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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Moloka'i pilot project may open island grids to more rooftop solar**

**HONOLULU, March 4, 2016** – In partnership with E-Gear LLC, the Hawaiian Electric Companies will launch a pilot program designed to allow more customers to interconnect rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems on Moloka'i. The level of PV systems already installed or approved for installation on the island's small electric grid is among the highest in the islands. As a result, new PV applications on Moloka'i have experienced delays as solutions are sought to address reliability and safety issues raised in technical reviews.

E-Gear will install their specialized Energy Management Control (EMC) and storage technology, which will be paid for by the utility, which will enable 10 PV systems waiting to be installed to move forward. This equipment can be monitored and controlled by utility system operators, potentially improving the interaction of rooftop PV systems with the grid and reducing the chance these systems will undermine reliable service and power quality for all Moloka'i customers. The Hawaiian Electric Companies will evaluate the performance of these systems and determine whether similar systems can be used to integrate more solar power in areas with high concentrations of rooftop PV systems.

E-Gear is currently evaluating their EMC-equipped PV systems -- designed to minimize the grid impact of rooftop PV systems on a small, highly saturated grid like Moloka'i's -- in partnership with the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI).

"We're very proud to be a Hawai'i company developing hi-tech solutions right here in Hawai'i," said E-Gear co-founder and managing partner, Chris DeBone. "Our advanced edge-of-grid solutions have been developed and tested over the past two years to bridge a gap between Hawai'i's 100 percent renewables goal and a grid designed in a pre-PV era."

"Working with our partners in the PV industry, we can address these technical challenges and offer our customers more options," said Jim Alberts, Hawaiian Electric senior vice president of customer service. "This pilot project on Moloka'i is an example of the kinds of innovative solutions that can benefit all islands and help us reach our renewable energy goals."

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