



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony COMMENTING on HCR0099
REQUESTING THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY
OF, AND PROCEDURES FOR, IMPLEMENTING A BULKY WASTE ITEM
REDEMPTION PROGRAM

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

Hearing Date: 3/23/2021

Room Number: Via Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (Department) estimates that it will cost at least
2 \$250,000.00 to conduct a study on implementing a bulky waste redemption program in Hawai‘i
3 and requests an appropriation of general funds to accomplish HCR0099. Implementing this
4 proposal will impact the priorities identified in the Governor’s Executive Budget Request for the
5 Department’s appropriations and personnel priorities.

6 **Department Testimony:** Illegal dumping of bulky waste items pose public health, safety,
7 aesthetic, and environmental concerns. Mirroring, or possibly amending, the statutes that
8 established the State’s Deposit Beverage Container Program may be a novel approach to
9 addressing illegal dumping of bulky waste.

10 Commissioning a study to analyze and evaluate the feasibility of implementing a bulky
11 waste redemption program in Hawai‘i may assist decision-makers with making an informed
12 decision and facilitate implementation by the Department. It is important to understand the
13 benefits and costs to all stakeholders, including the environment, consumers, taxpayers,
14 businesses, and government agencies if future legislation is enacted.

15 The Department estimates that the total cost to hire an expert consultant to analyze and
16 evaluate data and draft a study should cost at least \$250,000.00. Unfortunately, the COVID-19
17 pandemic has severely impacted the State’s economy and the Department’s resources and

1 budget, including the Department's special funds. The Department respectfully requests that
2 \$250,000.00 of general funds be appropriated so that the Department can accomplish HCR0099.
3 The Department also estimates that it may take at least two years to successfully complete this
4 study, and respectfully requests additional time to submit a report to the Legislature.

5 **Offered Amendments:** None.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

March 23, 2021

To: House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Representative Nicole E. Lowen, Chair
Representative Lisa Marten, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Re: HCR99: REQUESTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONDUCT A STUDY ON
THE FEASIBILITY OF, AND PROCEDURES FOR, IMPLEMENTING A
BULKY WASTE ITEM REDEMPTION PROGRAM

Meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 10:00 a.m., Room 325 via videoconference

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Marten, and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and its Natural Resources Committee are in **strong support** of HCR99 as this Resolution requests the Environmental Management Division of the Department of Health to conduct a study on the feasibility of, and procedures for, implementing a bulky waste item redemption program.

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i (Party) has adopted at its 2018 State Convention, clear safeguards to promote and protect our clean and healthy environment. At page 17 of the Party Platform, it specifically provides, to wit:

ENVIRONMENT

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i believes that the preservation and restoration of our natural environment is essential. We support a sustainable society that utilizes the earth in such a way that future generations will benefit from the practices of our generation. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of our native ecosystems on each island. We believe in integrated approaches, practices, and support public policies that create and maintain a sustainable way of life in Hawai'i.

We believe in supporting best management practices in sustaining our environment and in increased citizen involvement. We support programs that encourage sustainable clean, efficient, creative, and environmentally friendly modes of transportation, recycling and waste reduction.



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The conservation, preservation and restoration of Hawai'i's natural resources are connected to health and welfare of our people; therefore, we support the conservation and protection of our natural environment, which includes reducing our carbon footprint for the benefit of current and future generations.

We support the protection of our *'āina* against destruction by corporate, government, or military usage and expect full restoration and reparation of environmental damage. To handle current and future demands for water, we must assess the current condition of our aquifers and take appropriate actions to secure our fresh water resources.

We support democratic participation of citizens and residents to protect (i) valuable coastal ecosystems and reefs from misuse and (ii) beaches for public use and recreation. The Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management (CZM) law, HRS Chapter 205A, currently provides for public participation in management of coastal resources.

We believe in the vigorous enforcement of our environmental laws and increased public-private stewardships and citizen involvement in protecting our resources.

We know that climate change is a real threat to our islands and the world. We strongly urge our candidates and elected officials to take immediate action to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change. This includes funding adaptation measures including coastal retreat, effective participation of indigenous peoples in climate change governance, and recognition that indigenous, local, and traditional ecological knowledge is key in climate change adaptation solutions.

We strongly urge this Committee to pass HCR99. This Resolution requests the Environmental Management Division of the Department of Health to conduct a study on the feasibility of, and procedures for, implementing a bulky waste item redemption program, either through establishment of a new redemption program or inclusion of bulky waste items in the existing Hawaii deposit beverage container program. This program, if implemented, would be consistent with the Democratic Party Platform in supporting programs that encourage sustainable clean, efficient, creative, and environmentally friendly recycling and waste reduction. This program is designed to avoid bulky waste from polluting our oceans, being buried in landfills, and or just scattered throughout the land and coastline causing a threat to the marine life, wildlife, and the environment.



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Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Respectfully yours,

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I support HCR 99.

The State of Hawaii has long suffered by the illegal dumping of motor vehicles, mattresses, furniture, tires and other items in the community. There are laws that make dumping illegal but dumping continues. The problem is compounded by the fact that most illegal dumping occurs when no one is present to view the activity. This makes identifying and prosecuting the offenders impossible. Enforcement of the law is impracticable.

City and state resources to clean illegal dumping is costly and reduces moneys that can be used for other necessary expenses of the government. Also cleanups are not timely so neighborhoods suffer from the odors, sanitation issues related to illegal dumps and not to mention the unaesthetic conditions it creates.

It is clear that other solutions to illegal dumping must be explored. One solution is to make it economically advantageous for residents to properly dispose of trash instead of the system of penalizing illegal dumping. Implementing a system similar to the Hawaii deposit beverage container program for large illegally dumped items will reduce this problem. The large items for this program should include but not limited to motor vehicles, tires, beds and other furniture.

If residents were rewarded for taking deposit eligible items to collection-redemption sites then this will reduce illegal dumping, and reduce government expenses to clean trash in our neighborhoods. It may even create new industries for the transport of deposit eligible items to collection-redemption sites. So even if the residents don't transport items to collection-redemption sites, businesses or others will do so because there is an economic incentive to do so.

Let's implement an incentive system instead of a penalty system to solve illegal dumping in our state.

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