



# Star Advertiser

## 28 groups to take part in PUC review

The wide variety of intervenors regarding the proposed sale “is in the public interest,” the Public Utilities Commission says

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The Public Utilities Commission is giving a seat at the table to all 28 interested parties who applied to be part of the agency’s decision on whether to approve the sale of Hawaiian Electric Industries to Juno Beach, Fla.-based NextEra Energy Inc.

The state Energy Department, Hawaii Gas, solar lobbying groups and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 were some of the groups approved by the PUC in an order Monday.

HEI, parent company for the state’s three major utilities, and NextEra Energy filed a joint application with the PUC on Jan. 29, asking for approval of the \$4.3 billion sale.

As intervenors in the application, the groups can pose questions and file information requests, to which Next-Era and HEI are required to respond.

The PUC said the variety of groups involved would better prepare the commission for making its decision about the sale.

“The commission finds that it is in the public interest to ensure that a broad spectrum of interests are represented in the proceeding,” the PUC said in the order.

The commission granted intervenor status to Renewable Energy Action Coalition of Hawaii, Hawaii Island Energy Co-op, Kauai Island Energy Co-op, Hawaii Water Service Co., Ka Lei Maile Alii Hawaiian Civic Club, Maui County, Hawaii Solar Energy Association, Friends of Lanai, Puna Pono Alliance, Hawaii County, Ulu-pono Initiative, AES Hawaii, Life of the Land, Blue Planet Foundation, SunPower Corp., Tawhiri Power, Hawaii PV Coalition, Paniolo Power Co., Hawaii Renewable Energy Alliance, SunEdison LLC, the state Office of Planning, Sierra Club, Hina Power Corp. and the Honolulu Board of Water Supply.

The PUC also conditionally approved the Alliance for Solar Choice with the requirement that the group obtain an attorney who passed the Hawaii bar.

HEI and NextEra opposed giving intervenor status to all of the groups except the state Energy Department, the state Office of Planning, and Hawaii and Maui counties.

The deadline for interested groups to file was Feb. 18.

The decision came sooner than expected, said Henry Curtis, director of Life of the Land, adding that a PUC response to a request to intervene usually takes from a month to more than a year.

Marco Mangelsdorf, spokesman for the newly formed Hawaii Island Energy Co-op, said he was happy to see such a variety of interested parties approved.

“This is definitely good news as far as the Hawaii PUC welcoming a diversity of input on this set of critical issues presented in the HEI-NextEra docket. We are pleased to get a seat at the table to represent the Big Island’s interests in these proceedings,” Mangelsdorf said.

The PUC could take a year to 18 months to rule on the proposed purchase, PUC Chairman Randy Iwase said last month.