

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2380
RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: 2/12/2020

Room Number: CR 224

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure may impact the priorities identified in the Governor's
- 2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department) appropriations and
- 3 personnel priorities.

- 4 **Department Testimony:** The Department supports this measure. Act 132, Session Laws of
- 5 Hawaii (SLH) 2018 established a Cesspool Conversion Working Group (CCWG) that is
- 6 administered by the Department, to develop a long-range, comprehensive plan for cesspool
- 7 conversion statewide of all cesspools by 2050. The CCWG is also responsible for evaluating
- 8 alternative wastewater equipment and technologies appropriate to the various areas where
- 9 cesspools are located that may better protect the environment at lower or comparable cost and
- 10 how the equipment or technologies can be incorporated as part of the long-term solution to
- 11 wastewater treatment issues. The Department believes that funding a pilot project that
- 12 evaluates various available wastewater treatment alternative technologies will assist the CCWG
- 13 with meeting the objectives of Act 132 SLH 2018. However, the Department may not be the
- 14 best agency to develop and manage the pilot project. The University of Hawaii's Water
- 15 Resources Research Center (UH WRRC) may be the appropriate agency that has the expertise
- 16 and experience to conduct the pilot project testing of new sewage technologies.

- 17 **Offered Amendments:** Amend bill by replacing the Department of Health with UH WRRC as
- 18 the agency that will establish and conduct the pilot testing of new toilet and sewage technologies.

- 1 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 12, 2020

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Deputy Manager and Chief Engineer 

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
and Members
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
State Senate
State Capitol, Room 224
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 2380: Relating to Environmental Protection

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports Senate Bill (HB) 2380. This bill establishes a 3-year Department of Health (DOH) pilot project to demonstrate new toilet and sewage treatment technologies and to expedite demonstration projects.

According to a 2017 DOH Report Relating to Cesspools and Prioritization For Replacement submitted to the Legislature (2018, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH)), there are nearly 88,000 inventoried cesspools in the State. These cesspools discharge 53.0 million gallons of raw sewage into the groundwater and surface water every day. Oahu has 11,300 cesspools that discharge 7.5 million gallons per day of raw sewage into the groundwater and surrounding environment. Act 132, 2018 SLH, established a Cesspool Conversion Working Group within DOH to develop a comprehensive plan for conversion of all statewide cesspools by 2050. Accordingly, "replacement of each existing cesspool with an improved treatment method could cost \$20,000 or more per system, for a total cost around \$1.75 billion." DOH has partnered with several state and county agencies to resolving these issues, which are complex.

A 3-year pilot project and additional funding to research and find new toilet and sewage treatment technologies would allow the DOH to continue to find a new waste management solution that can preserve local water quality and protect our environment.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony in support of SB 2380.

Very truly yours,



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

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

IN REPLY REFER TO:
WAS 20-54

February 7, 2020

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice-Chair
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senate
State Capitol, Room 224
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Ruderman, and Members of the Committee on
Agriculture and Environment:

SUBJECT: SB 2380
Relating to Environmental Protection

The Department of Environmental Services (ENV) of the City and County of Honolulu supports SB 2380, which would establish a 3-year Department of Health pilot project to demonstrate new toilet and sewage treatment technologies and to expedite demonstration projects.

In consideration of Act 125 requiring the replacement of all cesspools in Hawaii by 2050, ENV recognizes the need for innovative solutions for achieving that goal. By establishing an expedited pilot project to identify, demonstrate and evaluate a wide range of cesspool conversion technologies, SB 2380 adopts a proactive approach to addressing this issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori M.K. Kahikina", is written over a horizontal line.

Lori M.K. Kahikina, P.E.
Director



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT
Wednesday, February 12, 2020 — 1:30 p.m. — Room 224

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2380, Relating to Environmental Protection.

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Hennessey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Communications & External Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve our community's quality of life by creating more locally produced food; increasing affordable clean renewable energy and transportation options; and better managing waste and fresh water resources.

Ulupono supports SB 2380, which establishes a 3-year Department of Health pilot project to demonstrate new toilet and sewage treatment technologies and to expedite demonstration projects.

Hawai'i has over 88,000 cesspools statewide that discharge more than 53 million gallons of untreated sewage into the State's waters each day. This poses major health and environmental risks to our drinking water, groundwater, streams, and shore waters.

As an island state, Hawai'i is responsible for handling and diverting its waste streams. With the passage of Act 132, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2018, a cesspool conversion working group was formed and tasked to develop a comprehensive plan to address cesspool conversions in an environmentally-responsible manner. Allowing this solution-based approach will help to find new, innovative technologies in the State's push to transition cesspools statewide to eco-friendly alternatives.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Amy Hennessey, APR
Senior Vice President, Communications & External Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



WAI WASTEWATER
ALTERNATIVES AND
INNOVATIONS

LATE

Feb. 11, 2020

In Support of **SB2380** Relating to Environmental Protection
House Committees on Agriculture & Environment (AEN)
Feb. 12, 1:30pm, Room 224

Aloha, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the non-profit WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, I am writing in **strong support of SB2380**, which would establish a pilot program with the Dept. Of Health and UH Sea Grant to review and test new toilet and sewage treatment technologies in different locations across the state.

I serve on the Cesspool Conversion Working Group, and this bill would help us find better and more affordable solutions to our serious wastewater management problem. Hawaii has more than 88,000 cesspools across the state, and these substandard systems discharge 53 million gallons of raw sewage each day into Hawaii's waters. That's like a massive sewage spill every day! Although most of us don't see the effects, this sewage pollution poses serious risks to water quality, human health and the resilience of our coral reefs.

WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations is dedicated to protecting our waters and near-shore ecosystems by reducing sewage pollution from cesspools and failing septic systems. Our goal is to help communities and homeowners find more innovative, affordable and eco-friendly solutions to wastewater management. Better sanitation systems reduce sewage pollution and makes properties more valuable, while also protecting our groundwater, streams and the health of our coral reefs and coastal areas.

This crucial bill will help DOH to help fund pilot projects that allow us to test new technology like the Gates Foundation's Reinvented Toilets. These and other innovative circular systems separate liquids and solids, burn the solids as fuel and then pasteurize the water, producing pathogen-free biochar and clean, recycled water. The mandate to convert all cesspools is 2050, but with 30-year mortgages, we need to start testing new solutions now, especially in high-priority areas like Kahalu'u and Upcountry Maui. This bill will make it easier to do that and provide critical information for the Cesspool Conversion Working Group to help us in selecting the best new sanitation technologies for the state.

Mahalo for your leadership on this issue and consideration of this bill. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Aloha,
Stuart Coleman
Stuart H. Coleman

SB-2380

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 8:43:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2020 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo nui loa no kĀ“ia.

SB-2380

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 5:59:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2020 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB2380. Sewage eventually ends up in the ocean, so this bill will help to protect Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystem, which is also under assault by various other factors.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, Maui