



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0696-SD1
RELATING TO CESSPOOLS**

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

Hearing Date: February 25, 2019

Room Number: CR 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. 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 (CCWG) in completing its comprehensive cesspool
7 conversion plan. To date, the CCWG has held four meetings on September 13, 2018,
8 October 9, 2018, November 15, 2018, and January 18, 2019. The CCWG is currently working
9 on 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 and to submit an interim
11 report due to the legislature no later than December 31, 2019. This measure provides the
12 additional time and funding that will be needed to develop a comprehensive cesspool conversion
13 plan and to complete all tasks and reports required under Act 132, SLH 2018.

14 The staff from the University of Hawaii (UH) Water Resources Research Center
15 (WRRC) also supports this measure. They stated to the Department that they would need the
16 additional time and funding to conduct a comprehensive state study of sewage contamination in
17 nearshore marine areas.

18 **Offered Amendments:** No amendments offered.

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



O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities

COMMITTEE WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, February 25, 2019

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 221
State Capitol

RE: SB 696 Relating to Cesspools

To the Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I am Melodie Aduja, Chair of the O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i. Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony on SB 696. The O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities ("OCCLP") hereby submits its testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 696, relating to Cesspools.**

The purpose of SB 696 is to: (1) Extend various reporting deadlines and the sunset date of the cesspool conversion working group; and (2) to appropriate additional funds for the conduct of the comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas and for research and technical assistance necessary for completion of the 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, i.e., that 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 and they create serious public safety issues, environmental problems and economic dangers which are exacerbated by the effects of climate change, OCCLP supports SB 696 and urges its passage out of the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Monday, February 25, 2019 at 10:25 a.m.

By

Darren Lerner, Director
Water Resources Research Center

And

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

SB 696 SD1 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) strongly supports this measure. In light of the fact that Hawai'i has the the largest concentration of coastal cesspools in the nation and understanding the importance of clean, healthy ocean waters to Hawai'i's people, communities and economy, Act 132, Session Laws of Hawai'i (SLH) 2018, appropriated \$500,000 for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the WRRC to conduct a comprehensive statewide study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas. The WRRC recognizes that this research and the information that WRRC would be able to provide the Cesspool Conversion Working Group (CCWG) established by Act 312, SLH 2018, and organized by the State of Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) would be significantly more robust and informative by the proposed appropriation of an additional \$500,000 and the provision of additional time to conduct these studies for fiscal year 2020-2021. In consideration of the additional funding in support of continued research, the proposed extension of the date for reporting to the legislature is also recognized as appropriate and is well appreciated.

From our discussions with the University of Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology and DOH, they also support this measure. DOH specifically stated that they would need the additional time and funding to conduct research or gather technical assistance on other issues as identified by the (CCWG) in completing its comprehensive cesspool conversion plan and they understand the need for additional funds as detailed in this bill to carry out our collective charge to fruition.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-696-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2019 1:13:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:25:00 AM



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

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB696. Our marine ecosystem is the lifeblood of our tourism dollars. To protect it is to protect businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei