

# IRON WORKERS STABILIZATION FUND

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April 13, 2023  
8:45 am

House  
Committee on Water & Land  
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SCR57 SD1 – URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO EXEMPT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAX THOSE PROPERTY OWNERS OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF AN ACTIVE MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILL OR CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION LANDFILL OR DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY AN ACTIVE LANDFILL TO A DEGREE THAT WARRANTS SUCH AN EXEMPTION.

Aloha Chair Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, Chair Nicole Lowen, Vice Chair Elle Cochran and Members of the Committees:

We **SUPPORT** SCR57 SD1. This resolution urges the City and County of Honolulu to provide a real property tax exemption for those residents living within ½ mile of the operation of an active landfill on the island of O‘ahu and anyone else that the City finds is impacted by an active landfill.

The scientific consensus affirms what the communities of West O‘ahu, especially Nānākuli, have been experiencing for decades, that landfills are a health hazard. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Health Statistics Neighborhood Life Expectancy Project (see attachments for visual maps), our members and their families in the two census tracts abutting the PVT Landfill operated in Nānākuli live 10 years less than the state average of 82 years, being the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest life expectancies in the entire state. This is unacceptable. As a matter of fairness, every community in Hawaii deserves a “clean and healthful environment” (HI State Const. Art. XI, Sec. 9). No one should suffer the ill effects of landfills, so we need to decrease our reliance upon landfills and eventually stop using them altogether.

The total waste generated on O‘ahu in 2021 was over 1.5 million tons, with 255,135 tons representing 25% of the total waste stream being Construction and Demolition Recycling; 222,238 tons representing 4% of the total waste being Construction and Demolition landfilling; 437,578 tons representing 28% of the total waste being General Material Recycling; 513,635 tons representing 30% of the total waste being H-Power Waste-to-Energy; 157,531 tons representing 11% of the total waste being H-Power Ash and Residual that was landfilled; and 106,723 tons representing 2% of the total waste being Municipal Solid Waste landfilling (City and County of Honolulu, *Status Report on Reducing and/or Continuing the Use of Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill*, 2023)

# IRON WORKERS STABILIZATION FUND

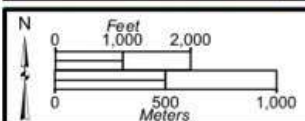
Nearly all landfilling, waste-to-energy processing, and recycling of O‘ahu’s waste occurs in West O‘ahu at the City-owned Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill (WGSL) in Kahe valley adjacent to the Honokai Hale and Makakilo communities, the City-owned H-POWER facility adjacent to the Kapolei community, and where both the H-POWER ash along with much of the Construction and Demolition waste passes through Makakilo, Kapolei, and Honokai Hale to either end up at WGSL or in Nānākuli at the landfill operated by PVT Land Company, Ltd. (City and County of Honolulu, *Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan*, 2019).

Hawai‘i recognized that “no one segment of the population or geographic area should be disproportionately burdened with environmental and/or health impacts resulting from development, construction, operations and/or use of natural resources” (Hawaii State Department of Health, *Hawaii Environmental Justice Initiative Report*, 2008). Many of those living within the ½ mile of the operation of an active landfill are living paycheck to paycheck. A real property tax break will bring about meaningful change and opportunity for those residents to better care for their health and safety, including through purchasing and maintaining air filters in their houses.

The people of West O‘ahu, especially those living within a ½ mile of the active operation of O‘ahu’s landfills have borne the brunt of our collective waste. Please urge the City to provide a tax break to those residents impacted so that they can take necessary actions to care for their health and safety.

We urge the committee to **PASS SCR57 SD1**. Mahalo for the opportunity testimony.

Date Saved: 10/12/2018 4:02:03 PM Document Path: F:\Hawaii\GIS\Projects\IVT\Figure 1-1\_PVTISWMF.mxd



**Location Map**  
 PVT ISWMF Relocation  
 Nanakuli, Waianae District, Oahu, Hawaii

Figure  
 1-1

# Life Expectancies

Census tracks surrounding  
 PVT Landfills including  
 Nānākuli & Princess Kahanu  
 Homesteads: **~72 yrs.**  
 HI Average: **~82 yrs.**  
**A 10 year loss**

CDC/US Department of Health



National Vital Statistics System

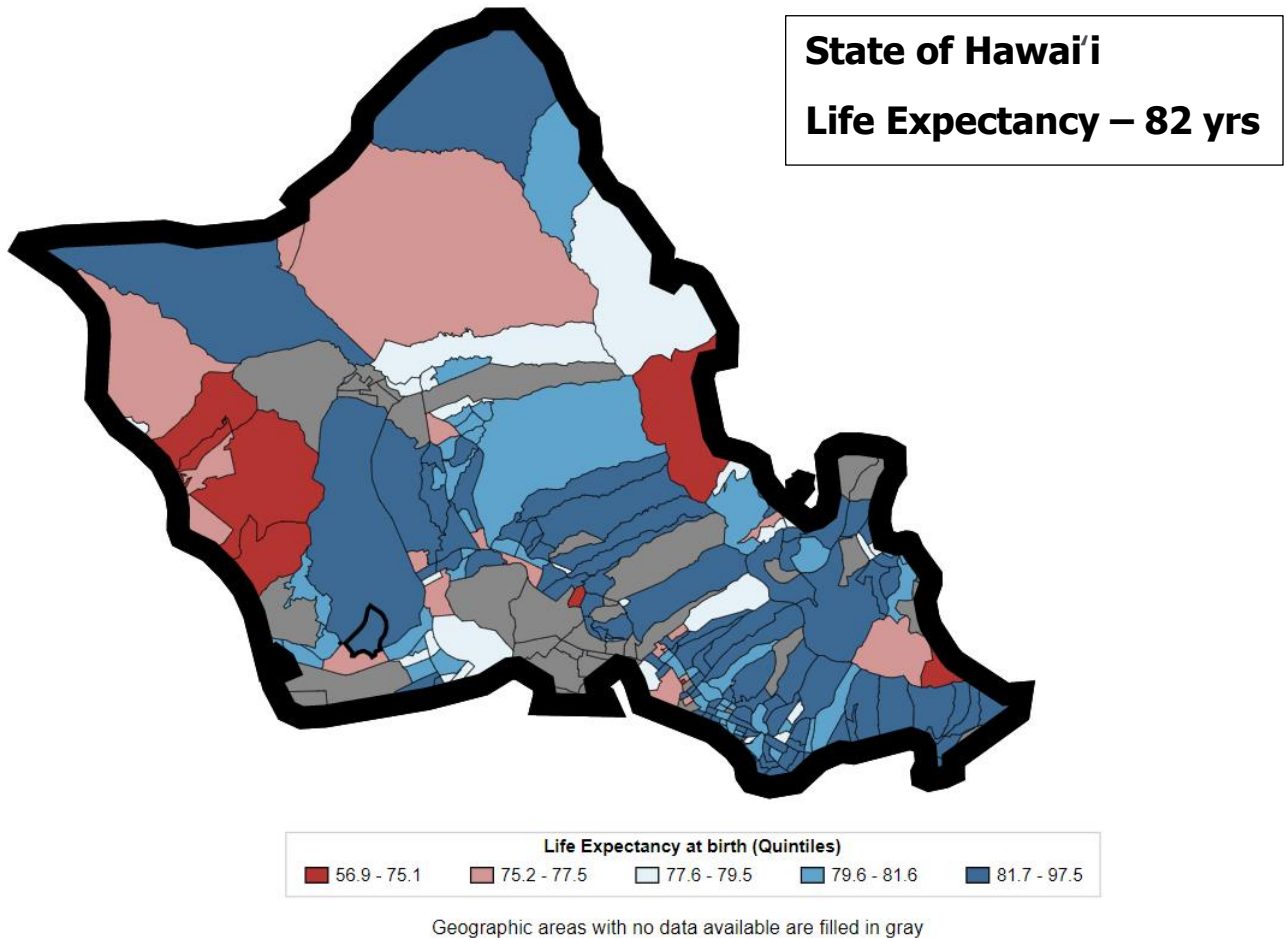
U.S. Small-area Life Expectancy  
 Estimates Project - USALEEP

**usaleep** Neighborhood Life  
 Expectancy Project



Life Expectancy at Birth for U.S. States and Census Tracts, 2010-2015

## LIFE EXPECTANCY\* FOR THE ISLAND OF O’AHU, HAWAI’I



\*The Life Expectancy at birth are for U.S. Census Tracts, 2010-2015. These estimates are the result of the collaborative project, “[U.S. Small-area Life Expectancy Estimates Project \(USALEEP\)](#),” between the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS), and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

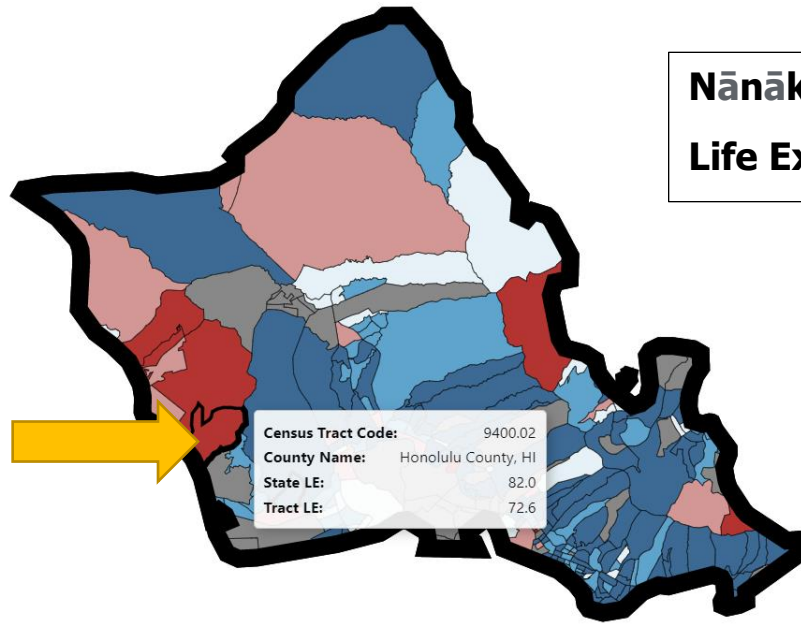
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, March 9). *Life expectancy data viz.* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved March 9, 2023, from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data-visualization/life-expectancy/index.html>.



# NCHS Data Visualization Gallery

...Visualizing the Nation's Health

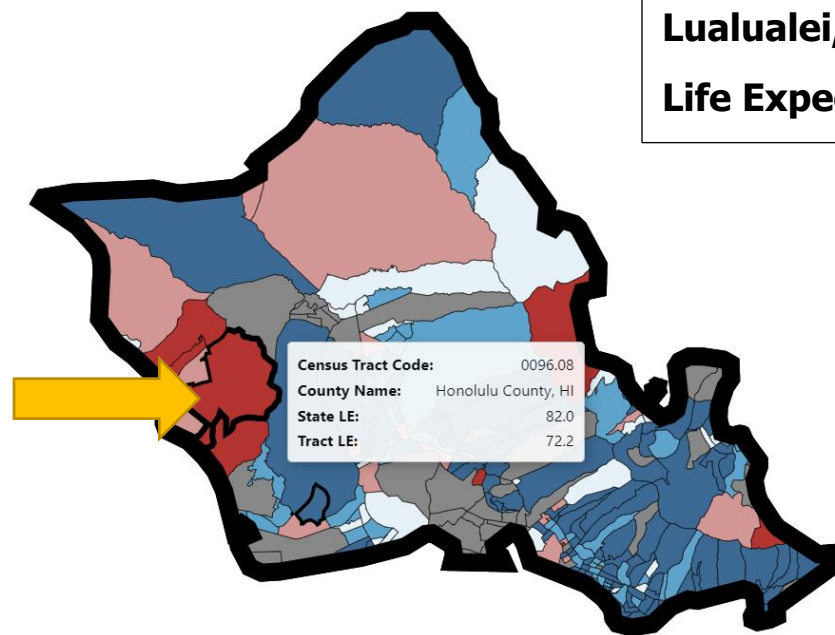
Life Expectancy at Birth for U.S. States and Census Tracts, 2010-2015



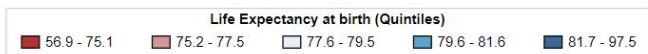
**Nānākuli, O'ahu**  
**Life Expectancy – 72.6 yrs**



Geographic areas with no data available are filled in gray



**Lualualei, O'ahu**  
**Life Expectancy – 72.2 yrs**



Geographic areas with no data available are filled in gray

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 7:02:51 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
NANCY JONES	Hydroponics Alternatives LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Poepoe, Vice Chair Cochran and Honorable Committee Members:

I submit this testimony in SUPPORT of SCR 57/ SD 1--as amended—which urges the City and County of Honolulu to exempt from real property taxes: 1) those property owners of residential units within one-half mile of an active municipal solid waste landfill; 2) residential property owners within one-half mile of a construction/demolition landfill; OR 3) those residential property owners deemed to have been impacted by an active landfill that warrants such an exemption.

There exists an abundance of evidence that shows definite, negative health impacts to those that reside within one-half mile away from active landfills due to geography, micro-climates and other reasons. Residents of areas in close proximity to such landfills – particularly those on the Leeward Coast, which seems to be O`ahu’s “favorite dumping ground” -- could benefit significantly from a City and County property tax exemption that would allow residents to perhaps resolve their individual safety and health concerns.

For these key reasons and in the interest of preserving the health and safety of our Leeward Coast full-time residents (NOT vacation/Air BNB rentals) – especially our kupuna -- I urge your Committee to please pass SCR 57/ SD 1.

Mahalo for this opportunity to present this testimony supporting SCR 57/ SD 1.

Nancy Jones

PO Box 1462, Wai`anae, HI 96792 / Email: [nancyhydroalt@gmail.com](mailto:nancyhydroalt@gmail.com)

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 9:58:43 AM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
CYNTHIA REZENTES	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the intent of this resolution which recognizes that those residents of Hawaii living within a half mile of either a municipal solid waste or construction/demolition landfill, are at risk of detrimental health risks for living in close proximity to any form of landfill.

This issue has been recognized by the EPA via numerous meetings held by their Environmental Justice division via numerous testimony received from communities across the United States where health issues including shorter life spans have been recognized.

Relief from property tax is the least that should be made available to individuals living within such close proximity to landfills and should be continued even after current landfills are re-located away from residential areas.

Further consideration for exemptions should be given to those who are living within close proximity of past landfills that could have a continuing detrimental effect on residents, i.e. former Wai`anae Incinerator/landfill, Waipahu landfill, etc.

Please support our residents who bear the brunt of the negative health issues for living next to landfills which support all of our residents and keep them "safe" from living next to these detrimental sites.

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 12:33:22 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ed Werner	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha:

I support tax relief for those suffering from landfills. Help our our kupuna, keiki, and opio that live next to everyone's trash. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Ed Werner

Nanakuli, Oahu



**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 12:38:42 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Melvin Paris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators:

I support helping out our former neighbors that live next to the landfill in Nanakuli and even the ones that live next to Waimanalo Gulch. They should get help because they take so much of our island's trash and I have experienced the dirt and dust that comes from the landfills and covers everyone's houses. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Melvin Paris

Kapolei, Oahu

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 12:41:11 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Henrietta Paris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives:

Mahalo for considering how we can help those whose health and wellness are being impacted by landfills. We used to live on Auyoung and Mohihi street, less than half a mile from PVT Landfill in Nanakuli. The dust and dirt used to cover our house and it was difficult to breath at times. Please help out those still living there. Please continue this good work. God bless.

Sincerely,

Henrietta Paris

Kapolei, Oahu

April 13, 2023  
8:45 am

House Committee on Water and Land  
Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair  
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection  
Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair  
Rep. Elle Cochran, Vice Chair

SCR57 SD1 - URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO EXEMPT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAX THOSE PROPERTY OWNERS OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF AN ACTIVE MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILL OR CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION LANDFILL OR DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY AN ACTIVE LANDFILL TO A DEGREE THAT WARRANTS SUCH AN EXEMPTION.

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Poepoe, Vice Chair Cochran, and members of the committees:

This resolution urges the City and County of Honolulu to provide tax relief to those that suffer from the ills of landfills.

From Mā'ili, my name is Kamuela Werner. I graduated from Nānākuli High School, hold a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Management as well as a Masters in Public Health from the University of Hawai'i. I have worked at the Department of Native Hawaiian Health at the John A. Burns School of Medicine as a Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander health disparities researcher, as a Native Hawaiian Congressional fellow for Senator Mazie Hirono in D.C., and now work as a teacher and farmer at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School.

Before moving to Mā'ili, I grew up in a multi-generational Native Hawaiian household on Mōhihi Street in Nānākuli. The Lualualei plain was my backyard where, at the time, you could see straight through to the base of Pu'u Heleakalā, the sacred and storied place of our ancestor Māui. Now we see "mauna 'ōpala" as the keiki call it, created by the PVT Land Company. Today, I speak on behalf of my 'ohana that live, work, or go to school in the shadow of "trash mountain".

We respectfully ask you to SUPPORT SCR57 SD1. Why? To advance environmental justice for our community who are victims of environmental racism.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Health Statistics in the U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project based in part on U.S. census data, the census tracts that include Nānākuli Homestead and the neighborhoods of Auyoung Homestead Road and Mōhihi Street have the 2nd and 3rd lowest life expectancies in the State. Our communities' life expectancy is 8 to 10

years less than the State average of 82 years. Immediately surrounding these communities, the life expectancy jumps between 4 and 6 years from the backside of Lualualei Valley behind the Wai‘anae Coast Comprehensive Center, to Ko‘olina, Honokai Hale, and Makakilo. Something is not pono.

Current and available public health studies associate living in close proximity to a landfill of 1 to 4 miles with adverse pregnancy outcomes, increases in infant low birth weights, increases in the risk of birth defects, self-reported headaches, sleepiness, respiratory and central nervous system problems, psychological conditions, and gastrointestinal issues. (See Health effects of residence near hazardous waste landfill sites: a review of epidemiologic literature, *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 2000; Health effects associated with the disposal of solid waste in landfills and incinerators in populations living in surrounding areas: a systematic review, *The International Journal of Public Health*, 2013). As a Construction and Demolition landfill in specific, the current PVT landfill contains tons of gypsum drywall which breaks down to produce hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) gas (See Hydrogen sulfide generation in simulated construction and demolition debris landfills: impact of waste composition, *The Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association*, 2006). Residential exposure to H<sub>2</sub>S within 3.1 miles of a landfill is associated with lung cancer deaths as well as with death, disease and hospitalizations from respiratory illnesses (Morbidity and mortality of people who live close to municipal waste landfills: a multisite cohort study, *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 2016). Using the US Census 2017 ACS 5-Year Population Estimates for Nānākuli and Mā‘ili, it is estimated that over 18,000 residents live within 3.1 miles of the PVT landfill and are potentially exposed daily to H<sub>2</sub>S in specific, and other landfill gasses and debris. In emergency situations, the State and City and County of Honolulu governments can place, and have placed, materials from disaster cleanups into PVT landfill.

The Hawai‘i Department of Health (HDOH) has never clarified that there is no risk to the public for living in proximity to landfills in general, or the current or proposed PVT landfill in specific, especially within 3.1 miles. Further, HDOH has never reviewed the findings of independent studies which say that there is no risk to public health from landfills in general or from the current or proposed PVT landfills in specific, especially to the thousands of people that live, work, and play within a 3.1-mile radius of landfill operations. In fact, according to the PVT 2019 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the only HDOH air monitoring station that measures H<sub>2</sub>S is located in Puna on Hawai‘i Island. HDOH given the current regulations for landfills, has been unable to adequately protect the public health, despite kama‘āina testimony presented since the 1980s, voicing concerns over the adverse health impacts of living and working in close proximity to landfills both in general and with regard to the operations and plans of PVT in specific. Lastly, it is not clear if the permit requirements issued by HDOH or the Department of Planning and Permitting of the City and County of Honolulu are being enforced by HDOH and the City and County of Honolulu.

As a Native Hawaiian Congressional fellow who worked in the Office of Sen. Mazie Hirono, I gained a greater understanding of the purpose and value of governmental policies, which are in part, to protect the health and safety of the public. The policies that regulate our landfills today are incomplete, because communities are still at risk, our communities of Nānākuli and Mā‘ili communities are at risk. According to the EPA, environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. I argue, the current regulations and policies

that allow PVT to operate a landfill in the heart of Nānākuli and Māʻili communities are racist towards Native Hawaiians and/or Pacific Islands and prejudiced towards working families with low to medium incomes. Today, we can take a step towards environmental justice for all communities.

This resolution will encourage the City and County of Honolulu to financially support those most directly affected by the public health crisis currently occurring in Nānākuli and Māʻili.

Therefore, I urge the committee to PASS SCR57 SD1.

Mahalo.

Ke aloha ʻāina

Kamuela Werner, MPH

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/11/2023 7:18:10 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Zeb Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Poepoe, Vice Chair Cochran and Honorable Committee Members:

I present this testimony SUPPORTING SCR 57/ SD 1--as amended—urging the City and County of Honolulu to exempt from real property taxes: 1) those property owners of residential units within one-half mile of an active municipal solid waste landfill; 2) residential property owners within one-half mile of a construction/demolition landfill; OR 3) those residential property owners deemed to have been impacted by an active landfill that warrants such an exemption.

A number of studies show definite, negative health impacts to those residing within one-half mile of active landfills due to geography, micro-climates and other reasons. Residents of areas in close proximity to such landfills – particularly those on the Leeward Coast, which has become O`ahu’s “favorite dumping ground” -- could really financially benefit from a City and County property tax exemption that would allow residents to perhaps resolve their individual safety and health concerns.

For these key reasons and to preserve the health and safety of our Leeward Coast full-time residents (as opposed to vacation/AirBnB rentals) – especially our kupuna -- I respectfully urge your Committee to please pass SCR 57/ SD 1.

Mahalo for this opportunity to present this testimony supporting SCR 57/ SD 1.

Zeb Jones

PO Box 1462/ Wai`anae, HI 96792 / Email: [zebbe3442@gmail.com](mailto:zebbe3442@gmail.com)

**SCR-57-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/12/2023 1:54:55 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/13/2023 8:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lena Suzuki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support