



# CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT

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## Executive Director's Message

By Dean Nishina

As the new fiscal year begins, our office continues to work diligently on numerous application proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). That includes phase two of the ongoing Performance-Based Regulation docket that you can learn more about it on page 4.

There have been a number of energy-related bills the Consumer Advocate's (CA) office has been tracking and testifying that have recently been signed into law. For a short list of some of those bills, have a look on page 3 of this newsletter.

The PUC ruled on the application for Sprint and T-Mobile to merge. The CA initially recommended to the PUC that it deny the companies' request to merge. Also, the Hawaii Attorney General joined a multi-state lawsuit against the merger between the two telecommunication companies. Read more about it on page 2.

### Energy Quick Quiz

Electrical energy can be produced from:

- a. Mechanical energy
- b. Chemical energy
- c. Radiant energy
- d. All of the above

See if you got the answer correct on page 4.



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Staff members from DCA and the PUC tour the Kona Water Service Company plant on May 30.

### In This Issue

- Sprint-T-Mobile merger
- Dealing with power outages
- HECO's new EV charging station
- Energy-related bills signed into law
- Performance-based regulation Phase 2



T-Mobile US Inc. and Sprint Corporation are the third and fourth largest mobile wireless networks in the U.S.

## PUC approves request for Sprint and T-Mobile to merge

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) approved the merger transaction that will result in Sprint Communications becoming indirect wholly owned subsidiary of T-Mobile USA.

The Consumer Advocate (CA), in its statement of position, recommended the PUC deny T-Mobile and Sprint's request for a merger transaction between the two companies. The CA noted the impact of the proposed merger on Hawaii's prices and telecommunications services was unclear and it cannot be presumed that competition serves the same purpose as public interest regulation. Later, however, after the applicants' commitments to accelerate 5G roll-out in Hawaii, the CA entered into a settlement.

*Docket No. 2018-0157*

## Hawaii joins multi-state lawsuit to stop Sprint-T-Mobile merger

Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors announced in June that Hawaii has joined 13 other states in filing a multi-state lawsuit to halt the proposed merger of telecom giants T-Mobile and Sprint. The complaint alleges that the merger of two of the four largest national mobile network operators would deprive consumers of the benefits of competition and drive up prices for cellphone services.

"The proposed merger transaction raises significant antitrust concerns, which could adversely affect a consumer service that has become a necessary part of modern life," said Attorney General Connors.

***PUC Docket Numbers are included in these articles for further, in depth reading. PUC public filings are accessible online via the PUC's Document Management System (DMS). Visit: <http://dms.puc.hawaii.gov/dms>***

## Dealing with Power Outages

A power outage is when the electrical power goes out unexpectedly. Power outages can last a few minutes to a few days depending on the severity of event that cause them. Below are a few helpful tips during a power outage:

- Keep freezers and refrigerators closed.
- Only use generators outdoors and away from windows.
- Do not use a gas stove to heat your home.
- Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.
- Have alternate plans for refrigerating medicines or using power-dependent medical devices.
- If safe, go to an alternative location for heat and cooling.
- Check on your neighbors.



Source: Ready.gov (Department of Homeland Security)

## HECO adds EV fast charging station in Haleiwa

Hawaiian Electric Company opened its 10th electric vehicle fast charger on Oahu in the Haleiwa Town Center, 66-145 Kamehameha Highway.

The new charger helps fill a gap between Central and Windward Oahu and the North Shore and should help relieve some "range anxiety" by EV drivers concerned about the distance.

The Haleiwa fast charger supports CHAdeMO (used mostly by EVs like the Nissan Leaf, Mitsubishi i-MiEV and Kia Soul EV) and CCS (used by American and European EVs like the BMW i3 and as an option on the Chevy Bolt.). It will offer charging at the same time-of-use rate as other utility fast chargers, with lowest rates from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For locations and prices, visit [hawaiianelectric.com/GOEV](http://hawaiianelectric.com/GOEV). To locate Level 2 chargers across the islands, visit [plugshare.com](http://plugshare.com).



Photo courtesy: HECO.



Photo courtesy: Governor David Y. Ige Flickr. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/govhawaii/48139675036/in/album-72157709280172008/>

## Governor signs energy-related bills into law

Governor David Ige recently signed a number of energy-related bills, enacting them into law. The Consumer Advocate testified in numerous bills advocating a position for consumers as a whole.

The following is a short list of energy- and utility- related bills that are now acts in the State of Hawaii:

Bill	Relating to	Act
SB 1241	Energy Data	92
HB 556	Energy Efficiency	141
HB 1585	Environment	142
SB 661	Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles	143
HB 401	Contracting for Public Facilities	144
HB 560	Energy Training	145
HB 1558	Sustainability	146
HB 452	Preferential Electricity Rates for Protected Agriculture	203
HB 1305	Mutual Assistant Agreement	214
SB 991	Telecommunications	229
SB 1442	Public Utilities Commission	239

# PUC initiates second phase of performance-based regulation (PBR) investigation

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has convened the next phase PBR. The PUC oversaw the completion of Phase 1, which examined the current regulatory framework to identify specific areas of focus for further PBR development and to identify key goals and outcomes.

Phase 2 will focus on the development of a detailed framework of a regulatory process meant to better encourage the utilities to achieve state goals, such as renewable energy adoptions, and the reduction of greenhouse gases, while still keeping the rates affordable. This process will look at new revenue adjustment mechanisms, performance incentive mechanisms, and other regulatory processes to reward or penalize the utility based on their progress.

Guiding principles to inform the development of PBR mechanisms in Phase 2 include: (1) a customer-centric approach, (2) administrative efficiency, and (3) utility financial integrity.

A procedural schedule has been established for Phase 2 in Order No. 36388 of this docket.

*Docket No. 2018-0088*

## Upcoming Dates of Interest



- **Aug 9-11: BIA Summer Home Building & Remodeling Show** held at Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall. DCA will be at the DCCA booth.

- **Aug 16: Statehood Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).



- **Sep 2: Labor Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).

*Energy Quick Quiz Answer: d. all of the above*

*Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Energy Kids*

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