



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

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0551
RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

REPRESENTATIVE NICOLE E. LOWEN, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Hearing Date: January 31, 2019 Room Number: CR 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure may impact the priorities identified in the Governor's
2 Executive Budget Request.

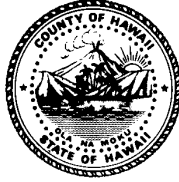
3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) supports this measure. Act
4 132, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018, appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2018-2019 for
5 the Department to conduct research or gather technical assistance on other issues as identified by
6 the Cesspool Conversion Working Group (CCWP) in completing its comprehensive cesspool
7 conversion plan. To date, the CCWP has held four meetings on September 13, 2018,
8 October 9, 2018, November 15, 2018 and January 18, 2019. The CCWP is currently working on
9 the research and technical support contracts and recognizes that it would be challenging to
10 encumber the entire \$1,000,000 by the end of fiscal year 2018-2019. This would significantly
11 impact the CCWP because they would not be able to develop the comprehensive cesspool
12 conversion plan required under Act 132, SLH 2018. Allowing the unencumbered funds to lapse
13 on June 30, 2020 instead of June 30, 2019 would give the CCWP the additional time needed to
14 encumber the \$1,000,000 appropriation to fund the research and technical support contracts.

15 Staff from the University of Hawaii (UH) Water Resources Research Center (WRRC)
16 also supports this measure. They stated to the Department that they would need the additional
17 time to encumber the \$500,000 to conduct a comprehensive state study of sewage contamination
18 in nearshore marine areas.

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

Harry Kim
Mayor

Wilfred M. Okabe
Managing Director



William A. Kucharski
Director

Diane A. Noda
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

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<http://www.hawaiicounty.gov/environmental-management/>

January 29, 2019

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
State of Hawai'i House of Representatives
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: **SUPPORT of HB551**
(Relating to Cesspools)

Date: January 31, 2019 (Thursday)

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Dear Chairperson Lowen and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

The County of Hawai'i (COH) supports HB 551. Extending the funding allocated by Act 132 into fiscal years 2019-2020 is necessary and appropriate. The Cesspool Conversion Workgroup created by Act 132 can properly respond to the Hawai'i Legislature only if this funding remains available.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William A. Kucharski".

William A. Kucharski
Director

cc: Andrew Levin, Executive Assistant



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

By
Darren Lerner, Director
Water Resources Research Center
and
Michael Bruno
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 551 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Wildberger, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) strongly supports this measure. Act 132, Session Laws of Hawai'i (SLH) 2018, appropriated \$500,000 for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the WRRC to conduct a comprehensive state study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas. The WRRC recognizes that it would be challenging to encumber the entire \$500,000 by the end of fiscal year 2018-2019. This would significantly impact the results of this work and the WRRC's ability to appropriately inform the Cesspool Conversion Working Group as it informs the comprehensive cesspool conversion plan required under Act 132, SLH 2018. Allowing the unencumbered funds to lapse on June 30, 2020 instead of June 30, 2019 would give the WRRC the additional time needed to encumber the funds for the research required.

In discussion with staff from the Department of Health (DOH), they also support this measure. They would need the additional time to encumber the \$1,000,000 to conduct research or gather technical assistance on other issues as identified by the Cesspool Conversion Working Group in completing its comprehensive cesspool conversion plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



CORAL REEF ALLIANCE

LATE

To: House Representative Chair Nicole E. Lowen, Committee on EEP

Re: HB 551 Relating to Cesspools
Thursday, January 31, 2019
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.

From: Erica Perez- Program Manager (Hawai'i Island)
eperez@coral.org
Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)

Subject: I am testifying in Support with comment of HB 551 relating to cesspools: extends lapse date for funds appropriated to the University of Hawaii to conduct a comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas.

I am testifying in Support of HB 551 relating to cesspools on behalf of the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL). CORAL is an international coral reef conservation organization that works with communities, businesses, and governments to save coral reefs. With field offices on Maui and Hawai'i Island, and projects throughout the Main Hawaiian Islands, CORAL uses a science-based approach to improve coastal water quality. Throughout the state, CORAL's programs mitigate land-based sources of pollution, such as wastewater discharge and stormwater runoff. CORAL is happy to be a member of the State Cesspool Working Group.

As a working group member, I can attest to the tight timeline and long list of objectives required from the committee. Any action that will provide flexibility in spending and allow the group additional time to making critical decisions would be of great help. The task of researching sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas is critical to the prioritization of communities in the statewide cesspool transition and identification of technology alternatives. Quality research takes time and will be critical in the decision making process of that transition. While there is urgency an extension would be helpful.

In closing, CORAL Supports HB 2732 HD 1. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Erica Perez, Program Manager (Hawai'i Island)
eperez@coral.org
Coral Reef Alliance



ONE WORLD ONE WATER
677 Ala Moana Blvd, Suite 1100
Honolulu, Hi 96713

Testimony in Support of HB551
Relating to Cesspools

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
January 31st, 2019
8:30am
Conference Room 325

Subject: House Bill (HB) 551 Relating to Cesspool Conversions

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Wildberger, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection,

At One World One Water we are dedicated to reinvesting in water infrastructure and restoring natural environments, and we strongly support **HB551** that extends lapse dates for cesspool conversion research in the state. By extending the lapse date for funds appropriated for University of Hawaii's study of sewage contamination and extending the Department of Health's date for research relating to cesspool conversion more time will be allotted for an in-depth study of how to convert Hawaii's cesspools.

With thousands of cesspools in the state potentially contaminating water supplies, coral reefs, and public health thorough research is required to figure out the best way forward to convert these systems to more sustainable ones while considering the burden on Hawaii's economy and local households. **We ask your support of HB551** to allow more time for these cesspool studies so that the most well vetted solutions can be determined.

Please contact us at globalwater@gmail.com should you have any questions or require additional information regarding this matter.

Sincerely,
One World One Water



O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities (OCCLP)

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair

Rep. Tina Wildberger, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, January 31, 2019

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 325, State Capitol

RE: HB 551 Relating to Cesspools

Aloha mai kakou Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Wildberger and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

The O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities (OCCLP) of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i (DPH) hereby submits its testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 551 relating to Cesspools.**

HB 551 extends the lapse date for funds appropriated to the University of Hawaii to conduct a comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas. HB 551 also extends the lapse date for funds appropriated to the Department of Health to conduct research or gather technical assistance relating to the cesspool conversion working group's comprehensive cesspool conversion plan.

DPH encourages the responsible development of ocean resources and aquaculture to achieve sustainability in our State of our marine resources and ensure and improve the health of our reef and marine life. *Democratic Party of Hawai`i Platform (2018), p. 9, ln. 7-9.*

Cesspools throughout the State of Hawai`i threaten drinking water supplies, coral reefs and the health of people who swim and surf in our island waters. They create a serious public safety issue, environmental problem and economic danger that is exacerbated by the effects of climate change. DPH supports septic tank upgrades and wastewater sewage systems where feasible by 2025. *Democratic Party of Hawai`i Platform (2018), p. 17, ln. 37-40.*

For the foregoing reasons, OCCLP supports HB 551 and urges its passage out of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection.

Mahalo nui loa
Me ka `oia`i`o

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja

Chair, O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of
Hawai`i

Ph. (808) 258-8889

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 7:29:54 AM

Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rene Umberger	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 1:54:00 PM

Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm glad we want to extend the lapse date for these funds, but why are we taking so long?

LATE

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:50:13 AM
Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Funding extension beyond 6/30/19 is needed for both the study and the working group in order for Hawaii to decide how to address cesspools and pollution of nearshore waters.



Jan. 30, 2019

In Support of HB551 Relating to Cesspools
House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection (EEP)
January 31, 2019, 8:30am, Room 325

Aloha, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Wildberger, and Members of the Committee:

The Surfrider Foundation's Hawaii Chapters strongly support HB551 to expand the lapse date for funds appropriated to the University of Hawaii to conduct a statewide study of sewage contamination in our nearshore marine areas. Volunteer leaders from Surfrider five Hawaii Chapters have played an active role in passing bills to stop the construction of new cesspools, create tax incentives for homeowners to convert them and make plans to convert thousands of cesspools across Hawaii.

Non-point source discharge from cesspools in Hawaii is a serious threat to our water quality, and this bill extends the ongoing research being done by UH. With about 88,000 across the state, Hawaii has the highest number of cesspools in the country, and many pose a threat to water resources. It's estimated that these substandard wastewater systems leach 53 million gallons per day of untreated human waste, harmful pathogens and nutrient loads into nearby waters. Cesspools are a leading source of water pollution, and their effluent can contaminate drinking water sources, streams and oceans with disease-causing pathogens, algae-causing nutrients and other harmful substances.

As the Hawaii Regional Manager of Surfrider, I was invited to join and currently serve on the Hawaii Dept. of Health's (DOH) Cesspool Conversion Working Group. We have already begun the process of funding wastewater research through the UH Sea Grant Program, but these projects take time to put together. This bill will allow that important research to continue after the original lapse date.

Because cesspools pose serious public health and environmental problems, new research is needed to help assess how much untreated sewage is leaching out from old cesspools and septic systems, which release about 53 million into Hawaii's waters everyday. This bill will continue that research beyond the original lapse date. Mahalo for your consideration and leadership in dealing with these water quality and waste issues and help make Hawaii a leader in wastewater treatment.

Aloha,

Stuart Coleman

Stuart H. Coleman, Hawaii Manager

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:27:35 PM

Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rafael Bergstom	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:33:22 PM

Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anny Barlow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-551

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 8:04:26 AM

Testimony for EEP on 1/31/2019 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
robert brower	surfrider foundation kauai	Support	No

Comments: