

# Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

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DATE: 31st January, 2018

TO: Chair Gabbard and Members of Committee on Agriculture and Environment

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

RE: **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2285**  
Relating to plastic straws  
Committee hearing on Wednesday 31st January, 2018 at 1:15PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

I am writing on behalf of Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i in strong support of SB2285 which prohibits businesses and individuals from selling, distributing or providing plastic straws or part plastic straws. B.E.A.C.H. strongly encourages the committee to pass this bill. This is an excellent bill with fines and community service picking up litter for violation of this law. Thank you Senator Rhoads for introducing this bill.

At every clean-up B.E.A.C.H. has found plastic straws. They are found on beaches with marine debris out of the ocean and are also in the top items of "beach goer trash" (items that people bring to the shoreline and leave behind). While we were surveying our recycle bins at Ala Moana Beach Park nearly every day over a 6 month period, we found a lot of clear plastic straw wrappers littered all over the ground and all throughout the park every time we went. Banning plastic straws will also help eliminate the plastic straw wrappers.

Plastic marine debris is a severe threat to the environment, marine life and the food chain. Plastic straws are completely unnecessary. People can either drink without a straw or they can bring their own straw (there are good ones available made from glass, stainless steel or bamboo) or use paper straws. It is no hardship to anyone to eliminate plastic straws but it will make a big difference to stop these unnecessary items from getting into the environment as plastic lasts forever.

Your leadership is needed to help protect Hawai'i's environment by taking action to ban the sale and distribution of plastic straws. Thank you. Please accept this as written testimony in strong support of this bill.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Frazer.  
President, 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 marine life, sea birds and the ocean/coastal environment.*



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI  
PRESIDENT  
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII  
January 31, 2018**

**Re: SB 2285 RELATING TO PLASTIC STRAWS**

Good afternoon Chairperson Gabbard and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii (RMH) is a statewide not-for-profit trade organization committed to supporting the retail industry and business in general in Hawaii. The retail industry is one of the largest employers in the state, employing 25% of the labor force.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii opposes SB 2285 Relating to Plastic Straws. Retailers continue to be concerned about our aina and have supported many initiatives that preserve and protect our environment.

Bans are not the simple answer. This measure would not only affect restaurants, but grocery stores, retail and supply stores as well. It would include not only the straws that are used in beverages, but also such items the straws for and in reusable beverage containers that are sold in stores. This government mandate would place another cost burden businesses. Establishments normally purchase containers in bulk to gain the best possible price and would not have ample time to use up what they have in addition to finding something that is cost effective. Many of the alternative straws like paper and bamboo are much more expensive than the plastic.

We should be looking at litter control programs and education and not a ban. Businesses respond to the wants of the customers that patronize their particular establishments. Businesses should be incentivized and not criminalized for having straws. It could be as simple as making straws available upon request in beverages and still allowing business to sell straws. This way it is a choice of the customer while also having some impact in terms of reducing the plastics problem.

We should be looking at a coordinated comprehensive litter reduction program. Government, business and the community should work together on the wise management of our resources by reducing, reusing and recycling principles.

Again mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Aloha my name is Vanessa Zepeda and I have been an Oahu resident for eight years. I am alumni from the University of Hawaii at Manoa where I graduated with a degree in Marine Biology. Additionally, I am an active volunteer in local aquariums and beach clean ups. I am absolutely for the proposed bill SB228 RELATING TO PLASTIC STRAWS. It is imperative to take local action towards plastic pollution in our oceans and for our 'aina, especially since on a Federal level our current administration has decided not to commit to The Paris Agreement goal towards a healthier planet. I think it would be a wonderful thing to lead by example to the mainland states about the importance of plastic waste, especially since most people on the mainland do not see the ocean plastic waste on a daily basis as we do here every time we go to the beach. I think it could be a fantastic tool to educate the visitors that come to Hawaii about the dangers of plastic waste so that maybe they will take this newly found education to perhaps change their daily lives when they return to their homes after their visits. I also work in the service industry here on Oahu and am painfully aware of all of the plastic waste that is produced in even just one day at a restaurant here in Waikiki. If it was possible to ban plastic straws and cups and introduce a biodegradable material instead (paper, or the new Yucca root "plastic" which is biodegradable) we could significantly influence the amount of waste that ends up in our oceans. More programs and commercials could also help educate locals and visitors about the importance of not littering and making better choices about plastic waste. Again, I am strongly for the proposed bill SB2285. Thank you to the committee for taking the time to read my testimony.

**SB-2285**

Submitted on: 1/31/2018 12:36:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2018 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Petra Brown		Support	No

Comments:

I have worked in the service industry on the mainland. I have notice most of the garbage that people don't care to pick up are napkins and straws. Napkins will eventually decompose, but plastic straws do not. They are small pieces of non compostable garbage that often don't make it into garbages and easy enter the ocean causing harm to marine life. Re usable or paper straws are better alternatives if people want to use a straw. Restaurants have to put all dishes through a sanitizer rinse, straws could just be like extra dishes. For to go coffee, juices, smoothies, or soft drinks paper straws work well or businesses could sell reusable ones that costumer would know to keep on them, much like re usable shopping bags. I think eliminating plastic straws would only benefit Hawaii.

**SB-2285**

Submitted on: 1/31/2018 12:30:36 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2018 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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 AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
THE SENATE  
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018  
Wednesday, January 31, 2018  
1:15 p.m.**

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 224

**RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2285, RELATING TO PLASTIC STRAWS**

To the Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair; the Honorable Gil Riviere, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Good afternoon, my name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill No. 2285, relating to the prohibition on the distribution and selling of plastic straws. The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of Senate Bill No. 2109 and support its passage.

Senate Bill No. 2285, is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it prohibits the distribution and selling of plastic straws and

establishes a fine and requires individual and business violators to pick up litter or perform community service.

The DPH Platform states that “[t]he Democratic Party of Hawai’i believes that the preservation and restoration of our natural environment are essential. We support a sustainable society that utilizes the earth in such a way that future generations will benefit from the practices of our generation. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of our native ecosystems on each island. We believe in integrated approaches, practices, and support public policies that create and maintain a sustainable way of life in Hawai’i. (Platform of the DPH, P. 8, Lines 406-411 (2016)).

Given that Senate Bill No. 2285 prohibits the distribution and sale of plastic straws, 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

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