



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Thursday, March 30, 2023 at 3:15 p.m.

By

Elmer K. Ka'ai, Director
Government Relations and Community Affairs
Office of the Provost

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 71 – REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO CONDUCT A STUDY RELATING TO ASBESTOS PREVALENCE AND ABATEMENT IN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN THE STATE

Chairs Kim and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Kidani and Aquino, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for opportunity to submit testimony on SCR 71 which is requesting the University of Hawai'i to conduct a study relating to asbestos prevalence and abatement in residential properties in the State. The University of Hawaii (UH) appreciates the intent of this resolution and provides the following comments.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine and University of Hawai'i Cancer Center can provide a clinical and medical expertise on the impacts of asbestos; however, SCR 71, is not seeking these types of impacts. This resolution is requesting:

1. an inventory of the types of residential structures in the State of Hawai'i that contains or are constructed with asbestos-related materials;
2. an analysis to determine the estimated number of residential structures containing dangerous levels of asbestos in the State; and
3. an evaluation on a potential impact of a State-mandated asbestos abatement process prior to renovation or demolition of a residential property, similar to those followed in other jurisdictions, on the State's contractor industry and permitting process.

The study will require access to real property assessments information, building and structural designs, and any environmental impact statements reports. In addition, this study will need to include input from each county, not only the City and County of

Honolulu, since their residents are subject to both State and their respective County laws, ordinances, codes, and mandates.

With the potential complexity of this study, UH does not have the expertise nor units to conduct this type of work or study.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



March 29, 2023

**Senate Committee on Higher Education and
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services**

RE: SCR71 Related to Residential Asbestos

Aloha Chair Kim, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Kidani, and Vice Chair Aquino,

Re-use Hawai'i is a non-profit organization working to create a long-term solution to Hawaii's waste management challenges by keeping building materials out of the landfill and cultivating the circular economy in Hawai'i.

SCR71 is an important step in assessing asbestos in existing buildings. As a licensed contractor focused on the Deconstruction and salvage of residential buildings, we often encounter friable asbestos which we hire a certified abatement contractor to remove and properly dispose of. Because there are no requirements for the handling of residential asbestos in Hawai'i, contractors and homeowners lack the guidance to properly survey and abate this harmful material which leads to unnecessary exposure to workers and residents.

We support the passing of SCR71 and the University of Hawaii in their study of the number of houses containing asbestos and the impacts of a state-mandated asbestos abatement procedure.

Mahalo nui loa,

Quinn Vittum
Executive Director
Re-use Hawai'i