



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1653
RELATING TO RESIDENTIAL REAL PROPERTY

REPRESENTATIVE NICOLE E. LOWEN, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Hearing Date: 2/4/2020

Room Number: CR 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) supports this measure with
3 comments. The United States Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic
4 Atmospheric Administration have indicated that an individual wastewater system inspection
5 program is necessary for Hawaii to receive approval of its coastal nonpoint program pursuant to
6 Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990. The Department
7 and the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism could potentially lose
8 approximately \$1.1 million of federal funds if an inspection program is not implemented. This
9 measure would satisfy the federal requirement of having an inspection program for individual
10 wastewater systems and would decrease the number of failing systems, thereby having a
11 beneficial impact on water quality. Requiring the inspection of the individual wastewater
12 systems at the time of sale of a property will protect a potential buyer. Problems with an
13 individual wastewater system can range from simple repairs to very complex replacement which
14 can cost thousands of dollars. The individual wastewater system is considered an extension of
15 the plumbing of a home. During home inspections at the time of sale, it is common for plumbing
16 and electrical systems to be inspected for deficiencies. It would only make sense to include the
17 inspection of the individual wastewater systems in all home inspections at the time of sale.

- 1 **Offered Amendments:** The Department recommends replacing the term onsite sewage system
- 2 with individual wastewater system as defined in section 342D-1. In SECTION 1, under new
- 3 proposed section 508D-A, compliance status of the individual wastewater system should be
- 4 included with the inspection of records.

- 5 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.