



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

**Testimony COMMENTING on HCR102
REQUESTING THE WASTEWATER BRANCH OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A
FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE USE OF ORGANIC BIODEGRADABLE WATER
CLARIFIERS FOR CESSPOOL WATER REMEDIATION**

REPRESENTATIVE LINDA ICHIYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

Hearing Date: 3/28/2023

Room Number: 430

- 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 offers comments on this measure. The measure
- 5 requests the Department's Wastewater Branch of the Environmental Management Division to
- 6 conduct a feasibility study on the use of organic biodegradable water clarifiers for cesspool water
- 7 remediation. The Department's Wastewater Branch is a regulatory agency that does not conduct
- 8 feasibility studies on new wastewater technologies and effectiveness of additives used for
- 9 wastewater treatment. The manufacturers of the organic biodegradable water clarifiers should
- 10 reach out to a university or an independent research laboratory to test their product.
- 11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
- 12 **Offered Amendments:** None.



To: The Honorable Chair Linda Ichiyama, the Honorable Vice-chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the House Committee on Water and Land

From: The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **HCR102/HR139 REQUESTING THE WASTEWATER BRANCH OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BRANCH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE USE OF ORGANIC BIOGRADABLE WATER CLARIFIERS FOR CESSPOOL WATER REMEDIATION**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 28, 2023, 9:30 a.m. CR430

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, the Honorable Vice-chair Poepoe, and members of the House Committee on Water and Land:

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean.

The **Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) COMMENTS ON HCR102/HR139.**

I served as a Deputy Attorney General representing the Department of Health (DOH) Wastewater Branch for 15 years and served on the Cesspool Conversion Working Group for its entire four years. On behalf of HIROC, I **strongly support further investigation of the feasibility of new technologies that can reduce**

cesspool wastes, especially nutrients that harm reefs, at lower costs than conventional septic systems or aerobic treatment unit systems.

I do not believe that the DOH is the right entity to conduct such research, however. I do not think the research into new technologies should be limited to the use of organic biodegradable water clarifiers. Funding should be provided.

This Committee has passed a bill, **SB285 SD2 HD2**, that provides funding for **the University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center (UH WRRC) to conduct a demonstration project to examine and demonstrate new wastewater technologies.** If that bill passes, it would be **more appropriate than this concurrent resolution and resolution.**

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

HCR-102

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 9:22:50 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/28/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracy Yoshimura	PJY Global Consultants	Support	In Person

Comments:

To: Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Members of the Committee on Water & Land

Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 430

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Support for HCR 102/HR 139

I strongly support HCR 102/HR 139, which requests the Wastewater Branch of the Environmental Management Division of the Department of Health to conduct a feasibility study on the use of organic biodegradable water clarifiers for cesspool water remediation.

HCR 102/HR 139 provides in part:

(a) Pursuant to Act 125, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017 (Act 125), every cesspool in the State, excluding cesspools granted exemptions by the Director of Health, must be upgraded or converted to an approved wastewater system or connected to a sewerage system by January 1, 2050.

(b) There are approximately eighty-two thousand cesspools that will be required to be upgraded or converted to an approved wastewater system or connected to a sewer system by 2050.

(c) New wastewater management solutions could greatly improve public health and save public funds.

(d) One such promising technology is the use of an organic, biodegradable water clarifier (Clarifier) that is introduced through an automated, long-lasting delivery device that is inexpensive, tamper-proof, solar-powered, with clear and simple dosing instructions.

One of the proprietary formulas, Solutek, is FDA approved as a water clarifier in the United States, and is also well-proven from 22 years of use in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong, China, Japan, and Ireland. It contains no live organisms, enzymes or hazardous chemicals, and is user-safe, non-hazardous, non-flammable. Solutek's system can fully remediate Hawaii's cesspools for at least 95% less than the \$20,000 cost per household previously estimated by the Department of Health (local contractors have stated that the cost today, is closer to \$30,000 per household) for their replacement, greatly reducing the burden to the State and its residents. In fact, this cost reduction for the upgrade of the 83,000 cesspools here in Hawaii would result in savings in excess of \$1.5 billion dollars, to the residents and State, while meeting the mandate for conversion 28 years ahead of schedule.

As such, I fully support this resolution and believe that the Wastewater Branch of the Environmental Management Division of the Department of Health should do a feasibility study on the use of organic biodegradable water clarifiers for cesspool water remediation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tracy Yoshimura