

SB 2640

RELATING TO WASTEWATER

Description:

Provides that a county may not prohibit, based upon proximity to a county sewer system, the use of an otherwise authorized individual wastewater system as an on-site means of wastewater disposal in lieu of wastewater treatment works.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
WAS 12-43

February 27, 2012

The Honorable Will Espero, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Public Safety,
Government Operations, and Military Affairs
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
and Members of the Committee on
Energy and Environment
State Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Espero, Chair Gabbard, and Members:

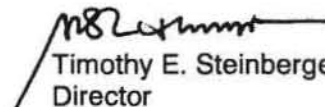
Subject: Senate Bill 2640, Relating to Wastewater

The City and County of Honolulu's Department of Environmental Services opposes Senate Bill (SB) 2640, Relating to Wastewater.

SB 2640 proposes that a county may not prohibit, based upon proximity to a county sewer system, the use of otherwise authorized individual wastewater systems as an on-site means of wastewater disposal in lieu of wastewater treatment works. While on-site means of wastewater disposal have significant value in areas that are not sewered when a county and its taxpayers or rate payers have invested in the infrastructure to provide an appropriate system to protect the general public health and the environment, it is not appropriate for selected customers, whom the system was designed to serve, to not participate in and connect to that public infrastructure.

The Department of Environmental Services respectfully requests that the Committee not pass SB 2640, Relating to Wastewater.

Sincerely,


Timothy E. Steinberger, P.E.
Director

From: Kauwila Hanchett [kxmsteersman@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:05 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: Lindy Helm; Noelani Lee
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 2640

Welina me ke Aloha,

Ka Honua Momona International is in strong support of SB 2640, introduced by Senator Maile Shimabukuro, which would allow compost toilets and septic tanks to be used by eliminating the requirement to hook into sewer lines. As described in the bill: "Provides that a county may not prohibit, based upon proximity to a county sewer system, the use of an otherwise authorized wastewater system as an on-site means of wastewater disposal in lieu of wastewater treatment works."

As we try to address Hawaii's many environmental challenges; including severe water shortages, sewage spills and the consequent threat to environmental and human health, we need to actively seek out better alternatives to dealing with human waste. It has been proven that human waste can be safely composted with no risk to human or environmental health through the use of composting toilets. The technology for these systems have greatly improved over time. Compost toilets are now user-friendly, virtually odorless, and easy to maintain. Also composting toilets generate zero sewage, instead creating a valuable, nutrient-rich end product sometimes referred to as "humanure". Changing the waste mentality will be paramount as we move forward to a better Hawaii.

Furthermore, composting toilets offer perhaps the only viable alternative for environmentally and culturally sensitive sites where extensive excavation must be avoided. We would like to urge the Committees on Public Safety and Energy and Environment to pass SB2640 and continue to work on finding alternative solutions to Hawaii's environmental and human health concerns.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Kauwila Hanchett

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Kauwila Hanchett
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Ka Honua Momona (KHM) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, based on the island of Molokai. KHM's mission is to be a model of sustainability *mauka a makai* (from the mountains to the sea). We seek to foster connections between all aspects of the island ecosystem, including the people and culture, and we firmly believe that Molokai can again return to abundance and become a self-sufficient model for all nations. Our primary long-term goals are to: 1) Develop indigenous education systems by revitalizing natural and cultural resources; 2) Perpetuate traditional knowledge and stewardship while evolving with modern technology. Our organization is blessed with a local Board of Directors, a small dedicated staff, an awesome core team of volunteers, and many many dedicated community members who have helped keep our vision alive!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:58 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: jacksharpsteen@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2640 on 2/28/2012 2:30:00 PM

Testimony for PGM/ENE 2/28/2012 2:30:00 PM SB2640

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: JACK SHARPSTEEN
Organization: HONSON CO. INC.
E-mail: jacksharpsteen@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments:

Jack Sharpsteen with Honson Co. Inc., I have been in the business selling compost waste treatment systems here in Hawaii for 30 years, both to the homeowner, State agencies and National Parks. Sun Mar and Clivus Multrum composters do have the National Sanitation Foundation Standard #41, this foundation tests the compost units and verifies that the composters do what the manufacture claims. I support SB 2640, as an example, I live on the North Shore/Pupukea, in order to obtain a building permit, the homeowner needs to convert their cesspool to a septic system. This is quite an expense, and if a centralized sewage system were to be built here, all homeowners would be required to abandon their present systems (that work fine) and hook up, again at great expense. But if one could keep their present system or put in a composting system, this seems like the best way to go. Just remember, a composting system either uses no water or a pint of water to flush. With a normal flush toilet one is combining a pint of waste with 2-3 gallons of water, and now we have 3 gallons of waste that must be treated. With a composting system, 95% of that waste is converted into carbon dioxide and water vapor.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2012 9:02 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2640 on 2/28/2012 2:30:00 PM

Testimony for PGM/ENE 2/28/2012 2:30:00 PM SB2640

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brenda Kosky
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/27/2012

Comments: