

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in OPPOSITION to H.B. 1507**  
**RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

REPRESENTATIVE Chris Lee, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
Hearing Date: February 10, 2015                      Room Number: 325  
Time: 8:30 a.m.

1    **Fiscal Implications:** Administrative time and cost of coordinating activities of the proposed working  
2    group and development of administrative rules.

3    **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health respectfully opposes this measure.

4    This bill proposes to establish uniform minimum statewide standards for the prohibition of distribution  
5    of single use plastic bags at retail points of sale, mandates the department to establish administrative  
6    rules, and tasks the department to establish a working group to study methods to reduce the use of all  
7    disposable bags.

8    Recognizing that all four counties have ordinances in place prohibiting the distribution of single use  
9    plastic bags at many retail points of sale, establishing minimum statewide standards, creating state  
10    administrative rules, and convening a working group would duplicate county ordinance and is therefore  
11    unnecessary.

12    Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

13    **Offered Amendments:** None

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**HB1507**  
**RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**  
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

February 10, 2015

8:30 a.m.

Conference Room 325

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment will recommend to the OHA Board of Trustees a position of **SUPPORT** for HB1507, which seeks to mitigate the impacts of plastic bags on our natural and cultural resources, as well as on our municipal waste stream.

Plastic debris, including plastic bags, substantially impact natural and cultural resources of particular significance in Hawaiian culture and tradition. For example, the ingestion of plastic debris by seabirds, such as mōlī, as well as by endangered honu, is a well-documented phenomenon that may have highly injurious or even fatal consequences.<sup>i</sup> Such species hold special significance in Hawaiian culture and traditions: the cultural importance of seabirds includes their role in navigation, meteorology, craftwork, and in their spiritual and symbolic significance;<sup>ii</sup> likewise, honu, or sea turtles, are also featured in numerous mo‘olelo, hula, ki‘i pōhaku, and other artforms, and were traditionally raised and harvested for food, medicinal, and other purposes.<sup>iii</sup>

By setting a baseline standard for the reduction of plastic bags used by retailers, and by encouraging further efforts to eliminate plastic and other disposable bags, this measure will therefore help to reduce the significant impact that our plastic debris has on such threatened and endangered natural and cultural resources. In addition, such a reduction in disposable plastic bags will reduce and mitigate their contribution to our municipal waste stream.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB1507. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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<sup>i</sup> See, e.g., JOHN KLAVITTER, UNITED STATES FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE, DISCARDED PLASTICS DISTRESS ALBATROSS CHICKS (2012) available at <http://www.fws.gov/news/blog/index.cfm/2012/10/24/Discarded-plastics-distress-albatross-chicks> (“Over 90 percent of the approximately 320,000 Laysan albatross chicks that hatch each year . . . contain plastic in the proventriculus and gizzard portions of their stomachs. . . . Chicks that perish on average contain twice the amount of plastic as the successful fledgling”); U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, MARINE DEBRIS IN THE NORTH PACIFIC: A SUMMARY OF EXISTING INFORMATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF DATA GAPS 12 (2011) available at <http://www.epa.gov/region9/marine-debris/pdf/MarineDebris-NPacFinalAprvd.pdf> (“Sea turtles do not appear to distinguish between floating debris and floating prey, resulting in ingestion of plastic bags”); see also *id.* at 10 (“Problems associated with the ingestion of plastics include development of internal and external wounds, impairment of feeding capacity due to the buildup or blockage of the digestive system, decreased

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mobility and predatory avoidance, and toxicity (reviewed by Gregory 2010). Ingestion of plastics by seabirds has been shown to reduce body weight (Spear et al. 1995), inhibit fat deposition (Connors and Smith 1982), and reduce reproductive capacity (Azzarello and Van Vleet 1987). Additionally, the deaths of sea turtles, whales, manatees, and dolphins have been attributed to gastrointestinal blockages by plastics (reviewed by Derraik 2002, Gregory 2010)<sup>ii</sup>).

<sup>ii</sup> See, e.g., Daniel Harrington, *Seabirds of the Hawaiian Islands*, in HAWAIIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HISTORY, CULTURE, NATIVE SPECIES, SCIENCE <http://www.hawaiianencyclopedia.com/seabirds-of-the-hawaiian-islan.asp> (last accessed February 6, 2015); see also CRAIG HARRISON, *SEABIRDS OF HAWAII: NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION* (1990).

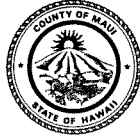
<sup>iii</sup> See, e.g., National Park Service, E Mālama i Nā Honu, <http://www.nps.gov/kaho/naturescience/upload/honu.pdf> (last accessed February 6, 2015); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Protected Resource Division: Green Sea Turtle, [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_green\\_sea\\_turtle.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_green_sea_turtle.html) (last accessed February 6, 2015).

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## COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

February 6, 2015

TO: Honorable Chris Lee, Chair  
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

FROM: Robert Carroll  
Councilmember, East Maui 

DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

SUBJECT: **OPPOSITION TO HB 1507, RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to establish a uniform minimum standard statewide on the use of plastic bags by retailers. Establishes a working group to study methods to reduce the use of all disposable bags.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I oppose this measure for the following reasons:

1. County by County the use of plastic bags have been prohibited at the point of sale. With this said, it should be evident that the people of Hawaii have spoken, they do not want plastic bags littering our environment and destroying marine life. As a result, the State of Hawaii should seek to totally eliminate single use plastic bags throughout the state versus legislating "loop holes" by establishing various degrees of plastic bags that can be utilized. A plastic bag is a plastic bag no matter the number of times you can use it or the thickness of the bag. Plastic will still destroy our environment and kill aquatic life.
2. Even though this proposed legislation does not "prohibit a county from enacting ordinances that are more stringent", the health of our children, environment and marine life should not be compromised by authorizing an opportunity to reduce plastic bag restrictions in the future. Despite the measures exception for counties greater restrictions, the measure implies "loop holes". The future of our quality of life and that of marine life cannot afford "loop holes".

February 6, 2015

Page 2

3. The State of California was the first state in the nation to establish a statewide ban on the use of plastic bags. *The Huffington Post* stated that “Hawaii is also on track to have a de-facto statewide ban, with all counties approving prohibitions.” Therefore, Hawaii is leading the nation in an effort to save our health and preserve our environment for future generations. Accordingly, I respectfully request that you do not take a step backwards, implement greater restrictions, not “loop holes”.

For the foregoing reasons, I oppose this measure.

CM:EM:plastic\_bags\_hb1507:grs

Jodi Malinoski  
Surfrider Foundation Oahu Chapter  
Committee of Energy and Environmental Protection  
Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 AM in Room 325  
Bill 1507: Plastic Bag Bill  
Strong Support of HB 1507

Dear Chair Lee and Vice Chair Lowen,

Aloha and good morning. My name is Jodi Malinoski and I am the Rise Above Plastics Coordinator for Surfrider Foundation Oahu Chapter. The Rise Above Plastics coalition comprises of five environmental groups: Surfrider Foundation, Styrophobia, Sustainable Coastlines, Conservation Council for Hawaii, and Kōkua Hawaii Foundation; I am writing to represent our coalition who is in strong support of House Bill 1507.

Plastics are a major source of pollution to Hawaii's land and ocean environment. They are harmful to marine animals and leach toxins into our soils and water systems. Because of their reliance on fossil fuels and their non-biodegradable, polluting nature, plastic bag bans have been of increasing interest throughout the State. Although each county has already passed an ordinance to reduce the impact of plastic bag pollution in Hawaii, there are differences between every county. HB 1507 would help to consolidate these ordinances by creating a minimum standard policy that would be more consistent throughout the State. This statewide plastic bag bill does not weaken the existing county laws, yet it reassures that a ban on plastic bags will still remain a priority in Hawaii.

More notably, the creation of a working group to study how to reduce all single-use, non-recyclable bags is an important component of HB 1507 which is not in existing county ordinances. Although reducing plastic bag pollution is beneficial, it is essential that Hawaii reduce all of its waste. Replacing plastic bags with paper bags is a costly alternative and the

production of paper bags has its own environmental impacts. This working group would be able to explore each county ordinance to determine if one type of policy should be implemented throughout the state, as well as explore how a fee for paper bags would impact Hawaii's economy. For example, the fee imposed by the HI-5 recycling program has indicated that giving consumers and retailers a monetary incentive to recycle is a successful solution to reduce waste. A similar fee for paper bags may encourage alternatives to non-recyclable bags and generate revenue for local businesses and the economy. Through this Bill, the proposed working group could explore these and other options.

As the Surfrider Oahu Rise Above Plastics coordinator, I represent five organizations in Hawaii who strongly support HB 1507 and urge its passing this 2015 session. Thank you for this opportunity and for showing concern about Hawaii's plastic pollution problem.

Warmest Mahalo,

Jodi Malinoski

Rafael Bergstrom  
Surfrider Foundation Oahu Chapter  
HB 1507  
EEP, February 10<sup>th</sup> 2015, 8:30AM  
Strong Support

The State of Hawai'i has already begun to show its leadership in stopping single-use plastic bags from entering our marine ecosystems by banning bags in 4 counties. We now have the opportunity to unify legislation at a State level and be a national leader in this type of legislation. The Surfrider Foundation has conducted countless beach cleanups over the years and documented a disturbing trend of plastics littering our beaches and contaminating our oceans. Plastic bags present threats to marine life through ingestion which can be fatal.

As more people inhabit our islands and the world in general it is our duty as communities to start being more responsible with our consumption patterns. Alternatives to plastic bags are abundant, especially in the form of reusable bags that can transport our groceries and other purchases with out creating waste. Our society should collectively embrace these lifestyle changes as part of our respect for the environment that we rely on for food, resources, recreation, and economies.

The Surfrider Foundation, Oahu Chapter strongly supports all efforts that move us towards this cleaner, more sustainable future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cheers,  
Rafael Bergstrom  
Oahu Chapter Coordinator, Surfrider Foundation



# Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

*P.O. Box 25284 · Honolulu · Hawai'i · 96825*

*(808) 393 2168 · [www.b-e-a-c-h.org](http://www.b-e-a-c-h.org)*

DATE: 8th February, 2015.

TO: Chair Chris Lee, Vice-Chair Nicole Lowen and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

FROM: Suzanne Frazer, President, Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

RE: **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB1507**

Relating to Environmental Protection. Establishes a uniform minimum standard statewide on the use of plastic bags by retailers.

Committee meeting on Tuesday 10th February, 2015 at 8:30AM.

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Lowen and Committee Members,

Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i (B.E.A.C.H.) is opposed to HB1507.

This bill can undermine the plastic bag bans that are already in effect in Maui, Hawai'i and Kaua'i counties. The only way there will be a "consistent and coherent" law statewide with HB1507 is for these counties to weaken their laws. Even though HB1507 allows for more stringent county ordinances, that doesn't stop a county from reducing their more stringent ordinances to be consistent with the proposed legislation of HB1507. The public supports protecting the environment and marine life. The people of Hawai'i want a strong law banning plastic checkout bags in Hawai'i not a weakened one. Hawai'i as an ocean state needs to lead the way with a strong law that is consistent statewide in protecting Hawai'i's marine life.

Every sea turtle in Hawai'i is either endangered or threatened. They all eat jellyfish as hatchlings. For the adult leatherback sea turtle, jellyfish are their main diet. They mistake soft plastic floating in the ocean for food. When sea turtles eat plastic bags they cannot regurgitate them. They die from blockages and starvation caused from ingesting plastic bags. This is why plastic bags need to be banned.

Leatherback sea turtles are at risk of extinction within 10-15 years. In Hawai'i they are classified as critically imperiled and highly vulnerable to extinction. Although they have survived for over 100 million years, their populations have dropped 97% from 91000 Pacific leatherbacks in 1982 to under 3000 in 2003.

Everyone now knows the harm that plastic bags cause to sea turtles. It is up to everyone, including businesses, to do the right thing and protect them.

Replacing one plastic bag with another plastic bag is NOT a ban. Allowing some plastic checkout

bags while banning other plastic checkout bags is NOT a ban on plastic checkout bags. And it's confusing for customers, visitors and the general public. They expect to see a proper ban on plastic checkout bags throughout Hawai'i.

Other reasons B.E.A.C.H. does not support HB1507 are because this bill:

- allows plastic checkout bags to transport prepared foods, beverages or bakery goods — These bags are the very bags that are littered the most. These are the bags that litter beaches, parks, waterways, streams, are in the ocean and all over the environment. People take their meal to the beach and litter the bag and often the rest of the contents. These bags must be included in any plastic checkout bag ban and Maui, Hawai'i and Kaua'i counties have successfully done this and their laws have been in action for years now and work just fine.

- allows thicker plastic bags to be used — A plastic bag is a plastic bag no matter how thick. A 2.25 mil or 3 mil bag can easily become airborne, it can float in water, it can suffocate, it can be swallowed by a whale, it can harm and kill sea turtles, whales and other marine life. Just because a bag is thicker does NOT mean that a person will reuse it and because a bag is reused that does NOT mean that it is a Reusable Bag. Lots of bags including regular plastic bags can be reused. That doesn't make them a Reusable Bag. Bags given away for free with groceries are treated like a disposable bag no matter how thick. Plastic bags that are reused and then disposed of can still blow out of garbage trucks, rubbish bins etc. and end up in the ocean causing harm to marine life.

- allows compostable plastic bags — These contain Mater-Bi a substance that is derived from fossil fuels. They do NOT compost in the natural environment such as outdoors in the garden, in the ocean, in a stream etc. They will not disappear. They will only compost in a high heat, commercial compost facility — none of which exist in this state. Also compostable bags are now being made thicker and stronger and they will harm and kill sea turtles in the same way a regular plastic bag would if ingested — causing blockages, starvation and death.

- exempts 501c3 organizations — All organizations, groups, individuals as well as businesses need to be banned from distributing plastic checkout bags. Plastic checkout bags should not be allowed to be used by anyone in the state of Hawai'i. There is no reason why 501c3 organizations should be allowed to harm the environment and marine life. There is no good reason to exempt them. Non-profit organizations have been around longer than plastic bags have and I'm sure organizations have done just fine before without plastic carry bags.

Other comments concerning this bill:

- Plastic bags do not remain in the environment "for decades" as written in this bill. They remain in the environment FOREVER.
- It is 1-2% of plastic bags that are recycled, not 5% as written in this bill.
- The cost of a paper bag is not "significantly more" than plastic bags.
- There is no such thing as a "non-recyclable" paper bag. All paper bags are recyclable.

HB1507 does not support all the progress that has been made so far in Maui, Hawai'i and Kaua'i

counties to reduce plastic bags in the environment. Honolulu County failed to pass a strong ban and HB1507 would cause Honolulu's weak ban to set the standard for Hawai'i. Why impose the weakest ban on the whole of the state? That is really awful for Hawai'i.

Please legislate a strong plastic bag ban statewide that people can be proud of, that shows that Hawai'i really cares about endangered and threatened marine animals and takes the right, appropriate actions to protect them. We need your leadership now to once and for all ban all plastic checkout bags statewide. Please do what is right for Hawai'i's environment and marine life and protect them through a strong consistent law statewide, not a weakened minimum one.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Frazer.

President,

Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i (B.E.A.C.H.)



*Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i is an all volunteer, non-profit organization that brings awareness and solutions to marine debris through environmental education, plastic reduction/litter prevention campaigns, and marine debris removal and research in order to protect Hawai'i's marine life, sea birds and the ocean/coastal environment.*



The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Program  
923 Nu'uuanu Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96817

Tel (808) 537-4508  
Fax (808) 545-2019  
nature.org/hawaii

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting H.B. 1507 Relating to Environmental Protection  
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection  
Tuesday, February 10, 2015, 8:30AM, Room 325

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life in these islands depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 35,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.*

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The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 1507 to establish a statewide minimum standard and ban on plastic check-out bags and non-recyclable paper bags. Plastic check-out bags in particular are a significant contributor to litter in Hawai'i, are a threat to marine and bird life, and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions that exacerbate the effects climate change.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer our support for this bill.

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EEPtestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 10:41 AM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: psgegen@hotmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM

**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| pat gegen           | Zero Waste Kauai    | Comments Only             | No                        |

Comments: HB 1507 – Statewide Uniform Minimum Standard on the Use of Plastic Bags by Retailers While Zero Waste Kauai supports the intent of HB 1507 and we do feel that establishing a minimum standard for “compostable” bags is beneficial, the inclusion of language exempting food service establishments is counterproductive and could lead to proposals to modify current County bans to include this exemption Misused take-out food bags are one of the largest elements in roadside and marine litter. Each County has chosen to approach the issue of single use plastic bags in a different manner, and the Legislature should not propose language which could create confusion with County restrictions. Kauai’s take-out establishments have utilized many different methods of packaging their goods including the reuse of cardboard boxes and allowing customers to use their cloth reusable bags with great success. Also, the intent of the legislation is to promote the use of reuseable bags and language allowing the use of “heavy duty” plastic bags as reuseable is contrary to the intent. The bulk of these “heavy duty” bags would be used only once and we feel that language should be deleted from the proposed bill. If this bill is to move forward we would request it be modified to address our concerns. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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Feb. 9, 2015

Committee Chair & Members of Energy and Environmental Protection (EEP)

**RE: Strong Support for HB1507 – Relating to Plastic Bags – Strong Support**

**Hearing on Tue., Feb. 10, State Capitol, Conf. Rm. 325, 8:30am.**

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen, and Committee Members,

As the Hawaii Regional Manager of the Surfrider Foundation, I'm writing in strong support passage of HB1507. We helped draft this bill to create a more consistent statewide policy that consolidates all of the county laws without detracting from their requirements. The bill will also create a more consistent policy for consumers and companies. With the creation of a task force to study possible fees, we hope it will reduce the use of single-use plastic and paper bags and increase the use of reusable bags, which are much better for the environment.

Plastics are a major source of pollution and are harmful to marine creatures. According to the EPA, more than one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals die each year due to ingestion and entanglement. Plastic bags are some of the worst offenders, and sea turtles and other creatures often mistake them for jelly fish with lethal effects. They are among the most littered items in Hawaii and the world, and we collect thousands of them at our monthly cleanups.

Because of their high rates of litter, each county has already passed an ordinance to reduce the impact of plastic bag pollution in Hawaii. But there are differences among the county bills; so HB 1507 would help to consolidate these ordinances by creating a minimum standard policy that would be more consistent throughout the State. This statewide plastic bag bill does not weaken the existing county laws, yet it reassures that a ban on plastic bags will still remain a priority in Hawaii.

We support the creation of a working group to study how to reduce all single-use, non-recyclable bags as an important component of HB 1507. Although reducing plastic bag pollution is beneficial, it is essential that Hawaii reduce all of its waste. Replacing plastic bags with paper bags is a costly alternative for companies and consumers, and the production of paper bags has its own high environmental impacts. A working group would be able to recommend a policy to be implemented throughout the state, as well as explore how a fee for paper bags would impact Hawaii's economy. A similar HI-5 fee for paper bags would encourage alternatives to non-recyclable bags and generate revenue for local businesses and the economy.

Hawaii was the first state in the country to ban single-use plastic grocery bags county by county, and we hope to build on that success and leadership by creating a more consistent statewide policy. On behalf of the Rise Above Plastics campaign, we ask you to pass HB 1507 and create a task force to explore the use of fees and other methods to reduce plastic pollution and improve the beauty and health of our natural environment. Mahalo for your time and consideration and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,  
Stuart Coleman  
Stuart H. Coleman  
Hawaii Regional Manager

Surfrider Foundation Hawaii Chapters \* 2121 Algaroba St., #1107 \* Honolulu, HI 96826  
808-381-6220 \* [scoleman@surfrider.org](mailto:scoleman@surfrider.org) \* [www.surfrider.org](http://www.surfrider.org)

EEPttestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:04 AM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: brenda.asuncion@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM\*

**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brenda Asuncion     | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

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Aloha Chair and Committee members,

I strongly support Bill 1507 which aims to regulate and reduce plastic bags and the resulting pollution. I have testified in person with my son and his classmates three years ago for a similar Bill. Regulation has been a long time in coming!

Plastic bags are easily substituted by other products that do not damage our marine life and blight our scenic views in the ways plastic bags do.

Reusable bags are plentiful and available, and in other parts of the world, as well as other islands in our state they do not provide plastic bags in grocery stores. To truly change a lifetime of habits, we need to change regulations.

Thank you, Lisa Marten



EEPtestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 12:22 AM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: zacharyhitchcock@yahoo.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM

**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Zachary Hitchcock   | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Zachary Hitchcock Chairman, Surfrider Foundation Oahu Chapter 1533 Artesian Way Honolulu, HI 96822 Dear Chairman, I have picked up hundreds of plastic bags on our beaches and parks on Oahu. I have paddled them under my chin or in my pocket from out surfing. We have to get a handle on this. The upcoming ban will not thwart the plastic bag manufacturer. Bags will still be distributed. Continuing to educate people and studying the use of these bags is a valid proposal. We need to be smarter about the products we use. I support this House Bill 1507, and I hope you do, too. Sincerely, Zachary Hitchcock 808-222-6960

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**DATE:** 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2015

**TO:** Chair Chris Lee, Vice-Chair Nicole Lowen and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

**FROM:** Dean Otsuki  
P.O. Box 25284  
Honolulu, HI 96825

**RE:** **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB1507**  
Relating to Environmental Protection. Establishes a uniform minimum standard statewide on the use of plastic bags by retailers.

Committee hearing, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 at 8:30AM.

Aloha Chair Lee and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection,

Although I understand the intention of this bill, I am writing in opposition to HB1507 for the following reasons.

1. This bill sets a minimum standard for the use of plastic check out bags. It undermines county laws that are stronger than this bill. Even though this bill allows counties to strengthen their laws they could also weaken them as well.

2. Allowing compostable bags is substituting one plastic bag for another. Compostable bags do not breakdown in a safe and timely manner and would endanger sea turtles and other marine life if they get into the ocean. A compostable bag takes approximately 180 days in high heat in a commercial composting facility (which the state does not have) to completely breakdown.

Compostable bags are actually more expensive ranging in price from 25 to 30 cents per bag. Paper bags are about 1 cent a bag. HB1507 states that compostable bags need to have "Compostable" and "ASTM 6400" printed on a plastic bag in 1 inch green letters. Who would enforce this as it would be easy to print this on plastic bags.

3. The bill exempts bags used to transport prepared foods, beverages and bakery goods. These are the plastic bags that are found in the environment at beach and stream clean-ups around the islands. These are the ones that need to be banned.

4. Exempts plastic bags for newspapers and prescription medications. My neighbor works for the Koko Marina harbor patrol and he says that he is always collecting newspaper plastic bags from the marina. When I delivered newspapers as a kid we only wrapped newspapers in plastic bags when it rained. And do we really need plastic bags for small pill containers? Bring a reusable bag.

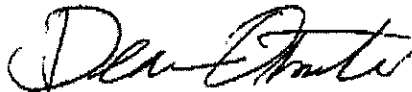
5. Exempts plastic bags to package loose items. The easy solution is to use reusable bags.

6. Working group to study various methods to reduce disposable bags. We all know how to reduce disposable plastic – don't accept, buy or use them!

The definition of a plastic bag (**plastic check-out bag**) needs to be a clear definition, consistent with Hawai'i and Maui counties plastic bag ban and targets the plastic bags that get loose in the environment. The law needs to be straightforward and clear for implementation and the list of exemptions causes confusion as it includes bags used to transport prepared foods, beverages and bakery goods as well as bags used to transport other items. Keeping HB1507 simple would benefit everyone.

The people of Hawai'i, our land and marine life need the strongest laws for disposable plastics. Please consider the above recommendations and statements in re-crafting this bill. Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony.

Aloha,



Dean Otsuki

EEPtestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:51 AM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: justpeachy242@yahoo.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM\*

**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Fawn Liebengood     | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

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Honolulu, HI 96813  
Fax : 808-791-0702  
Telephone : 808-533-1292

TO:  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
Representative Chris Lee, Chair  
Representative Nicole E. Lowen, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 10, 2015  
TIME: 8:30am  
PLACE: Conference Room

RE: HB1507

Position: Comments

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

We ask that this measure be amended to include language mandating a minimum \$0.10 fee for the bags that stores may still provide to customers at checkout. This fee will help offset the cost to businesses of implementing this measure and county level ordinances.

By attaching the fee to the bags themselves it helps stores avoid having to raise prices in order to recuperate the cost of these more expensive bag options.

Mandating a fee for any type of single use bags is also an incentive for consumers to get in the habit of using reusable bags, which are the most environmentally friendly option.

Suggested language to be inserted into Section 2 is as follows:

**"§ 342H- Ban on plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags.** Businesses shall be prohibited from providing plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags to their customers at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise. Nothing in this part shall preclude a business from making available to customers, ~~with or without charge,~~ at the point of sale:

- (1) Reusable bags, compostable plastic bags, or recyclable paper bags for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise for purchase for not less than \$0.10; or
- (2) ~~Non-recyclable paper~~ bags to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods.

All monies collected pursuant to these provisions are to be retained by the store."

If the above language is included then Section 3, paragraph (a), subsection (2) could be removed from the bill.

The above language is very similar to what was passed in California in 2014. We believe that inclusion of this language makes this legislation better for businesses, better for consumers, and better for the environment.

We would be happy to provide input and assistance on any other possible changes to the measure, and to participate in the working group when it is convened.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Conservation Council  
for Hawai'i**

*Hawai'i's voice for wildlife*

*Kō Hawai'i leo no nā holoholona lōhiu*



**LATE**

Testimony Submitted to the  
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection  
Hearing: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 8:30 am, Room 325  
In Support of HB 1507 Relating to Environmental Protection

Aloha, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen, and Members of the Committee. The Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports HB 1507, which establishes a uniform minimum standard statewide on the use of plastic bags by retailers, and establishes a working group to study methods to reduce the use of all disposable bags.

Hawai'i has already passed plastic bag bans in all four counties. This bill would consolidate the four county bills without undermining each county's rules and efforts, while providing a consistent statewide ban.

Over 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals die each year due to ingestion of or entanglement in plastic. In Hawai'i, plastic pollution also contributes to unsightly litter on our beaches, parks, and streets.

Plastics require the use of millions of barrels of crude oil/fossil fuels for their production and distribution.

Only 10% or so of all plastics are recycled. The rest are thrown away, which places an additional burden on our landfills.

Please kokua. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

*Marjorie Ziegler*

Marjorie Ziegler



*Conservation Council for Hawai'i is a nonprofit, environmental membership organization dedicated to protecting native Hawaiian plants, animals, and ecosystems for future generations.*

*Established in 1950 and based in Honolulu, CCH is one of the largest and most effective wildlife organizations in Hawai'i with more than 5,000 members and supporters, including concerned citizens, educators, scientists, government agencies, and elected officials.*

*Through research, education, service, organizing, and legal advocacy, CCH works to stop the destruction of native wildlife and wild places in Hawai'i.*

*Since 1973, CCH has served as the Hawai'i state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation.*

Telephone/Fax: 808.593.0255 | email: [info@conservehi.org](mailto:info@conservehi.org) | web: [www.conservehi.org](http://www.conservehi.org)  
P.O. Box 2923 | Honolulu, HI 96802 | Office: 250 Ward Ave., Suite 220 | Honolulu, HI 96814

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 3:46 PM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: jmccay@hotmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM



**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| James McCay         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Aloha, Please continue to lead Hawai'i forward to more sane and sustainable way of living. Malama Pono & Mahalo, James McCay 2957 Kalakaua Ave Honolulu HI 96815

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Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 3:57 PM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: kenzen808@gmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM



**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ken Sentner         | Surfrider Foundation | Support                   | Yes                       |

Comments: Pass this bill to establish a long-range plan to limit the number of single-use bags. This will benefit our immediate environment, upon which our tourism-based economy depends, and will conserve resources used to produce these wasteful products. Establishing a state-wide standard will aid retailers in compliance as well.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:40 PM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: babyjean@hotmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM



**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ronnie Perry        | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: I strongly support this bill. We need to reduce the amount of disposable trash. Mahalo, Ronnie Perry

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Hb1507 statewide standard to establish plastic bag ban

The objections to single-use plastic checkout bags have been well stated and thoroughly covered. It is a somber, familiar figure that 1 million seabirds and over 100,000 marine animals die every year due to ingestion or entanglement with plastics. That they require millions of barrels of oil to create and they leave behind toxic residues for at least a thousand years, poisoning Hawaii in the name of convenience. There is no question that Hawaii requires an intentional shift away from these products, but what I want to emphasize support of is the necessity for a unifying, consistent ban across all of the counties in order to simplify the needs of retailers who are struggling to keep up with varying requirements across the counties. That this bill would not undermine existing bans is essential.

For those objecting, saying that a ban is not the answer. That litter management is more important. I would say that a product designed to be feather light in a wind-rich environment stands no chance of being contained and being managed. In spite of attempts at litter control these millions of bags get into our environment and they are causing irreparable harm. To eliminate their introduction in the first place is the best way.

Regarding the establishment of a working group aimed at reducing all disposable bag use, I support this strongly as we cannot pretend that a habit so deeply ingrained into our society over decades can be quickly and absolutely achieved. We know that simply telling a consumer that an action is wrong, bad, terrible, or dangerous will break the cycle. That is why, if Hawaii wants to effectively eliminate this plastic pollution from its waters and land, it will undertake the necessary steps to determine real solutions based in environmental psychology and community based social marketing techniques.

There are countless winners in this shift: sanitation workers, marine life, tourists, even retail stores who would ultimately pay less in overhead if customers brought their own bags. Even local manufacturers of plastic bags are already producing reusable bags and could increase their sales. New businesses could spring up to fill the need for locally produced, recycled totes. This is a huge, positive, crucial step for Hawaii and its relationship with single-use plastics. Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Milholen  
Honolulu, HI 96816

lowen2-Thomas

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 10:08 PM  
To: EEPtestimony  
Cc: anthuriumz@hotmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1507 on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM

**HB1507**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for EEP on Feb 10, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| wynnie hee          | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Yes, PLEASE protect our environment, not just litter on land, but plastic is killing our sea birds and sea creatures, tangling marine mammals...PLEASE HELP THEM and pass this bill.

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