

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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2718 HD1
RELATING TO RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND
ADAPTATION.**

REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: February 24, 2020

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** 1.0 FTE and \$165,000 general fund appropriation for salary and operating
2 expenses.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports HB2718 HD1 to
4 fill a gap in Hawaii's climate change response plan. Although there is robust activity related to
5 infrastructure resilience, the department is not aware of advanced conversations and planning
6 around human health mitigation, much less adaptation.

7 DOH has very experienced civil and environmental engineers and highly trained clinical and
8 population health management professionals, including public health preparedness, however, the
9 department has identified no resources that possess domain knowledge in both. A scan of other
10 state resources, such as at the Office of Planning, University of Hawaii School of Public Health,
11 and the John A. Burns School of Medicine revealed only three individuals with a professional
12 interest in human health adaptation related to climate change, but none with programmatic
13 responsibility for thought leadership on the topic.

14 A missing element, for example, that is key is surveillance: developing strategic climate
15 monitoring, surveillance, and response systems to prevent and respond to climate-related impacts
16 may include creating decision support systems that enable agencies to predict, anticipate, and
17 model events and early warning systems that enable rapid response. The capacity to
18 systematically collect, manage, analyze, and interpret climate and extreme weather data and the

1 impact on human health is critical to making informed climate policy and developing effective
2 responses to climate and weather events

3 The purpose of HB2718 HD1, therefore, is to establish a permanent Climate Change and Human
4 Health Adaptation Coordinator to assure health care and public health strategies are synthesized
5 with environmental- and energy-related mitigation and adaptation activities. This position's
6 scope of responsibility is to define and plan for anticipated health effects related to weather and
7 climate include death and illness from heat waves; injuries and mental health impacts from
8 catastrophic events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods; increased air pollution with
9 concurrent rises in respiratory and cardiovascular diseases; detrimental impacts on water quality
10 and quantity; and an increased incidence of vector-borne, foodborne, and waterborne diseases.
11 Recent climate and weather-related challenges, from extreme weather events to changing
12 patterns of communicable disease, have already demonstrated the critical need to improve public
13 health capacity and capability to identify, prevent, and respond to these threats. Although
14 deployed to the Department of Health because of the need for subject-matter supervision on both
15 health care and environmental issues, the Climate Change and Human Health Adaptation
16 Coordinator will coordinate closely with the state's Sustainability Coordinator and related
17 resources, as as aligning and informing the priorities of the Climate Change Mitigation and
18 Adaptation Commission.

19 Operational expenses include neighbor island travel to meet with stakeholders, consultants for
20 planning or human health adaptation research, and office supplies.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

22

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FEBRUARY 24, 2020
1:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 2718 HD1
RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2718 HD1 that establishes and appropriates funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health.

As the climate warms, animal and insect vectors for disease will extend the range of their current habitats, increasing the risk for illness in humans. *Aedes* mosquito species capable of transmitting dengue fever and zika virus are already present in the State. As a member of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation Commission created by Act 32 SLH 2017, the Department of Agriculture supports a dedicated position within the Department of Health to address the impacts of climate change on human health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
Anukriti Hittle
Coordinator, Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission

Before the
FINANCE

Monday, February 24, 2020
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In support of
HOUSE BILL 2718, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

House Bill 2718, House Draft 1 proposes to establish and appropriate funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health. **On behalf of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) I support this measure, provided it does not adversely affect the Department of Health’s Executive Supplemental Budget.**

The Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission “recognizes the urgency of climate threats and the need to act quickly. It promotes ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsible strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation in a manner that is clean, equitable and resilient.” It is a high-level multi-jurisdictional body that guides the priorities of the state’s climate response. Co-chaired by the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Office of Planning, it consists of 20 members—chairs of four legislative committees, and executive department heads at the county and state levels.

This measure acts on the Commission’s mandates as established by Act 32, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017 to uphold the United States’ pledges under the Paris Agreement, and is a crucial component of Hawaii’s adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this measure.

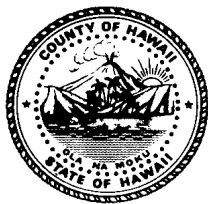
Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, Office of Planning

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WTH
Chairperson, HTA
Chairperson, DOA
CEO, OHA
Chairperson, DHHL
Director, DBEDT
Director, DOT
Director, DOH
Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
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Director, Hawai’i DP
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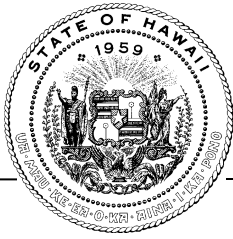
February 21, 2020

Testimony by
MICHAEL YEE
Director, County of Hawai'i Planning Department
before the
Committee on Finance
Monday, February 24, 2020, 1:00 P.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
In consideration of
HB 2718 HD1
Relating to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The County of Hawai'i Planning Department strongly **SUPPORTS** Bill HB 2718, HD1 to establish and appropriates funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health.

As a member of the Hawai'i Climate Change and Adaptation Commission I actively work on elevating social equity as an integral value of climate change and sea level rise policy. A Climate Change and Human Health Adaptation Coordinator at the Department of Health is critical to evaluating the health impacts on frontline communities facing climate change and sea level rise. The position would add to the multisector response that Hawai'i must have to help communities build adaptation and resilience.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.



OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Monday, February 24, 2020
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

LATE

in consideration of
HB 2718, HD1
RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of Planning **supports** HB 2718, HD1, to establish and appropriate funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health, provided it does not displace Executive Budget priorities.

The Office of Planning has been actively working on sustainable development and climate adaptation to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In 2018, the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO) published a Special Report on Health and Climate Change, which was delivered to the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).¹ The Special Report recommended that the health sector be more actively involved in climate adaptation planning noting that local-level governments are increasingly promoting health and climate goals through policies for cleaner transportation, energy, waste management, and urban planning.

Climate change adds further pressure on public health, which is strongly influenced by effects on other sectors such as food, water, and sanitation. The WHO recommends that a multisectoral response is required to build on existing strengths and encourage the health care and public health communities to work with water and sanitation, food systems, and energy provision sectors to integrate and build climate adaptation and resilience.

¹ World Health Organization. 2018. COP24 Special Report: Health & Climate Change. Available online: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276405/9789241514972-eng.pdf?ua=1>

The Office of Planning notes that the Hawai‘i State Legislature recently established the State’s Sustainability Coordinator position within the Office of Planning, pursuant to the Supplemental Appropriation Act of 2016.

The Office of Planning thanks the Hawai‘i State Legislature for passing Act 146, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2019, now codified within the Hawai‘i State Planning Act as §226-65 to revise and update Hawai‘i’s 2050 Sustainability Plan to “serve as the State’s climate and sustainability action plan.” The State’s Sustainability Coordinator looks forward to working in collaboration with the proposed Climate Change and Human Health Adaptation Coordinator and the Department of Health to assist with the planning to adapt to climate change-related human health adaptation issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96843
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February 24, 2020

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Manager and Chief Engineer

ELLEN E. KITAMURA, P.E.
Deputy Manager and Chief Engineer 

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members
Committee on Finance
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 308
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

Dear Chair Luke and Members:

Subject: House Bill 2718, House Draft 1: Relating to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports House Bill (HB) 2718, House Draft (HD) 1. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for a Climate Change and Human Health Adaption Coordinator within the Department of Health.

As the State and county agencies move forward to implement recommendations of the Hawai'i Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report (Report), there needs to be a coordinated effort between both the State and counties.

The BWS recognizes that climate change and sea level rise will impact the sustainability of Oahu's water resources and coastal water infrastructure. As such, vulnerability assessments and adaptation measures needed to be prioritized and implemented. BWS recently completed its vulnerability assessment entitled Impacts of Climate Change on Honolulu Water Supplies & Planning Strategies for Mitigation (2019) and have incorporated the findings into our long-range CIP. Water quality vulnerabilities were also assessed to understand how sea level rise could impact our groundwater aquifers and public health.

Saltwater intrusion is the main water quality concern identified through this project. Continued monitoring of water quality is recommended. Development of additional triggers and actions for individual wells in response to rising trends in chloride

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members
February 24, 2020
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concentrations should be developed in consultation with the BWS, Department of Health (DOH) and the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) on water adaptation actions.

Other concerns include the number of cesspools potentially harming public health and the environment. The DOH provided BWS with data identifying the number of cesspools on Oahu, which potentially impacts water quality. There is a need to incorporate recommended climate change mitigation policies and adaptive measures to protect against future water quality impacts and degradation of existing sources of groundwater supplies.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony in support of HB 2718, HD 1.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ernest Y. W. Lau', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer