

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the townhall meeting at Niu Valley Middle School Cafeteria last week. While there was frustration expressed by attendees, we thought it presented a good forum for the community to express their concerns regarding recent power outages in East Honolulu. Hawaiian Electric acknowledges that experiencing repeated outages is disruptive to daily life, and we recognize that the lack of timely, useful information during an outage only adds to that frustration. Recent storms – counting four since March 2026 have added to the frustration and outage impacts.

We wanted to inform you that Hawaiian Electric has set up a special team in Operations to focus on near-term and long-term solutions to improve the reliability and resilience of the East Honolulu electrical system. In parallel, Hawaiian Electric is working with community leaders in East Honolulu to form an advisory group to help guide our work toward solutions to improve reliability and resilience from Kahala to Hawaii Kai.

While we could not detail all the ongoing work that we are continuously doing in the area at the meeting, we wanted to share that several efforts are already underway to address the underlying causes of outages and strengthen the system:

- Replacing aging underground infrastructure: Engineers are designing and planning projects to replace direct-buried cables with new cables in protective underground casing (conduit). Two projects are currently in the planning stage, with completion anticipated by 2027. We are also monitoring cable failures on this circuit to determine whether additional projects are warranted.
- Reducing the impact of enhanced safety settings: Projects are underway to sectionalize portions of the circuit so that enhanced safety settings affect a smaller area when they are

activated. These settings are designed to quickly shut off power when a disruption is detected, reducing the risk that energized lines or sparks could reach the ground. While these protections are important for public safety and wildfire prevention, they can also result in more frequent disturbances under certain conditions.

- Investigating overhead-line faults: A project is underway to identify the causes of faults occurring on overhead line sections and to perform work intended to improve reliability in those areas.
- Vegetation management: Our vegetation management teams are continuing to perform additional work this year to maintain appropriate clearance between trees and electrical equipment. Certified arborists and vegetation crews are inspecting and maintaining trees near power lines, with wildfire mitigation efforts prioritized in East Honolulu. This includes pruning or removing dead, diseased, and high-risk trees, in coordination with public and private landowners where work involves easements and rights-of-way.
- Proactive hazard-tree mitigation: A new mid-cycle assessment program is being used to identify and address hazard trees and vegetation encroachment in high-risk and prioritized medium-risk areas, helping reduce the potential for tree-to-powerline contact and ignition.
- Enhanced inspections and grid hardening: Drones are being used to inspect electrical infrastructure in identified wildfire-risk areas, while crews continue to inspect and replace poles, powerlines, and other equipment throughout East Honolulu. Additional transmission, sub-transmission, and distribution upgrades are also planned to strengthen the system and reduce system-related hazards.
- Improved protection and response: Sparkless fuses and lightning arrestors have been installed in East Honolulu to reduce ignition risk and protect equipment from lightning. Single-phase fault indicators are also being deployed to help crews locate disturbances more quickly. Protective

devices have been programmed to “fast trip” when faults are detected, with automatic reclosing blocked in situations where those protections are required. Depending on conditions, crews may also need to visually inspect an area before restoring power following a disruption.

- Improved situational awareness: Weather stations are providing real-time fire-weather information, and artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted camera stations are supporting earlier identification of potential ignitions.

These projects are not intended simply as short-term responses to individual outages. They are part of a broader effort to address aging infrastructure, improve the reliability and resilience of the East Honolulu system, reduce wildfire risk, and improve our ability to detect, respond to, and restore power following disruptions.

We recognize that hearing about projects underway does not make it any less frustrating when your power goes out again. We have more work to do, both in strengthening the infrastructure and in communicating with customers when service interruptions occur. The community requests for clearer, more direct communication is important, and we are sharing those concerns with our leadership team.

Also, it is important for the community to know that our Contact Center is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by local Hawaii based staff; however, during storms, wait times may increase depending on the severity of the event and the number of customers seeking assistance.

We appreciate your patience, and we are sincerely sorry for the repeated disruptions and the frustration felt by you and your constituents.