

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

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

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

REP. JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: February 11, 2020

Room Number: 329

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 to fill a  
4 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

1 model events and early warning systems that enable rapid response. The capacity to  
2 systematically collect, manage, analyze, and interpret climate and extreme weather data and the  
3 impact on human health is critical to making informed climate policy and developing effective  
4 responses to climate and weather events

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

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

23 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

24

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  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020  
8:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

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

Chairpersons Lowen and Mizuno and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2718 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 their range 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**

**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  
Director, Maui DP  
Director, Hawai'i DP  
Director, Kaua'i DP  
The Adjutant General  
Manager, CZM

**Before the HOUSE COMMITTEES ON**  
**ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**  
**and**  
**HEALTH**

**TUESDAY, February 11, 2020**  
**8:30AM**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

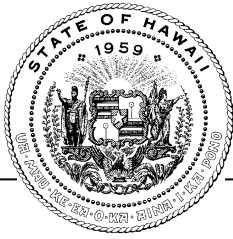
**In support of**  
**HOUSE BILL 2718**  
**RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION**

House Bill 2718 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 offer the following comments in support of 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 DLNR and 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 SLH 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. Since the Commission is the coordinating body for policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation for the state, I suggest the measure make direct reference to the Commission and its staff, in order to more effectively coordinate and align State priorities and actions on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments in support of this measure.



# OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director, Office of Planning  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
AND  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**  
Tuesday, February 11, 2020  
8:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

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

Chairs Lowen and Mizuno, Vice Chairs Wildberger and Kobayashi, and Members of the House Committees:

The Office of Planning **supports** HB 2718 to establish and appropriate funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health.

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 24<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).<sup>1</sup> 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.

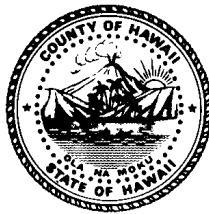
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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. 2018. COP24 Special Report: Health & Climate Change. Available online: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276405/9789241514972-eng.pdf?ua=1>

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.

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267  
FAX: (808) 323-4786  
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## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

February 6, 2020

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON HB 2718, RELATING TO CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION  
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection  
Committee on Health  
Tuesday, February 11, 2020  
8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Lowen, Chair Mizuno, and Members of the Committees:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2718, relating to climate mitigation and adaptation. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair of the Hawai'i County Council Public Safety Committee.

The purpose of this measure is to establish and appropriate funds for a climate change and human health adaptation coordinator within the Department of Health. Climate change affects human health and well-being. U.S Center for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have reported that climate change is a critical public health problem. Though steps are being taken to lessen climate change and its impacts on human health, we will still be impacted by global climate change due to large entities such as U.S., China, and the European Union, continuing to produce greenhouse gases at a scale and pace that runs the risk of run-away climate change. This causes an increased risk for health effects from climate change to our most vulnerable people. Increased risk for health effects from climate change will further stress the health care infrastructure, and financial systems.

For the reasons stated above I urge the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection, and the Committee on Health to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

*Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.*

## BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HI 96843  
www.boardofwatersupply.com




February 11, 2020

KIRK CALDWELL, MAYOR

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

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

The Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Energy and Environment Protection  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 325  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Health  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 325  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Lowen, Chair Mizuno and Members:

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

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports House Bill (HB) 2718. 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 Nicole E. Lowen, Chair  
and Members

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
and Members

February 11, 2020

Page 2

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.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ernest Y. W. Lau', is positioned above the printed name.

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

**HB-2718**

Submitted on: 2/9/2020 7:31:59 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/11/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Toni Withington	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please vote Yes. Climate change is real and will be the biggest challenge for us starting now. The State needs coordination of efforts in this area. The problems reach far beyond DOH, but that is a good place to have a professional coordinator who can work with many agencies.

Please vote yes.

Toni Withington, Hawi, North Kohala

**LATE**

**HB-2718**

Submitted on: 2/11/2020 12:48:43 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/11/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharlene Chun Lum	Individual	Support	No

Comments: