport plan clearly specify the land corridor that will be developed for this transport of power on any island over which the line will pass and the fifth resolve directs that these plans be completed by the end of this calendar year, 1988.

It seems most unlikely that the specific land corridors over each of the islands potentially involved in geothermal power transport can be identified by the end of this calendar year. There are a multitude of issues that must be given consideration in the designation of such a route. Such issues include identification and evaluation of the specific physical-technical requirements and limitations, environmental and natural resource considerations, social and community concerns, and economics. To direct that the plan or plans be completed in 10 months seems likely to jeopardize the quality of the plans and the intent of this resolution to encourage broad input into the development of the plans.

We suggest that amendment of HR 109 be considered to reflect the need for timely and broad coordination of planning of the overland transportation routes for geothermal power, the designation of a lead agency to oversee such broad coordination and to assume responsibility for documentation of plans, and that a report on the progress of these plans be submitted to interested parties by the end of the calendar year.