

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**Thursday, February 8, 2018
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2107
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

House Bill 2107 proposes to establish the Plastic Free Hawaii Initiative Program with the mission to eliminate plastic waste impacting native species and polluting the State's environment, establish the Plastic Free Hawaii Advisory Council to collect data regarding plastic pollution and provide recommendations to eliminate plastic waste, and appropriate funds. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

The Department recognizes the deleterious impacts of marine debris on wildlife and their habitats as a primary natural resource issue throughout the State. Marine debris degrade land and ocean based habitat through smothering and abrasion and impact a variety of wildlife (aquatic and terrestrial) through ingestion and entanglement. Hawai'i has the highest reported debris accumulations in the United States' Pacific Ocean Coastlines. The Department recently conducted a state-wide survey of marine debris accumulations spanning 1,000 miles of Hawai'i's coastline and detected over 20,000 individual pieces of marine debris, primarily composed of plastics. This was considered a vast under-estimate considering the study focused only on larger, easily identifiable debris items. Smaller microplastics are also prominent throughout Hawai'i's beaches. The study also highlighted the need for marine debris management in remote stretches of coastline, not easily accessed by clean-up groups.

Although a large amount of marine debris arrives from the ocean, it is all of our responsibility to reduce the amount of debris entering and re-entering our ocean and beaches. One of the major challenges we face in managing marine debris in Hawai'i, is the lack of a coordination among State, City and County, and Federal agencies in addition to clean-up groups, and communities.

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

House Bill 2107's Plastic Free Initiative Program is a critical step in helping the Department address this issue by the establishment of an advisory council that can coordinate a state-wide marine debris management plan and fund-raise for the necessary appropriations to address this critical issue.

The Department recommends one change to the bill in that a "Hawai'i initiative Council" is established rather than a "Hawai'i initiative Program" with the responsibilities described in the bill. The wording of "Program" may lead to confusion with other Departmental programs, such as the Forestry Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 10:49:17 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

**PRESENTATION OF THE
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII**

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2018

Thursday, February 8, 2018

8:30 a.m.

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2107, RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

To the Honorable Chris Lee, Chair; the Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii ("DPH"). Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No. 2107 relating to the Plastic Free Hawaii Initiative.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in support of House Bill No. 2107 and is in favor of its passage.

House Bill No.2107 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it: (1) establishes the Plastic Free Hawaii Initiative Program with the mission to eliminate plastic waste impacting native species and polluting the State's environment, (2) establishes the Plastic Free Hawaii Advisory Council to collect data regarding plastic pollution and provide recommendations to eliminate plastic waste, and (3) appropriates funds.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[w]e believe in supporting best management practices in sustaining our environment and in increased citizen involvement. We support programs that encourage sustainable clean, efficient, creative and environmentally-friendly modes of transportation, recycling, and waste reduction.

The conservation, preservation, and restoration of Hawaii's natural resources are connected to the health and welfare of our people; therefore, we support the conservation and protection of our natural environment, which includes reducing our carbon footprint for the benefit of current and future generations.

We support the protection of our 'aina against destruction by corporate, government, or military usage and expect full restoration and reparation of environmental damage to handle current and future demands for water, we must assess the current condition of our aquifer and take appropriate action to secure our freshwater resources.

We support the democratic participation of citizens and residents to protect (i) valuable coastal ecosystems and reefs from misuse and (ii) beaches for public use and recreation. The Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management (CZM) law, HRS Chapter 205A, currently provides for public participation in the management of coastal resources.

We believe in the vigorous enforcement of our environmental laws and increased public-private stewardships and citizen involvement in protecting our resources.

We know that climate change is a real threat to our islands and the world. We strongly urge our candidates and elected officials to take immediate action to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change. This includes funding adaptation measures including coastal retreat, effective participation of indigenous people in climate change governance, and recognition that indigenous, local, and traditional ecological knowledge is key in climate change adaptation solutions." (Platform of the DPH, P. 7, Lines 413-439 (2016)).

Given that House Bill No.2107 provides for the Plastic Free Hawaii Initiative, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Tel.: (808) 258-8889



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAII
MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. *Cherish the Earth.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

February 8, 2018 8:30AM Conference Room 325

In SUPPORT of HB 2107 Relating to environmental protection

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen and members of the Committee,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i, a member of the Common Good Coalition, **strongly supports HB 2107**, which aims to develop a long term plan to eliminate plastic waste in Hawai'i.

The disposal of plastic is huge problem to Hawai'i. Plastic does not biodegrade and remains in the environment indefinitely where it often ends up in the ocean. Sunlight oxydizes plastic and breaks it into smaller and smaller pieces until it is tiny enough to be ingested by fish--where it ultimately enters the food chain.

An estimated five million to thirteen million tons of plastic debris enter the oceans every year, which has contributed to creating the Pacific garbage gyre, a mass of plastic debris floating in the Pacific Ocean north of Hawai'i. Plastic from the gyre often reaches Hawai'i where it harms our wildlife and leaves unsightly litter on our beaches.

Hawai'i residents generate 2.8 tons of waste per person per year, more waste per capita than the residents of any other state in the nation. More than eighty percent of the plastic entering the Pacific Ocean comes from land-based litter and pollution, which can be prevented starting with measures such as HB 2107.

The bill seeks to develop a long-term plan to eliminate plastic pollution in Hawai'i's environment and reduce cleanup costs to taxpayers through the establishment of a committee to collect data, identify next steps, and provide recommendations.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter. We strongly support HB 2107 and urge you to pass this from your committee.

Sincerely,

Marti Townsend
Director, Sierra Club of Hawai'i

HB-2107

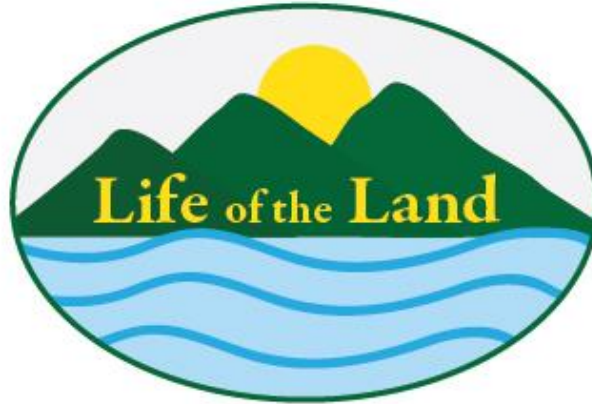
Submitted on: 2/6/2018 8:47:16 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Scott	Cuddle Party	Support	No

Comments:

LATE



P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, Hawai`i 96837-0158
Phone: 927-0709 henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Rep. Chris Lee, Chair

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Chair

Rep. Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 8, 2018

8:30 a.m.

Conference Room 325

HB 2107 RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SUPPORT

Aloha Chairs Lee, Vice Chairs Lowen, and Members of the Committees

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for 47 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

Establishes the Plastic Free Hawaii Initiative Program with the mission to eliminate plastic waste impacting native species and polluting the State's environment. Establishes the Plastic Free Hawaii Advisory Council to collect data regarding plastic pollution and provide recommendations to eliminate plastic waste. Appropriates funds.

Mahalo,

Henry Curtis, Executive Director

LATE

HB 2107: Strong Support
Hearing: February 8th 2018. 8:30AM
House Committee on EEP

Dear Members of the Senate AEN Committee

Surfrider Foundation's O'ahu Chapter is deeply concerned about plastics on our beaches, in our nearshore waters, and now found in marine life that calls these areas home. It has become a significant threat to the health of our islands. As a country, our citizens produce more than double per capita plastic waste of China and five times that of Indonesia, while (with Europe), housing 95% of the companies, lobbyists, and industries in the plastic economy (WEF 2016). By centering our eye on, Hawai'i, the U.S. state with the highest rates of waste generation (doubling the national average) and the beaches inundated with the Pacific Gyre's rapidly increasing plastic pollution (CNN 2016) we are at the heart of the global plastic problem. Up to 80% of the plastic in our oceans comes from land-based sources, estimated at 5-13 million tons of plastic. Hawai'i is uniquely positioned to focus the narrative of plastic solutions and our State has the opportunity to lead the world in a progressive movement that cultivates change at the source.

The United States environmental protection agency (EPA) outlines a waste pyramid in which reduction and re-use stand as the pinnacle to effective waste management. Our Cities, Counties, and State need to rethink the way they create, handle, and discuss waste. Surfrider Foundation believes that we can become a leader in a regenerative economy in which we value reuse and recovery over the single-use items. Single-use plastics, like straws & polystyrene foam, are a fossil fuel driven, carbon emitting industry that has no place in an island economy where space is limited and our environmental health is the most important issue to our economy.

To date, the majority of dialogue regarding solutions to the plastic problem revolves around how we clean up our how we focus attention on regions of the world that have poorer waste management. These solutions may help slow the flow of waste into our oceans or clean up what is already there, but do not help solve the underlying issue. As our ocean fills with more plastic by weight than fish (Washington Post 2016) by 2050, as we have seen a 610% increase in raw plastic production since 1975 (Jambeck 2015), and as 95% of plastic packaging globally (resulting in \$80-120 billion cost) is lost after a single-first use (WEF 2016), the solutions must be more geared towards a shift away from the fossil fuel based, greenhouse gas creating industry of plastics. Alternatives derived from compostable materials are widely available now as a stop-gap effort as we shift our economy back towards a system of reuse that is at the foundation of both Hawaiian culture and the ethic that this country began on.

The costs of plastic pollution are mounting in multiple sectors - financially, ecologically, and socially. Plastic is costing cities, counties, states, & countries millions of dollars and our global economy billions. Costs are passed to the taxpayers by burdening our stormwater management systems with the need for expensive best management practices and the costs of cleanups. Hawai'i State Department of Transportation (HDOT) has produced a trash plan that shows styrofoam and plastic bags as the top two contributors to the waste stream, while in California, the Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC) created a plastic cleanup valuation

study for 90+ counties in California. The study concluded that CA taxpayers are paying \$428 million per year to clean up plastic through storm drain management, street sweeping, and marine cleanups. San Diego County (with population of 1.3 equivalent to Hawaii) spends \$14 million alone on plastic cleanup. The United Nations Environmental Program has estimates in the billions for the global cost to cleanup plastics with \$14 billion for marine plastic alone.

A recent study published in the renowned journal of *Science* describes the mounting issues of plastics on our fragile and threatened reefs. The study describes corals as being 90% more likely to be diseased when plastic sits on the reef. The billions of pieces of plastic already in the ocean are scarring reefs and then likely infecting them with the contamination that comes from their chemical properties that allow for microbial colonization of pathogens. In other words, plastics bio-accumulate toxins in the water and thus can transfer such toxins to other organisms like coral. This is yet another toxic consequence of plastics in our oceans, of which many more are described in the points below.

The effects to marine life in our oceans are mounting. 50 to 80 percent of dead sea turtles have ingested plastic. Plastic bags, which resemble jellyfish, are the most commonly found item in sea turtles' stomachs. Worldwide, 82 of 144 examined bird species contained plastic debris in their stomachs; and in some cases, 80 percent of the population had consumed plastic. Researchers found that 66 percent of Giant Petrel shorebirds regurgitated plastic when feeding their chicks. Commercial fish, such as Opah and Bigeye Tuna, consume plastic, which could significantly reduce global populations. A University of Hawaii study reports "[i]n the two [Opah] species found in Hawaiian waters, 58 percent of the small-eye opah and 43 percent of the big-eye opah had ingested some kind of debris."

On a recent field trip visiting with the Marine Mammal Research Program, we were guided through the facilities where beached and dead Pilot Whales had been examined. The stomach contents of the three animals found on O'ahu, Lana'i, and Kaua'i revealed between 15-30 lbs of plastic in the gut. Plastic does not breakdown like organic material and as marine animals continue to ingest the plastics their stomachs eventually fill to a state in which they can no longer consume enough food to address proper nutritional maintenance. This is similar to the problem widely shared with Laysan Albatross in Papahānaumokuākea.

Ultimately, we have to reduce the problem at its source. Single-use plastics are an unneeded convenience that our society must learn to move away from. The alternatives exist and we must exercise some sort of ethic over our consumer behavior. Our kuleana is to protect our public trust resources like our shorelines for all generations into the future and currently we are not fulfilling that leadership role. Surfrider Foundation strongly urges the State Legislature to pass SB 2285, eliminating one of the most common single-use plastics, straws, from our waste streams and environment.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Rafael Bergstrom
Surfrider Foundation, O'ahu Chapter Coordinator

References:

C. Anela Choy & Jeffery C. Drazen, Plastic for Dinner? Observations of Frequent Debris Ingestion by Pelagic Predatory Fishes from the Central North Pacific, 485 MARINE ECOLOGY PROGRESS SERIES 155 (2013), at 161

California Ocean Protection Council. [An Implementation Strategy for the California Ocean Protection Council Resolution to Reduce and Prevent Ocean Litter](#). 2008. 3.

Christiana M. Boerger et al., Plastic Ingestion by Planktivorous Fishes in the North Pacific Central Gyre, 60 MARINE POLLUTION BULLETIN 2275, 2277 (2010).

Imam, Jareen. "Hawaii has a serious trash problem — and it's coming on ocean waves". CNN. June 3, 2016

Jambeck, J.R. Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into Ocean. Science. Feb 2015: Vol. 347, Issue 6223, pp. 768-771.

Kaplan, Sarah. "By 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans, study says". Washington Post. January 20, 2016.

Lamb, J.B. et al. "Plastic waste associated with disease on coral reefs." Science. Jan 2018: Vol 359, pp. 460-462

Mrosovsky, N. Leatherback Turtles: The Menace of Plastic, 58 MARINE POLLUTION BULLETIN 287 (2009).

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel—GEF (2012). Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions, Montreal, Technical Series No. 67, 61 pages.

World Economic Forum. The New Plastics Economy. Rethinking the future of plastics. 2015.

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 8:49:11 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Yuen		Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Chris Lee and Vice-Chair Nicole Lowen:

I strongly support HB2107 which aims to develop a long term plan to eliminate plastic waste in Hawaii.

The disposal of plastic is huge problem to Hawaii. Plastic does not biodegrade and remains in the environment indefinitely where the often end up in the ocean. Sunlight oxydizes plastic and breaks them into smaller and smaller pieces until they are tiny enough to be ingested by fishes where they enter the food chain.

An estimated five million to thirteen million tons of plastic debris enter the oceans every year, which has contributed to creating the Pacific garbage gyre, a mass of plastic debris floating in the Pacific Ocean north of Hawaii. Plastic from the gyre often reaches Hawaii where it harms our wildlife and beaches.

Hawaii residents generate 2.8 tons of waste per person per year, more waste per capita than the residents of any other state. More than eighty per cent of the plastic entering the Pacific Ocean comes from land-based litter and pollution which can be prevented.

The bill seeks to develop a long-term plan to eliminate plastic pollution in Hawaii's environment and reduce cleanup costs to taxpayers through the establishment of a committee to collect data, identify next steps, and provide recommendations.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter. I strongly support HB 2107 and urge you to pass this from your committee.

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 10:11:19 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez		Support	No

Comments:

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 10:51:39 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen		Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii as an ocean state is choking in plastic waste and should act to eliminate plastic waste as soon as possible. Please pass this bill. Mahalo!

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 12:51:29 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Maupin		Support	No

Comments:

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 2:26:43 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
pat gegen		Support	No

Comments:

Do the right thing. Protect our keiki, families and communities

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 8:04:31 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Natalie Wohner		Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 8:07:36 PM
Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Miki Wallace		Support	No

Comments:

I am a resident of Honolulu and support the ban on plastic. Plastic takes oil to make more than is used to fuel all the cars in the US- is still around. Even the plastic from our grandparents is full in our landfills, filling our marine life's stomachs effectively starving themselves. Please stop this self destruction of our planet and our future.

Thank you,

Miki Wallace

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 9:39:26 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dyson Chee		Support	No

Comments:

I believe that mankind's excessive use of plastic is seriously harming the environment. Especially in Hawaii, plastic pieces are everywhere from the beaches to the mountains. My most pressing concern with plastic is that it can have negative effects on humans and Hawaii's industries either directly or indirectly. Plastic fragments, if consumed, can pose serious health problems to those who consume it. Plastic floating in the ocean is consumed by fish which we in turn consume. This means that we are eating plastic. Plastic litter on the beaches are an eyesore and diminish Hawaii's reputation for having clean, beautiful, pristine beaches. All this plastic pollution, while difficult to clean up, can easily be stopped by going to the root of the problem. The island of Oahu consumes plastic with too much vigor; this hunger must be put to an end for our own sake and the sake of future generations. Let us not be selfish. Future generations depend on our actions. More plastic for us means more plastic litter and problem for them. This is why I strongly support this bill.

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 9:42:23 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mio Chee		Support	No

Comments:

I believe that mankind's excessive use of plastic is seriously harming the environment. Especially in Hawaii, plastic pieces are everywhere from the beaches to the mountains. My most pressing concern with plastic is that it can have negative effects on humans and Hawaii's industries either directly or indirectly. Plastic fragments, if consumed, can pose serious health problems to those who consume it. Plastic floating in the ocean is consumed by fish which we in turn consume. This means that we are eating plastic. Plastic litter on the beaches are an eyesore and diminish Hawaii's reputation for having clean, beautiful, pristine beaches. All this plastic pollution, while difficult to clean up, can easily be stopped by going to the root of the problem. The island of Oahu consumes plastic with too much vigor; this hunger must be put to an end for our own sake and the sake of future generations. Let us not be selfish. Future generations depend on our actions. More plastic for us means more plastic litter and problem for them. This is why I strongly support this bill.

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 11:47:19 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Smart		Oppose	No

Comments:

I most strongly oppose this bill.

Plastic products are very useful and inexpensive. When they have served their original purpose, they can become an exceptional fuel for the H-Power incinerator. Stop focusing on banning useful products. Most Hawaii residents use plastic products responsibly.

The real waste and litter problem is the cost to clean up an area after a sweep of a homeless encampment. Preventing people from setting up residence and accumulating trash on public property in the proportions that occurred on Nimitz Highway and other locations should be your focus. Stop wasting our time and tax dollars. Please use your time more productively on real problems. Thank-you.

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 7:11:59 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Micah Chee		Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. This bill is so important to our future generation and the environment.

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 12:55:36 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testimony Position	Present at Hearing
Stuart Coleman	Surfrider Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

Surfrider Foundation's Hawaii Chapters strongly support HB2107 and the creation of a Plastic Free Advisory Program. Our five chapters have been doing beach cleanups around the state for years, and we have collected hundreds of thousands of pounds of litter. In 2017, the Kauai Chapter removed over 122,000 pounds of debris just off that island alone! We will be submitting more detailed testimony soon. Mahalo for your consideration of this bill to monitor and find solutions for the increasing amount of plastic pollution contaminating our oceans, coral reefs and shorelines.

Aloha, Stuart Coleman, Hawaii Manager of the Surfrider Foundation

LATE

HB-2107

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 2:40:41 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Milholen	Kokua Hawaii Foundation	Support	No

Comments:



LATE

February 7, 2018

To: The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
Members, House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

From: Tim Shestek
American Chemistry Council

Re: **HB 2107 – Comments**

The American Chemistry Council (ACC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2107, legislation that would create the plastic free Hawaii initiative. ACC stands with the majority of scientists and policy makers who have found that effective marine litter solutions require an array of actions, including increased litter prevention, reducing, reusing and recycling, and other waste management infrastructure improvements.

Tackling marine debris is a complex challenge yet the plastics industry is actively engaged in efforts to respond. A landmark study published in Science Magazine identified developing countries in Asia that lack waste management as the source of the majority of plastic waste entering the oceans. By contrast the United States including Hawaii accounts for less than 1 percent of plastic marine debris.¹ Unfortunately, currents bring some of this unmanaged waste from Asia to Hawaii's shores. Thus, this is a global challenge that the plastic industry is working to address. Building on work in individual regions, trade associations representing both plastic resin makers and converters have come together to work with governments, NGOs, researchers and other stakeholders to prevent marine litter. Under the industry's "Declaration of the Global Plastics Associations for Solutions on Marine Litter" over 350 projects have been launched globally to prevent marine debris. Commitments have been made to:

- Contribute to solutions by working in public-private partnerships aimed at preventing marine debris;
- Work with the scientific community and researchers to better understand and evaluate the scope, origins and impact of and solutions to marine litter;
- Promote comprehensive science-based policies and enforcement of existing laws to prevent marine litter;
- Help spread knowledge regarding eco-efficient waste management systems and practices, particularly in communities and countries that border our oceans and watersheds;
- Enhance opportunities to recover plastic products for recycling and energy recovery; and
- Steward the transport and distribution of plastic resin pellets and products from supplier to customer to prevent product loss and encourage our customers to do the same.

In addition to Asia, we have basic waste management challenges in the US and Hawaii that need to be addressed. Just last year, ACC partnered with the City and County of Honolulu on a project to find and close off potential pathways for trash from land-based sources into the marine environment. One of the primary sources of litter found near waterways and beaches on Oahu is uncovered public trash cans that allow garbage to blow out. Through our partnership, ACC and the City and County of Honolulu identified a better design for outdoor public garbage cans to keep trash out of parks, and most importantly, out of waterways and the ocean. As part of this effort, ACC provided new cans that are now installed. Further studies will be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of this intervention. More information about our activities to help reduce marine debris can be found at: <http://www.marinedebrissolutions.com>.

¹ Jambeck, J.R., Andrady, A., Geyer, R., Narayan, R., Perryman, M., Siegler, T., Wilcox, C., Lavender Law, K., (2015). Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean, Science, 347, p. 768-771



Generally speaking, ACC supports the intent behind HB 2107. Nevertheless, we would like to offer some specific suggestions. The bill proposes to create the plastic free Hawaii advisory council consisting of various stakeholders. ACC urges your committee to expand the makeup of the advisory council to include representatives of restaurants, the plastics manufacturing industry, plastic packaging producers, retailers, and the grocery product industry. Including representation of these sectors will help ensure the task force can draw upon an array of expertise and resources related to marine debris, recycling, litter prevention, packaging design and use, as well as potential impacts any public policy option might have on the broader business community.

ACC also urges you to be mindful of the potential unintended environmental impacts associated with any effort that focuses exclusively on plastic materials. While some may suggest that simply eliminating plastic materials will have a net benefit on the environment, this assumption is not supported by scientific fact. A 2016 study found that the environmental cost of using plastics in consumer goods and packaging is nearly four times less than it would be if plastics were replaced with alternative materials.² Strong, lightweight plastics help us do more with less material, which provides environmental benefits throughout the lifecycle of plastic products and packaging.

This type of information and background is essential for any effort that looks at potential public policy options for addressing marine debris. Thank you for the opportunity to share these comments. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or ACC's Hawaii based representative Ross Yamasaki at 808-531-4551.

² https://www.plasticpackagingfacts.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/ACC-report_July-2016_v4.pdf