

Clarence T.C. Ching "Inspire in Hawaii" Writing Contest

Five years ago my grandparents were fed up. They were tired of paying high electric bills every month. Bills averaged between \$250-\$300 a month. After researching options, my grandfather decided to invest in a photovoltaic system. It changed our lives.

In Hawaii everything seems to cost more. Electricity is definitely one of those things. We need to find ways to make it more affordable for people in our community. I would like to propose building photovoltaic farms in order to supply Hawaii with low cost electricity.

If we do not do anything about the high cost of electricity now, the cost is going to keep going higher and higher. Electricity is used to cook and clean our homes, power our lights and electronics and make our lives better. Without electricity, we would not be able to do any of that and we would be lost. Our streets would be dark at night and not safe. We would not be able to use environment safe electric cars either.

The 24 panel photovoltaic system that my grandfather used cost \$24,000 at the time. He received \$14,000 in tax refunds. When you think about it, the system only cost him \$10,000. Every month his electric bill is now under fifteen dollars. That means in the 60 months that he has had his system, he has saved \$17,100 in electric costs and that has more than paid for the system that he bought!

When the pineapple companies shut down in Hawaii, they left their land open. Because that land is far from town not a lot of people want to live out there. The land is still not being used. If we used that land to create photovoltaic farms to produce electricity for our state, the savings could be really big.

Mr. Ching's vision for Hawaii was to make it a place where families could live and where people could have homes and better lives than in other places. In the story "A Prophecy Fulfilled", Mr. Ching is a visionary, someone who was a doer for the community. He created affordable places to live and has a foundation that helps to support schools like ours. He took care of the community with St. Francis Hospital where my grandfather happened to receive treatment for his prostate cancer eight years ago. I believe my idea for the photovoltaic farm would be an idea that Mr. Ching would have liked because this idea is working to help families be able to afford to live here. He would not want anyone in our community to have to leave our

state because the high cost of living that includes electricity makes it hard for families to stay here.

If our state acts now, we can save our community. Families would not have to leave because they cannot afford to live here. Tourism would increase because the cost of rooms would be cheaper and malls would be nicer because they wouldn't have to spend their profits on electricity. We can use the land that the pineapple companies left behind. We could get help from solar companies to help us. We could help electric companies provide clean energy.

People want to save money. They want to use their money to go on vacation, support their families and lead interesting, fun lives. We want to help families save so that they don't have to move away from Hawaii. Let's build photovoltaic farms and save Hawaii.