



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0551
RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: April 3, 2019

Room Number: 211

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 with
4 comments. Act 132, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018, appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal
5 year 2018-2019 for the Department to conduct research or gather technical assistance on other
6 issues as identified by the Cesspool Conversion Working Group (CCWG) in completing its
7 comprehensive cesspool conversion plan. To date, the CCWG has held five meetings on
8 September 13, 2018, October 9, 2018, November 15, 2018, January 18, 2019, and
9 March 28, 2019. The CCWG is currently working on the research and technical support
10 contracts and recognizes that it would be challenging to encumber the entire \$1,000,000 by the
11 end of fiscal year 2018-2019. This would significantly impact the CCWG because they would
12 not be able to develop the comprehensive cesspool conversion plan required under Act 132, SLH
13 2018. Allowing the unencumbered funds to lapse on June 30, 2020 instead of June 30, 2019
14 would give the CCWG the additional time needed to encumber the \$1,000,000 appropriation to
15 fund the research and technical support contracts.

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

1 In addition to addressing the lapsing funds issue, the Department and UH-WRRC would
2 need the various reporting deadlines and the sunset date of the CCWG to be extended as
3 indicated in SB696 SD2 HD1. The UH-WRRC could also use an additional \$0.5M
4 appropriation to be used in FY20 and FY21 to continue their efforts with conducting a
5 comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas and for
6 research and technical assistance necessary for the completion of the comprehensive cesspool
7 conversion plan.

8 **Offered Amendments:** Amend measure to be similar to SB696 SD2 HD1 and include an
9 additional \$0.5M appropriation for UH-WRRC to be used in FY20 and FY21.

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



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Ways and Means
Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at 10:20 a.m.

By

Darren Lerner, Director
Water Resources Research Center
and

Michael Bruno, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 551 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran 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.



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

Testimony in Support of HB551
Relating to Cesspools

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
April 3rd, 2019
10:20am
Conference Room 211

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

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

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

LATE

HB-551

Submitted on: 4/2/2019 4:44:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2019 10:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christin	Testifying for One World One Water, LLC	Support	No

Comments:

HB-551

Submitted on: 4/2/2019 3:12:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2019 10:20:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB1526. Coral reefs are dying in large part to warming oceans, and valuable coastline is eroding due to sea level rise. Climate change is already occurring. By granting an adequate budget for the DLNR we protect our environment thereby protecting our tourism dollars.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei

LATE

Testimony of

ELENA ZUCCHINI

Hawai'i resident

Before the Senate Committee on

WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, April, 3rd, 2019

10:20 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of

HOUSE BILL 551

RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Aloha Chair Dolovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

My name is Elena Zucchini and I am an international student at the Hawaii Pacific University. I am here today in order to give my support to the bill HB 551, which seeks to extend lapse date for funds appropriated to the University of Hawaii to conduct a comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas, and extend 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.

I decided to come to Hawaii in order to graduate in Environmental Studies. I thought Oahu could be one of the best location to study about the environment and especially oceanography. However, I realized Hawaii is not as perfect as I thought it would be. Indeed, corals and other marine animals are dying every day, people are getting sick from going into the water or eating fish, beaches are sometimes closed, and drinking water is sometimes not drinkable. And what is the reason? Ocean pollution, mainly due by sewage spills and cesspools.

According to the EPA, cesspools in Hawai'i release approximately 53 million gallons of untreated sewage into the ground each day.

Today, there are approximately 90,000 cesspools in Hawaii, with nearly 50,000 located on the Big Island, almost 14,000 on Kauai, over 12,000 on Maui, over 11,000 on Oahu and over 1,400 on Molokai, and 43,000 of them are posing risks to our water resources.

Hence, I believe that there is the need to continue working on a cesspool conversion plan, and that some more studies have to be done to show that cesspools have an important impact on marine life!

Cesspools are affecting our environment, and it is our responsibility to change this trend. I do think that each step that we will make in order to convert cesspools will result in a positive impact on the environment and a chance to resolve our mistakes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 551.