

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of**  
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
**Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on**  
**AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**  
**and**  
**WATER AND LAND**

**Friday, February 7, 2020**  
**1:30 P.M.**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of**  
**SENATE BILL 2548**  
**RELATING TO MARINE DEBRIS**

Senate Bill 2548 proposes to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to implement a pilot project to encourage the collection of man-made marine debris, which would pay fifty cents per pound of eligible marine debris delivered to a marine debris recycling center approved by the Department; and appropriate \$200,000 in general funds to create the pilot project. **The Department supports this measure and offers the following comments.**

For years, the Department has been removing larger types of marine debris from the State's shoreline and nearshore waters, including abandoned fishing nets, logs, and derelict vessels. Removal work is conducted or contracted by the Department's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation, and funding comes from the Boating Special Fund, which is comprised of user fee and lease rent revenues derived from state boating facilities. Many nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations also conduct their own volunteer beach cleanups, to great effect. This measure could complement existing efforts by creating a stronger incentive for members of the public to participate in marine debris removal.

The Department notes the following concerns with implementation of this measure and recommends the Committees address these concerns before moving this measure forward:

- The Department is unaware of any recycling facilities in the State that accept and recycle the types of marine debris contemplated in this measure. The Department recommends

removing all references to “a marine debris recycling center” (p.1, line 15 and p.2, line 8) and replacing it with “a marine debris collection center”.

- Implementation of the pilot project would incur significant costs such as providing the facility and equipment to receive, weigh, and store marine debris; payroll for workers staffing the collection center; and transportation and disposal costs. The only facility that would accept the types of marine debris contemplated by this measure is the Honolulu Program of Waste Energy Recovery (H-POWER) facility on O‘ahu, operated by Hawaiian Electric Company, which burns waste to produce electricity. The H-POWER facility assesses a tipping fee for entry. These costs and fees would reduce the amount of funds available to be paid out for marine debris.
- There will be difficulty in accurately weighing collected debris, especially nets, to ensure that water weight is minimized. The weight of nets significantly increases when saturated with water and can take weeks or even months to de-water. There is also a concern that some individuals will attempt to defraud weighing stations to maximize their payout by taking advantage of saturated nets or otherwise increasing the weight of submitted marine debris.
- Microplastic marine debris is also a significant threat to the environment, and the Department does not have the funding, capacity, or capability to address this type of marine debris. A large portion of the waste collected during beach cleanups is microplastic and plastic byproducts, and funding constraints are commonly the most significant hindrance to cleanup efforts.

The Department supports this pilot project as an opportunity to test the effectiveness of a marine debris reward program. As a more permanent solution, the Department believes a self-replenishing Marine Debris Abatement Fund or some type of recurring appropriation would greatly assist marine debris cleanup efforts. The funding would be administered by the Department, could include funding for a reward program such as proposed by this measure, and would be dedicated to providing funding to any state or county agency for marine cleanup efforts, including large debris, small debris, and vessels on state shores or in state waters. Allowing the Department to administer funds would ensure a central controlling entity for funding while also avoiding jurisdictional conflicts, as agencies would receive funding to handle cleanup efforts with their own staff and methods.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Testimony in Support of HB 2548

DATE: Friday,	DATE: Friday, February 7, 2020
February	TIME: 1:30 p.m.
7, 2020	PLACE: Conference Room 224

Aloha,

I am an aquarium fisherman I have spent much time and effort to give back to our seas to keep them healthy and maintain sustainability of our fisheries.

After seeing the plastics on the beach, we have done much research and thought to help this situation. I would like to share that information here.

If plastics remain on the beach High tides and shifting winds will send them back into the ocean. It is such a large job to remove plastics that many agencies and groups need to coordinate efforts to solve this issue. The HTFA Hawaii Tropical Fish Association will help too.

Two simple methods are being tested by us and please contact me for the results.

1. leaf blower vacuums gas or battery driven can lift lighter plastics into a bag to be emptied into a larger trash bag for pick up. This way can also be done on rocky shores. Cost is from \$100 to \$200 a very reasonable amount for many to individually buy and participate. Battery charged will have less noise pollution.

2. Wet dry vacuums, also come in battery operated versions and batteries can easily be recharged on site with solar battery chargers.

I would like to mention we spend up to 10 hours a day fishing and over 40 years we have seen little if any floating debris as it seems to collect in specific areas and float together. That is a good thing. High winds and storms blow it to our beaches.

Thanks for tackling this issue,

Ron Tubbs B.S.N.D.

**From:** [ONE OCEAN CONSERVATION](#)  
**To:** [AEN Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Support for SB 2548  
**Date:** Thursday, February 6, 2020 8:54:38 AM

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On behalf of Water Inspired Conservation Group we strongly support SB 2548. Hawaii's position in the North Pacific gyre makes it uniquely susceptible to high concentrations of marine debris and plastic pollution. Fishing nets and gear represent a major portion of marine debris, with a report (Lebreton 2018) estimating 46% of the mass within the Pacific garbage patch to consist of fishing gear. These items are a common sight at our monthly cleanups along Hawaii's coastlines, particularly the windward side. Creating incentives to encourage the active removal of fishing nets/gear will have a positive impact on Hawaii's populations of both marine and terrestrial species alike, fisheries which many locals rely on as a resource, as well as tourism as unique marine life and beautiful beaches, are some of the main attractions for visitors. The addition of a suitable facility that is capable of properly processing the collected materials is needed as the current alternative is simply to throw the nets away. There could be financial benefits that could come out of recycling the material as well, giving it new life to serve another purpose. This bill is very important to our community, please pass it!

# Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

P. O. Box 25284 · Honolulu · Hawai'i · 96825

(808) 393 2168 · [www.b-e-a-c-h.org](http://www.b-e-a-c-h.org)

DATE: Thursday 6th February, 2020

TO: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and the Environment  
Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Suzanne Frazer, President, Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

RE: **TESTIMONY: COMMENTS ON SB2548**

Relating to marine debris. Appropriating funds to create and implement a marine debris recycling pilot project.

Committee meeting on Friday 7th February, 2020 at 1:30PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Kahele and Committee Members,

I am writing comments regarding SB2548 on behalf of Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i (B.E.A.C.H.).

B.E.A.C.H. requests that you please hold this bill in committee until it is further clarified because the wording is too vague regarding transferring marine debris to an "approved facility" or a "marine debris recycling center". This bill needs to specify how the marine debris will be recycled and what centre or facility it will be taken to.

It is concerning what is planned for the recycling of the debris, because marine debris is toxic and should not be recycled into consumer products.

In addition the appropriation of \$200,000 for fishermen to collect marine debris doesn't seem quite right when non-profits such as B.E.A.C.H. have spent considerable time and money removing marine debris from shorelines and did not receive state funds to do so even though it is the state's and county's job to keep shorelines clear of debris. In our research into marine debris we have found that the fishing industry is the top polluter of marine debris. In addition, fishermen are known for creating "fish aggravating devices" by purposely throwing large bundles of fishing gear into the ocean and leaving it there. So how will anyone know whether they are just collecting their own gear back out of the water and then claiming money for it? It's in the fishing industry's best interest to volunteer their time to clean up the ocean because their industry depends on fish not going extinct. It just doesn't seem right to pay the polluters to clean up the mess they created.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Frazer.

B.E.A.C.H. Co-Founder & President





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**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Beau Oshiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

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TO:

Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Committee on Water and Land  
Senator Mike Gabbard and Senator Kaiiali'i Kahele, *Chairs*  
Senator Russell E. Ruderman and Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, *Vice Chairs*

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 7, 2020  
TIME: 1:30pm  
PLACE: Conference Room 224

RE: SB2548 Relating to Marine Debris

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

We support this effort to find ways to recycle marine debris here in Hawaii. Studies have shown that the vast majority of marine debris originates from outside our state and it not from local sources<sup>1</sup>. This debris originates from all over the Pacific before being washed up on Hawaii beaches by ocean currents. Last year HFIA partnered with several of our members and other groups to help introduce Seabin marine debris collection technology to our state. Many of our members are also involved in sponsoring and participating in beach cleanups to collect marine debris. A marine debris recycling pilot program is a thoughtful next step in tackling this global problem that winds up on our shores. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2019/10/12/hawaii-news/plastic-marine-debris-on-hawaiis-windward-coasts-comes-mostly-from-abroad-study-finds/>

**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 7:06:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kai Keemoku	Testifying for Sustainable Swim	Support	No

Comments:

We strongly support SB 2548. Hawaii's position in the North Pacific gyre makes it uniquely susceptible to high concentrations of marine debris and plastic pollution. Fishing nets and gear represent a major portion of marine debris, with a report (Lebreton 2018) estimating 46% of the mass within the pacific garbage patch to consist of fishing gear. These items are a common sight at our monthly cleanups along Hawaii's coastlines, particularly the windward side. Creating incentives to encourage the active removal of fishing nets/gear will have a positive impact on Hawaii's populations of both marine and terrestrial species alike, fisheries which many locals rely on as a resource, as well as tourism as unique marine life and beautiful beaches, are some of the main attractions for visitors. The addition of a suitable facility that is capable of properly processing the collected materials is needed as the current alternative is simply to throw the nets away. There could be financial benefits that could come out of recycling the material as well, giving it new life to serve another purpose. This bill is very important to our community, please pass it!

**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 6:42:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:41:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Agriculture and Environment and Water and Land Committees:

The Climate Protectors Coalition **strongly supports SB2548, but comments that it should be combined with SB3125, which also deals with removing marine debris.**

The Climate Protectors are a new group inspired by the Mauna Kea Protectors but focused on reversing the climate crisis. As a tropical island State, Hawaii will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, and rising sea levels. We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and eliminate plastic debris, not only in our ocean but also washing up on our shorelines. Marine debris, especially tiny microplastics, is harming marine life including sea birds, turtles, and precious coral reefs, hurting our recreation and tourism, and even endangering human health with adhering persistent toxins.

The Climate Protectors Coalition asks the Committees to pass an amended SB2548 by adding the following language at the end of page 1:

“In addition, this bill would enhance Hawaii’s environment and economy by providing \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center for research and development of specialized equipment for effectively and efficiently removing plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines. For purposes of this section, "plastic marine debris" means any discarded or abandoned plastic found on any shore, beach, or any beach access right-of-way.”

In addition, please add after SECTION 3:

“SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to the University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center for research and development of specialized equipment for effectively removing plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines. The University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center may contract with other entities as needed.”

Thank you for passing an amended bill that will begin to address marine debris on our shorelines as well as in our ocean! Mahalo!

**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 8:33:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ocean Ramsey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2548.

As someone who works daily in the ocean I see shocking more amounts of plastic and have saved sharks, turtles, and dolphins from entanglement. We need more support for marine debris removal and we will continue our efforts to educate the public to reduce use of single use plastics that are commonly seen on the dives we do and at the beach clean ups we run with One Ocean Diving and Conservation.

Hawaii's position in the North Pacific gyre makes it uniquely susceptible to high concentrations of marine debris and plastic pollution. Fishing nets and gear represent a major portion of marine debris, with a report (Lebreton 2018) estimating 46% of the mass within the Pacific garbage patch to consist of fishing gear. These items are a common sight at our monthly cleanups along Hawaii's coastlines, particularly the windward side. Creating incentives to encourage the active removal of fishing nets/gear will have a positive impact on Hawaii's populations of both marine and terrestrial species alike, fisheries which many locals rely on as a resource, as well as tourism as unique marine life and beautiful beaches, are some of the main attractions for visitors. The addition of a suitable facility that is capable of properly processing the collected materials is needed as the current alternative is simply to throw the nets away. There could be financial benefits that could come out of recycling the material as well, giving it new life to serve another purpose. This bill is very important to our community, please pass it!

One Ocean Research and Diving conducts daily surveys in the pelagic zone of the north shore of Oahu, and the presence of fishing nets/gear is regularly encountered to the point where we have made it one of the variables in our data set. These nets have a high chance of entangling marine life and we have cut fishing line, gear, and nets off live sharks and turtles multiple times. Plastic pollution including fishing gear is projected to increase exponentially in the years to come, and this problem will likely only get worse. Hawaii is uniquely situated in the north Pacific gyre where significant amounts of debris are concentrated. Incentivizing the removal of nets and debris will have positive impacts on wildlife as well as the many visitors and residents that enjoy Hawaii's beautiful coastline and waters. Please pass this bill.

K. Scarlett Mount

Support for S.B. No. 2548, Relating to Marine Debris Clean Up

Our 10th grade STEM and Humanities classes at Mid Pacific Institute we have been discussing different environmental issues in Hawaii and the social response of those issues. A multitude of our projects in class have been focused on the ocean and pollution. We strongly support S.B. No. 2548, Relating to Marine Debris Clean Up, which would combine and encourage efforts from the State and owner.

In regards to current progress in keeping our ocean clean there is plenty of room for improvement. This bill has the potential to severely decrease the amount of marine debris, and help protect Oahu's environment and culture. 99.9% of nets we find in our oceans are not from Hawaii, meaning that changing fishing law regarding nets will not have the desired effect. Once this bill gets passed, the State and marine vessels out on the ocean will work together to drastically decrease the pollution in our waters.

In passing this bill we will be able to change the amount of marine debris, including nets not originally from our islands, to a drastically smaller number. We urge the committee to pass S.B. No. 2548. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 7:07:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ocean Ramsey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We strongly support SB 2548. One Ocean Research and Diving conducts daily surveys in the pelagic zone of the north shore of Oahu, and the presence of fishing nets/gear is regularly encountered to the point where we have made it one of the variables in our data set. These nets have a high chance of entangling marine life and we have cut fishing line, gear, and nets off live sharks and turtles multiple times. Plastic pollution including fishing gear is projected to increase exponentially in the years to come, and this problem will likely only get worse. Hawaii is uniquely situated in the north pacific gyre where significant amounts of debris are concentrated. Incentivizing the removal of nets and debris will have positive impacts on wildlife as well as the many visitors and residents that enjoy Hawaii's beautiful coastline and waters. Please pass this bill.

**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 7:14:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Juan Oliphant	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senators

In support, thank you for helping with the plastic pollutions in our ocean and beach

Mahalos

Juan Oliphant

**SB-2548**

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 9:46:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2020 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kaitlyn P Jacobs	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support bill sb 2548 because there is such a strong need for something to do about the marine debris issue. I have seen first hand what marine plastics and debris do to the wildlife, and the beaches that are considered saved from human pollution. Islands that are central in Hawaiian culture, that should remain untouched. If we can figure out a way to recycle these pollutants, we could be on our way to being a waste negative society.