

State News for NSPE Members

Powering Past Coal on Oahu

Governor David Ige has established a new task force to help move Oahu's renewable projects along in a timelier manner, according to a *Star Advertiser* report.

The "Powering Past Coal Task Force," which Ige [established by executive order](#) on March 30, is not meant to be a policy-making body or charged with making administrative rule changes. Nor does it replace the independent review of participating agencies for permitting or regulation.

The purpose of the task force, according to the order, is to bring stakeholders together to "timely facilitate, coordinate, and align project development and reviews" by Hawaiian Electric, state and county agencies of renewable projects replacing coal.

[Read more.](#)

First Fleet of State Electric Vehicles Arrive on the Scene

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) makes a step forward in electrification of its light duty fleet with the arrival of the first electric vehicles (EVs) procured through the state's EV as a service contract.

The EV as a service contract allows HDOT and other interested state and county agencies to procure EVs and charging infrastructure on a per mile cost basis. Use of this service contract is expected to save approximately 75% in vehicle maintenance over the lifespan of the vehicle and an average of \$287 per vehicle per year in fuel costs.

On April 13, the first of nine EVs to serve as vehicle replacements was delivered to state highways. One EV was picked up by the Hawaii State Energy Office through the contract as well. By the end of May HDOT will replace an additional 34 internal

combustion engine vehicles with EVs.



"We were definitely excited to begin the service contract with Sustainability Partners as converting our aging vehicles to EVs is another way HDOT is saving money and working towards the State's goal of reducing fuel consumption in ground transportation 70% by 2030," said Hawaii Department of Transportation Deputy Director for Highways Ed Sniffen. "Public and private ground transportation is a huge contributor to carbon dioxide emissions. This service contract, that is available to all state and county agencies, could expedite government fleet conversions and help lead the way for increased private adoption of EV."

[Learn more.](#)

UH Professors Propose Plans to Redesign Hawaii's Infrastructure

It's a race against time as University of Hawaii professors propose radical changes to prepare for rising ocean levels.

"We believe on Oahu and in Honolulu, there is an opportunity to plan for these things before a disaster hits," said Judith Stilgenbauer, principal investigator and professor at UH Manoa's School of Architecture. "So, anticipating climate change rather than thinking of it as post disaster recovery, planning and design."

Stilgenbauer, her team and students conducted a two-year study that investigated the past, present and future of Honolulu's South Shore, according to the *Hawaii News Now* article. The [study](#) includes maps from the past 100 years that show just how much Honolulu has pushed the shoreline seaward by filling the land.

"And now the ocean is coming back and sort of reclaiming this land, and we need to prepare for that. We can't just give up," said Dr. Chip Fletcher, associate dean of Academic Affairs of the School of Ocean, Earth Science and Technology at UH Manoa.

[Read more.](#)

State Licensing Board Meeting

The Hawaii Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors & Landscape Architects will host its next meeting via Zoom on **Thursday, April 29** from 9a.m.-11:30 a.m.

A Zoom link and agenda will be provided prior to the meeting. Access [the licensing board website](#) for more information.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#).

We Need Your Input on Proposed Changes to Engineers' Creed

The [Engineers' Creed Survey](#) will be open until 9:00 pm EDT on April 23. As outlined in previous communications, NSPE is collecting feedback on proposed modifications to update outdated language without altering the philosophical underpinnings of the organization. The hope is that the use of broad, inclusive language will help all engineers within our organization incorporate their personal beliefs and experiences to better the profession.

Thank you to members who have already completed the survey. Please note: If you previously completed the survey, you will not be able to take it again.

If you have not had a chance to provide feedback, we encourage you to do so. Your input is important.

Thank you for your assistance, and thank you for being a member of NSPE.

Watch NSPE's New YouTube Vlog on Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Episode 3 of NSPE's new [Committee Corner](#) vlog covers the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and the March 24 markup of S.914 - the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021.

Ask Your Senators to Back Drinking and Wastewater Infrastructure

Professional Engineers play an integral role in the development and maintenance

of the nation's infrastructure, including infrastructure that provides clean drinking water and safe wastewater treatment.

Every community in the United States needs clean drinking water, and wastewater treatment facilities that keep the community clean and safe. The Senate is expected to vote this week on a bill to fund these vital systems.

[Ask Your Senators to Vote "Yes" on S.914](#)

S. 914, The Drinking and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021, ensures that communities have both, by providing much-needed funding for our drinking and wastewater systems. The bill authorizes funding for the Safe Drinking Water Act programs, and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. It also establishes programs that direct services and funding to low-income and under-served communities, and allocates money to respond to cyber threats. Share your engineering expertise with your lawmakers, and ask them to support this crucial funding.

S. 914 was voted out of the Senate Environment and Public Works committee with unanimous, bipartisan support. And in a press release dated April 15th, Majority Leader Schumer said the bill could be voted on by the full Senate as early as this week.

[Ask Your Senators to Vote "Yes" on S.914](#)

Please take a moment to contact your Senators, express your support, and ask them to vote "yes" on S. 914.

Society Backs House Bills on Engineering Education and 529 Savings Plans

NSPE supports the WORKER Act ([H.R. 594](#)), which establishes a \$20 million grant program to make specialized engineering programs available in K–12 schools. The bill was introduced by Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) and Rep. Susan Wild (D-PA) to improve worker training, retention, and advancement.

The grants will assist with teaching students the overall analytical and experimental approaches used in engineering and engineering technology; and increase participation of under-represented student groups in the engineering and engineering technology pipeline.

NSPE continues to advocate for passage of the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act ([H.R. 2171](#)). This legislation was successfully reintroduced by Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) with support from the Professional Certification

Coalition. The bill allows the beneficiaries of tax-advantaged 529 education savings plans to pay the costs associated with obtaining or maintaining postsecondary credentials—including professional licensing and private certification—with funds from their plan. As introduced, the legislation supports both new and existing PE licenses and NICET certifications. A companion bill, [S. 905](#) , was introduced by Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

NSPE will work with the Professional Certification Coalition leadership to help move these bills through the legislative process.

Members can view and participate in advocacy campaigns at the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#) .

Scammers Target Licensed Professionals

Scammers typically pose as someone from your bank, the IRS, or tech-support services to steal sensitive information and money, but these bad actors have added a twist to their schemes. Now, authorities are warning professional licensees that they are becoming prime targets for fraud.

In March, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge issued a fraud alert to licensees and state licensing boards. Scammers are calling license holders with claims that their licenses are under investigation and at risk of being suspended if they don't make an immediate payment. The license holder's caller ID may even display the legitimate licensing office's phone number that has been spoofed by the scam callers.

These latest scams have increased for nurses and other licensed medical professionals, but they aren't limited to a particular state, region, or profession. In February, the Maryland Department of Labor issued an alert about phishing emails targeting licensees. The Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs warned licensees in July 2020 about individuals posing as state officials or law enforcement agents to intimidate potential victims into divulging personal information. And as early as 2019, the California Department of Consumer Affairs issued a fraud scheme alert to licensees of the agency's boards and bureaus, including the board that licenses design professionals.

Take Advantage of NSPE's Spring Webinars

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Throughout April and May, NSPE will host a webinar every Wednesday starting at 2 p.m. EST. The webinars are available to members for \$99 (\$129 for nonmembers) and will include an online discussion and a 10-question quiz for the sessions to qualify for continuing education credit.

April 28: [Turn Your Ideas Into Gold - A Guide to Intellectual Property](#)

May 5: [Engineering Ethics: Canon IV - Fidelity to Employers/Clients](#)

May 12: [Engineering Leadership Success By Design - Emotional Intelligence and Neuroscience as Career Differentiators](#)

May 19: [Energy Storage: The Other Half of Renewable Energies](#)

May 26: [Catapult Your Win Rate by 50%](#)

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