

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB1688 HD2
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.**

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: March 19, 2024

Room Number: 229

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 respectfully comments that we will be able to
5 conduct the needs assessment study and report, provided that the requested additional time and
6 funding are appropriated. The study is the first step in implementing an effective Extended
7 Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program for packaging and paper waste. However, the
8 Department notes the addition of the advisory committee and its required input on the
9 assesment process and a public hearing as adding to the time and resources required for the
10 study. We therefore respectfully request an additional year to conduct the study and amending
11 the due date from December 31, 2026 to December 31, 2027. Finally, the Department is in need
12 of funds to conduct the study and respectfully requests \$1,000,000 in order to successfully
13 conduct the needs assessment.

14 The Department is concerned about the fiscal implications generated by this proposal as
15 it may adversely impact priorities indicated in the Governor's Executive Budget. However,
16 without the necessary funding, the Department will be unable to implement this study. HB1800
17 HD1 SEQ#1000-001 appropriates \$1,000,000 of general funds to the Department for this study.

1 **Offered Amendments:** The Department respectfully suggests the following revisions.
2 Additions appear as underlined and deletions appear as strikeouts.

3 SECTION 2(d), Page 8, line 15: “The department of health shall complete and submit
4 the needs assessment, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature by December 31,
5 ~~2026~~2027.”

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, OPSD

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
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Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

**Testimony of
Leah Laramee
Coordinator, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission**

**Before the Senate Committees on
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
and
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Thursday March 19, 2024
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 229**

**In support of
House Bill 1688 House Draft 2
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

House Bill 1688 HD2 requires the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products and appropriates funds. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the FY 2025 Executive Supplemental Budget Request..**

The Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 different departments, committees, and counties. A circular economy keeps materials and products in circulation for as long as possible. The Save Our Seas 2.0 Act refers to an economy that uses a systems-focused approach and involves industrial processes and economic activities that are restorative or regenerative by design, enables resources used in such processes and activities to maintain their highest value for as long as possible, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems (including business models). It is a change to the model in which resources are mined, made into products, and then become waste. A circular economy reduces material use, redesigns materials and products to be less resource intensive, and recaptures “waste” as a resource to manufacture new materials and products.

The December 2023 *Hawai'i Pathways to Decarbonization* identifies moving toward a circular economy as an opportunity to reduce emissions in waste, energy and agricultural sectors.¹ A circular economy approach demonstrates continuity in our emphasis on reducing negative

¹ https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Act-238_HSEO_Decarbonization_Report.pdf

lifecycle impacts of materials, including climate impacts, reducing the use of harmful materials, and decoupling material use from economic growth and meeting society's needs. This bill would be an outline of a vision to help the State address the full impacts of materials on our communities and set out a transformative vision for our waste management system – one that is inclusive, more equitable, and reflects the urgency of the climate crisis – by identifying priority strategies that will be dedicated to building a circular economy for all.

This work on a circular economy is an important part of slowing climate change. We must take action to address the climate crisis, and material recovery has an important role to play. The United Nations' International Resource Panel concluded that natural resource extraction and processing contribute to about half of all global greenhouse gas emissions.² The circular economy, when designed in a thoughtful and inclusive manner, has the potential to protect the environment, improve economics, and elevate social justice. Sustainability from its foundation requires social equity. How we extract, use, and dispose of our resources can affect already vulnerable communities disproportionately.

Circular economies also support underserved communities who have been overburdened with the negative environmental and health impacts caused by a non-circular economy. Many landfills and manufacturing and processing facilities are located in close proximity to low-income communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

² [unep_252_global_resource_outlook_2019_web.pdf](#)

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 8:10:13 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helen Cox	Testifying for Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

Kaua`i Climate Action Coalition (KCAC) supports HB1688 HD2. We are a group of over 150 Kaua`i residents who engage in education, direct action, and supporting legislation to address the climate crisis that threatens us now and in the future. KCAC supports HB1688 HD2 for several reasons. A needs assessment to determine how best to transition to a system that will reduce waste and increase reuse will lead the state to a more sustainable and responsible economy and culture. This, in turn, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, exploring how to implement an extended producer responsibility is crucial to establishing accountability and waste reduction. The bill appropriates funds for this vital assessment, and the benefits will far outweigh the costs of such an assessment. Please pass HB1688 HD2. Mahalo.

Helen Cox, Chair

Kaua`i Climate Action Coalition

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 11:08:11 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Dean	Testifying for Recycle Hawaii, Clean The Pacific	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This may come as a surprise, but Recycle Hawaii opposes HB1688. While we strongly support the intent of this bill, it is our position that the amount of time, work and money it would take to enact this bill would be significant and the opposition from industry groups would be overwhelming. In the end, the State of Hawaii would spend a lot of effort and money only to end up accepting a watered down version of California's SB54. As it stands, California is the 5th largest economy in the world and they have the clout and money to make this happen in a more stringent manner. If Hawaii were to take this legislation on by itself and it ended up as a bill that favors industry demands and perpetuates the status quo, we'll never get rid of it. Let's see what California can come up with first.

Our main concern is that if we leave the extended responsibility only to industry, our objectives will be ignored, much like they're doing now with the climate crisis. It's the same industries, same PR firms, same lobbyists. It's not unreasonable to think that they won't do everything in their power to increase production of plastic and thereby shareholder profits. It's better to have this kind of legislation solidified at the Federal level, but that is a tall order since politicians in Washington are all pretty much bought and paid for by the fossil fuel industry. California isn't a bad runner up though.

Sincerely,

Topher Dean

Founder: Clean The Pacific

President: Recycle Hawaii



**RECYCLE
HAWAII**

March 17, 2024

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Tim Richards, Vice Chair

Committee on Agriculture and the Environment

Senator Jarret Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB1688

As Hawaii's longest standing and most experienced nonprofit organization focused on waste reduction and sustainable materials management, Recycle Hawaii stands in strong opposition to this measure. We do not dispute the good intentions that led legislators to support the bill's introduction and passage, and we are prone to believe that the organizations testifying in favor of it also mean well. Our opposition is based on a uniquely well-informed position derived from a deep institutional knowledge of the issues the bill seeks to address as well as our ongoing engagement with stakeholders active at the grassroots, county, state, national and international levels who share our commitment to address the environmental impacts of waste production.

It is reasonable for parties engaged at one or two of these levels to assume that more must be done to gather information and engage stakeholders before we can create effective waste reduction policies for our state, but, as an organization fully integrated in policy arenas at each of these levels, we assert with great confidence that dedicating state resources towards the implementation of HB1688's provisions would be a complete waste of both money and time. With an estimated \$1,000,000 price tag, at a time when DOH is already strapped by understaffing and struggling to address impacts from the Maui fires, there is simply no justification for this measure, especially when efforts to obtain the same information and generate similar outcomes are already underway.

Currently, at significant expense to the state and a considerable commitment of staff resources, DOH is conducting the decennial Integrated Solid Waste Management Task Force planning process, mandated by law, and set to run through 2025. Recycle Hawaii is a member of this task force. Just last week we began our consideration of packaging waste, which is a primary focus of all EPR legislation.

Similarly, last year, as an awardee of an EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure grant, DOH made the commitment to “identify, measure, and quantify solid waste streams in four counties on the islands of Hawai‘i: Maui, Lana‘i, Moloka‘i, and Moloka‘i. . . [and] conduct a statewide waste characterization study, observe and characterize the waste streams studied, then use the final study to inform future solid waste management efforts, conduct targeted outreach, and publish the results. The study will inform Hawai‘i’s planning, management, and outreach efforts, particularly in disadvantaged communities, to increase solid waste diversion rates and support the State’s efforts to achieve the U.S. EPA’s National Recycling Goal and Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal.”

These statewide efforts, which most legislators, the general public and outside corporate interests are not aware of, are on track to deliver nearly all of the outcomes HB1688 would provide, making the bill’s mandate duplicative and its passage improvident.

But there’s more! At the same time, and at no expense to Hawaii State taxpayers, the EPA is making progress on establishing its own sustainable materials management policies, including EPR policy, through a robust stakeholder engagement process set to guide federal regulations and legislation. Similarly, for the past two years, the U.S. State Department, has been convening producers, environmental organizations (including Recycle Hawaii) and fenceline communities to help inform U.S. policy on the global treaty to end plastic pollution. Extended Producer Responsibility is a primary focus of these deliberations, and the wealth of information freely available to inform policymakers from this ongoing effort is truly astounding.

The various parties engaged in the U.S. State Department process also participate at the international level, through numerous global coalitions, in the United Nations-sponsored International Negotiating Committee’s global plastic treaty deliberations. Recycle Hawaii has been a participant in this process for over two years. Again, the massive global effort being made to gather information and identify the needs of stakeholders is generating a wealth of resources freely available for the asking and EPR legislation is a primary focus of these proceedings as well. The INC process aims to have a treaty completed by 2025. These global provisions could very well make it unnecessary for Hawaii to take any additional actions on EPR at all.

It is possible that the efforts mandated by HB1688 could provide some value by having Hawaii-based organizations and businesses engage in their own deliberations AFTER the EPA and United Nations processes conclude. Given the wealth of information already available and the ongoing state-funded processes aimed at gathering more, the prudent thing for lawmakers to do is **refrain from passing HB1688** at this time. Once all these processes are complete, a reconsideration of the initiative would be in order.



**Hawaii
Legislative
Council
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Joell Edwards
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P.O. Box 22394
Honolulu, HI
96823

Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair
Comm. on Commerce & Consumer Protection

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
Comm. on Agriculture and Environment

Tuesday, March 19, 2024
9:30 AM in Room 229

RE: **HB1688 HD2** Relating to Environment - **SUGGESTING AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chairs Keohokalole & Gabbard, Vice Chairs Fukunaga & Richards and Members of both Committees,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 100 small businesses across the State of Hawaii that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity; we know Hawaii can strengthen its economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment. This is why we offer the following amendments on HB1688 HD2, which requires the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment and establish an advisory council to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products.

While topics like extended producer responsibility, recycling, and waste-to-energy draw a range of opinions for and against, the broad consensus among Hawaii business owners, environmental groups and policymakers is that **reuse strategies will yield the greatest benefits.**

Everyone agrees that creating the infrastructure needed to establish a reuse economy will take a major investment. Last year, our Chamber was happy to submit **testimony in favor of Senator Gabbard's SB1458**, which would have engaged companies with sales of over \$500 million dollars worth of fast moving consumer goods in an EPR program that would raise the funding needed to establish reuse infrastructure throughout the state at no cost to Hawaii businesses.

Given that there is no debate regarding the value of reuse strategies, it seems more prudent for the state to pass legislation that will lead to the development of the infrastructure needed to put them into play.

For this reason the Chamber suggests amending HB1688 HD2 to 1) remove the provisions that duplicate ongoing efforts to assess Hawaii's waste stream and identify waste reduction options, 2) remove the provisions aimed at addressing the differences among the various stakeholders regarding extended producer responsibility, recycling and waste-to-energy and 3) substitute them with ones that will effectively establish reuse infrastructure throughout the state.



**Written Testimony of
David Thorp, American Beverage Association
Before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee
on Commerce and Consumer Protection**

**Comments on H.B. 1688, H.D.2
March 19, 2024**

Good morning, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and members of the committees. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.B. 1688, H.D.2 – relating to the environment.

I am David Thorp, Vice President, State Government Affairs West, for the American Beverage Association (ABA). The ABA is the trade association representing the non-alcoholic beverage industry across the country and here in Hawaii.

Comments on H.B. 1688, H.D.2

We appreciate the opportunity over the past few months to provide comments and feedback on this needs assessment proposal. We still have the following edits to address remaining concerns:

Edit Producer Language

Even without a definition of “producer,” the bill language confuses producers of packaged goods (who are the responsible parties under EPR) with producers of the packaging materials themselves. For example, the producer is the cereal manufacturer that puts cereal in a liner bag inside a box, not the manufacturers of the liner bag and the boxboard. Two edits would help clarify that:

- Page 2, Line 1 “packaging producers” should be “producers of packaged consumer goods and paper products”
- Page 3, Line 7 “Producers of packaging materials and paper products” should be “Producers of packaged consumer goods and paper products”

Advisory Council Membership

Several important stakeholders in the supply chain are excluded from the Advisory Council on both the producer and retail sides.

- Page 4, Line 8:
 - Replace “(2) One representative from a national producer or producer trade association;” with “(2) One representative from a national producer of packaged consumer goods or related trade association;”
 - Add new item: “One representative from a Hawaii based producer of packaged consumer goods;”

- Add new item: “One representative from a national producer of packaging materials or related trade association;”
- Add new item: “One representative from a national producer of paper products;”
- Add new item: “One representative of a national producer responsibility organization;”
- Page 4, Line 18 After (6): Add new item “One representative of a national retailer;”
- Renumber Section 2(b)

Amend Contamination Analysis (Section 2(c)(6))

- Clarify the scope of the contamination analysis, revising the requirement to read:

“(6) Levels of contamination in collected packaging and paper products at materials recovery facilities and the impact of compostable packaging on compost facilities throughout the state;”

Amend Packaging Definition (Section 2(e))

- The bill should focus on material collected from single and multi-family residents and managed by municipalities and counties. A primary goal of EPR is to shift the funding from local governments and taxpayers to the producers of the products and packaging.
 - Under the current definition, packaging would include sales to industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) customers. Commercial waste haulers manage this material through private contracts funded by the business or institutions.
 - This contrasts with residential material, which is managed by local governments and funded by consumers.
 - Including ICI material would dramatically increase the scope and cost of an EPR program and would displace existing, privately funded recycling.

- Page 8, Line 17 replace the definition of “Packaging materials” with:

“Packaging” means any material, regardless of recyclability, which is intended for short-term use and is used for the containment, protection, handling, or delivery of products to a residential consumer at the point of sale, including through an internet transaction. “Packaging” includes but is not limited to paper, paperboard, cardboard, plastics, glass or metal or a mixture thereof. “Packaging” excludes beverage containers included under the Hawaii deposit beverage container program and excludes material used for products sold to institutional, commercial, or industrial customers.”

Sincerely,
David Thorp
American Beverage Association
Vice President, State Government Affairs West



Environmental Caucus of
The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Energy & Climate Action Committee Agriculture & Food Security Committee

Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 9:30 am

Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment and on Commerce and Consumer Protection
HOUSE BILL 1688 HD2 – RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Position: Strong Support

Me ke Aloha, Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice-Chairs Richards and Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment and on Commerce and Consumer Protection:

HB1688 HD2 requires the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment and establish an advisory council to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products.

The Energy & Climate Action and Agriculture & Food Security Committees join in enthusiastic support of this superb bill, which has anticipated much of our testimony in its preamble!

Unable to control waste, we allow the littering and pollution of landscapes and nearshore waters. The prevailing approach costs more, increases toxic emissions and contributions to aging landfills.

Waste production is estimated as high as 30% of all of our expanding extraction, production, and consumption economy. HB1688 addresses the consumer front end of this problem by encouraging producers to reduce packaging, by reusing packaging materials directly, or through composting. We need to support county waste management in assessing the needs before climate change brings its many other costly challenges. The currently revenue surplus also helps fulfill repeated requests for better staffing.

A circular economy will need a modest and thoughtful relationship with resources and a liveable human and natural environment. Incineration, the subject of hopeful and optimistic technologies, is the most expensive and contaminating way to dispose of waste. Landfills are aging past their built-in safeguards against environmental pollution. So much of waste materials can be reused; contaminants threaten our fisheries and our recreationists. The transformation will provide more jobs while saving taxpayers the expenses of incineration and landfilling.

The preferred alternatives include a revisioning of packaging as compostables to replenish our chemically depleted soils, segregating all organic wastes and construction wastes for processing and reuse, producing repairable products, recycling metals and rare materials from electronics and other high-tech production. This creates local green jobs and reduces costs to taxpayers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to address this matter.

/s/ Charley Ice, Chair, Energy and Climate Action Committee
and Acting Chair, Agriculture and Food Security Committee
Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party



Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Board of Directors

Abby Boudouris – **President**
OR Dept. of Environmental Quality

Tom Metzner – **Vice President**
CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection

Jennifer Semrau – **Treasurer**
WI Dept. of Natural Resources

Mallory Anderson - **Clerk**
Hennepin County, MN

Racheal Ajayi
MO Dept. of Natural Resources

Mallory Anderson
Hennepin County, MN

Darla Arians
CO Dept. of Public Health and Environment

Jennifer Heaton-Jones
Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority, CT

Jennifer Holliday
Chittenden Solid Waste District, VT

Patrick Riley
OK Dept. of Environmental Quality

Mia Roethlein
VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Joe Rotella
RI Resource Recovery Corporation

Christina Seibert
Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, IL

Honorary Director

Walter Willis
Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, IL

Scott Klag
Formerly Metro, OR

March 18, 2024

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. Richards III, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Conference Room 229
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Support for HB 1688, Packaging Waste Needs Assessment

Dear Chairs Keohokalole and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Fukunaga and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **HB 1688 HD2**. This Needs Assessment bill is an important first step in the development of an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for packaging materials and paper products in Hawaii. An EPR program will support waste prevention, expand packaging reuse and refill systems, increase recycling, and promote more sustainable use of resources.

Comments made from stakeholders have improved HB 1688 in important ways. Amendments have expanded the list of parties to be consulted, established an Advisory Council, and clarified that the needs assessment is required to consider an appropriate definition of a producer. The Advisory Council will provide input on the draft needs assessment, and the Department of Health will hold a public hearing to obtain comments on the revised draft needs assessment. These additions are in line with best EPR practices being established in other states.

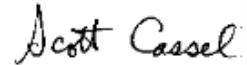
We support the inclusion of representatives from the native Hawaiian community, environmental justice organizations, and environmental and human health scientists in the process. We also applaud the inclusion of producer responsibility organizations working on reuseable packaging in the process.

An EPR program for packaging and paper products can save counties money, preserve landfill space, and help protect the environment. Packaging EPR has been successfully implemented throughout Europe and Asia for over 35 years, and in five Canadian provinces for over 15 years. Four states – Colorado, Oregon, California,

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national policy expert and consulting nonprofit that pioneered product stewardship in the United States along with a coalition of hundreds of state and local government officials. Since 2000, PSI has worked with numerous others to develop producer responsibility policies for many of the 136 such laws enacted for 18 industry sectors.

I urge you to **support HB 1688 HD2** for the financial and environmental health of Hawaii's economy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 513-3954, or Scott@ProductStewardship.US.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Cassel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder



Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Board of Directors

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March 18, 2024

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. Richards III, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Conference Room 229
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Support for HB 1688, Packaging Waste Needs Assessment

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Comments made from stakeholders have improved HB 1688 in important ways. Amendments have expanded the list of parties to be consulted, established an Advisory Council, and clarified that the needs assessment is required to consider an appropriate definition of a producer. The Advisory Council will provide input on the draft needs assessment, and the Department of Health will hold a public hearing to obtain comments on the revised draft needs assessment. These additions are in line with best EPR practices being established in other states.

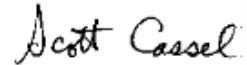
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An EPR program for packaging and paper products can save counties money, preserve landfill space, and help protect the environment. Packaging EPR has been successfully implemented throughout Europe and Asia for over 35 years, and in five Canadian provinces for over 15 years. Four states – Colorado, Oregon, California,

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I urge you to **support HB 1688 HD2** for the financial and environmental health of Hawaii's economy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 513-3954, or Scott@ProductStewardship.US.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Cassel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
MARCH 19, 2024
Re: HB 1688 HD1 RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

Good morning, Chair Keohokalole and Chair Gabbard and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901 and is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to supporting the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, on-line sellers, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

We support the intent of HB 1688 HD2 Relating to the Environment. This measure requires the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment and establish an advisory council to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products; appropriates funds; and is effective 7/1/3000.

We understand the importance of a comprehensive balanced study on extended producer responsibility (EPR) regarding waste management is well-founded and is crucial for developing sustainable practices tailored to the unique needs and limitations of the state and its counties. A statewide blanket solution may not be feasible in certain counties as each county is unique and has its own limitations.

Building on the understanding that what works in other states or countries may not necessarily work in Hawaii, the study should prioritize the development of customized EPR solutions tailored to the state's unique circumstances. It should also take into consideration the cost and who will pay for the changes.

We also strongly feel that the study should flush out all the details needed to implement the programs and projects. This includes a comprehensive assessment of Hawaii's existing waste management infrastructure, including recycling facilities, collection systems, and transportation networks. This assessment should identify gaps and limitations in the state's recycling resources as well as the logistical challenges associated the total cost and feasibility of shipping recyclables off-island.

We believe by thoroughly addressing these considerations and taking a comprehensive approach to waste management and EPR, Hawaii can develop sustainable practices that reduce the environmental impact of waste while respecting the state's unique challenges and limitations as an island community.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.





March 19, 2024

Chair Gabbard
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawaii State Senate
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Chair Keohokalole
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Hawaii State Senate
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of H.B. 1688 HD 2

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair Keohokalole, members of the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding H.B. 1688. **Just Zero strongly supports this bill and urges you to pass it out of committee.**

Just Zero is a national non-profit environmental advocacy organization that works alongside communities, policy makers, scientists, educators, organizers, and others to implement just and equitable solutions to climate-damaging and toxic production, consumption, and waste disposal practices. We believe that all people deserve Zero Waste solutions with zero climate-damaging emissions and zero toxic exposures.

The way we think about and manage waste in this country is flawed, inherently unsustainable, and deeply unjust. Unfortunately, this isn't surprising given that the companies that design, package, and market fast moving consumer goods are completely detached from the end-of-life management of these materials. Instead, residents, towns, and counties are stuck paying to collect and manage a waste stream they have little-to-no control over. Even worse, because these companies have no responsibility for the waste associated with their products and packaging, they are increasingly overpackaging products and using unrecyclable materials like plastic. This imposes a significant burden on Hawaii and its residents.

H.B. 1688 is a critical first step in addressing this problem. If enacted, the bill would require the Department of Health ("DOH") to conduct a comprehensive statewide needs assessment to inform the development of an Extended Producer Responsibility ("EPR") for Packaging Program. This calculated and deliberate approach will ensure that the EPR for Packaging



Program is ultimately proposed by the DOH is tailored to specifically address the waste management challenges that are unique to Hawaii.

We feel this approach is especially important given Hawaii’s geographic location, proximity to existing recycling end-markets, and opportunities to develop strong local reuse, waste reduction, and recycling programs.

I. An EPR for Packaging Program Will Help Hawaii Reduce Waste and Increase Recycling.

States across the country are grappling with increased waste volumes, stagnant recycling rates, and increased waste management and recycling costs. As a result, many states are considering implementing EPR for Packaging Programs that would shift the responsibility for paying for the end-of-life management of single-use packaging from consumers and local governments to the companies that manufacture and distribute these wasteful products. Moreover, many of these programs are also setting strong waste reduction, reuse, and recycling goals that will require regulated companies to minimize the amount of waste generated in the first place, while ensuring what is left is responsibly managed so that resources are reused and recirculated into the economy. Currently, California, Colorado, Maine, and Oregon have passed EPR for Packaging Laws. This session, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Washington are all considering EPR for Packaging bills.

EPR for Packaging Programs are especially necessary to combat the plastic production and pollution crisis that is wreaking havoc on our health and our environment. Despite being widely unrecyclable, most companies choose to package their products in plastic. Approximately, 40% of all plastic produced each year is used for packaging.¹ Virtually none of this material is recycled. In 2021, only 5% of all plastic waste generated by U.S. households was recycled.² This is unlikely to change, even with producer funded recycling systems, because most of this plastic isn’t technically or economically capable of being recycled.³

Well designed EPR for Packaging Programs can help reduce the amount of unnecessary plastic companies use to package and market their products and require them to transition to reusable packaging and more circular materials such as paper, glass, or aluminum that can be recycled effectively at consistently high rates.⁴

¹ Laura Parker, [Fast Facts About Plastic Pollution](#), National Geographic. (Dec. 20, 2018).

² Greenpeace, [Circular Claims Fall Flat Again](#), p. 3. (Oct. 24, 2022).

³ Peter Blair, [Plastic Recycling is a Lie Designed to Distract Us From Real Solutions](#), Just Zero. (Feb. 8, 2024).

⁴ For instance, [the rules the Maine Department of Environmental Protection has proposed to implement Maine’s EPR for Packaging Program](#) include goals that require regulated companies to reduce the amount of single-use packaging they use by 50% by 2050. The rules also require these companies to ensure that 30% of their packaging – measure by weight – is reusable or refillable by 2050%. Additionally,



II. States Are Increasingly Looking to Perform Comprehensive Needs Assessments Prior to Implementing an EPR for Packaging Program.

While EPR for Packaging Programs can be an incredibly effective tool to reduce waste and increase recycling, these programs can be extremely complicated and must be tailored to build on the existing waste management systems already in place. As a result, many states are looking to perform comprehensive needs assessments prior to developing and implementing an EPR for Packaging Program.

For instance, last year both Illinois and Maryland began the legislative session considering proposals to establish EPR for Packaging Programs.⁵ However, as the legislative session progressed, it became clear that more information was needed to understand the volume of packaging waste generated, how much of this material is currently being recycled, how much is currently being disposed of, how effective the existing recycling systems are, and the economic and logistical barriers holding waste reduction and recycling programs back.⁶ As a result, both states instead passed legislation requiring the completion of comprehensive needs assessment to inform the specific details of any future EPR for Packaging Program.⁷

III. H.B. 1688 Will Set Hawaii Up for Future Success When Pursuing an EPR for Packaging Program.

The framework of H.B. 1866 ensures that the needs assessment performed by DOH will not only evaluate all elements necessary to developing a strong, effective EPR for Packaging Program, but also that the stakeholders that are integral to Hawaii's existing waste management systems are consulted. The needs assessment requires an analysis of the existing amount of waste generated, the composition of the waste stream, how the amount and types of waste vary across different areas of the state, how this material is currently being managed, contamination within the state's recycling system, and the availability of end markets for recycled materials. This is critically important information that the state is currently lacking. Using this information, DOH, and stakeholders, can determine how to design a program that will benefit Hawaii's environment and economy.

Moreover, as the state conducts the needs assessment it can study the work being done around the country. All four states with existing EPR for Packaging Programs are currently in the process of developing the rules that will implement, administer, and enforce these programs.

[California's EPR for Packaging Program](#) requires regulated companies to reduce single-use plastic packaging 25% by 2032.

⁵ Cole Rosengren, [Momentum May Be Slowing for New EPR for Packaging Laws in 2023, But States Still Pursue Study Bills](#), Waste Dive. (June 12, 2023).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*



Many of these states will be close to implementing their programs by the time the DOH is required to propose a full EPR for Packaging Program.

Additionally, the results of Maryland’s needs assessment are required to be finalized by July 30, 2024.⁸ The results of Illinois’ needs assessment are required to be finalized by May 1, 2026.⁹ Therefore, the DOH can look to the work Maryland and Illinois performed to help inform the development of Hawaii’s needs assessment and proposed EPR for Packaging Program.

IV. Conclusion

The pollution, public health impacts, and costs associated with unfettered packaging generation and disposal are widespread and significant. Addressing this requires bold policy that is commensurate with the problem we are all facing. H.B. 1688 is an important step in the process of developing a comprehensive program that will help Hawaii understand the amount of waste packaging waste currently being generated, how this waste is being managed, and how a well-designed, state specific EPR for Packaging Program can help reduce waste, increase recycling, save the state and its residents money, and create good local jobs. Just Zero strongly urges you to support H.B. 1688. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Blair, Esq.
Policy and Advocacy Director
Just Zero.

⁸ [Maryland EPR for Packaging Needs Assessment](#), Section 2, Subsection (c). pg. 38. (2023).

⁹ [Illinois Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment](#), Section 20, Subsection (e). p 18. (2023).



To: The Honorable Chairs Jarrett Keohokalole and Mike Gabbard, the Honorable Vice Chairs Carol Fukunaga and Tim Richards, III, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Agriculture and Environment.
From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: **Hearing HB1688 HD2 RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 9:30 am, room 229

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Richards, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Agriculture and Environment!

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. HIROC is deeply concerned about the impact the state's waste management systems, and particularly plastic packaging waste, can have on Hawaii's public health, coral reefs, and nearshore water quality!

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate. The Climate Protectors Hawai'i is very concerned that the current waste handling system, with incinerators and methane-releasing landfills, is contributing unnecessarily to greenhouse gas emissions and climate warming. Reuse of materials greatly reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1688 HD2!

Hawai'i faces a **rapidly-approaching landfill capacity crisis in all counties. The high costs of handling our solid waste (including for visitors) currently falls on county taxpayers, not on the packaging producers who profit from sales.**

Recycling is limited in Hawai'i by a lack of infrastructure and geographic isolation that substantially increases costs. Materials with value are being put in landfills or incinerators rather than reused or recycled. The public health and environment are being harmed.

Given these problems, Hawai'i needs to move from the current linear system of waste handling (use and dispose) to a more circular system (reduce, reuse, compost, and recycle what we can't reuse). More reuse, composting, and recycling will all provide "green jobs" in Hawai'i.

Producers of packaging and paper products who profit from our consumption should pay part of the costs. They also are in the best position to redesign packaging to reduce waste volume and plastic and paper waste and save costs. Hawaii therefore should join numerous other states in establishing a system of "extended producer responsibility" (EPR).

The transition to a more circular waste handling system and EPR, however, will require substantial infrastructure and other costs. The transition should be designed carefully based on a full understanding of the infrastructure and operational needs of each county. There is no comprehensive statewide waste management plan. The counties handle waste very differently; some areas have curbside recycling while others have very little or no waste handling service. **To transition effectively to circular waste handling and EPR, a statewide assessment**

of the needs of each county by the Department of Health, with stakeholder and advisor input, is needed.

The bill provides for DOH consultation with many stakeholders, including producers of packaging and paper products, and an advisory council that will include a representative from a national producer or producer trade organization and a Hawai'i-based producer or producer association. **Additional representatives from producers on the advisory council would not be appropriate; the advisory council should not be dominated by producers over county, citizens, and other interests.**

This critically-needed bill would take the **first step toward tackling our waste management problems.** It would require the Hawai'i Department of Health to **conduct a statewide needs assessment to determine what is needed to transition to a more circular waste handling system, with less waste generation, more reuse, improved collection and local processing, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products.**

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

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

Citizens' Climate Lobby Hawai'i
hi.ccl.lobby@gmail.com
cclhawaii.org



March 15, 2024

SUPPORT FOR HB1688 HD2 – RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga, and Members of the AEN and CPN Committees:

Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) Hawai'i supports HB1688 HD2, which "Requires the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment and establish an advisory council to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)"

CCL Hawai'i comprises over 1000 members across Hawai'i. We advocate for effective, efficient, and fair climate legislation. We support **HB1688 HD2** as it will create a roadmap for reducing solid waste going into the state's landfills. "MSW [municipal solid waste] landfills are the third-largest source of methane emissions in the United States generated by human activity, accounting for approximately 14.3 percent of these emissions in 2021." (epa.gov, 11/16/2023) Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. In addition, the creation and transportation of materials that become waste in our landfills produce significant amounts of CO₂, another greenhouse gas.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Please support HB1688 HD2.

Respectfully,
CCL Hawai'i

Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change solutions. CCL Hawai'i's 1000+ members are part of a 180,000+ global organization. For more information, visit citizensclimatelobby.org.



Date: March 13, 2024

To: The Honorable Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Commerce and Consumer Protection

From: Hawaii Environmental Change Agents (HECA) - Solid Waste Reduction Task Force

Re: HB1688 HD1 - Statewide Needs Assessment for Packaging Materials and Paper Products

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the Committees,

The HECA Solid Waste Task Force is in **strong support HB1688 HD2** that will require the Department of Health (DOH) to conduct a statewide needs assessment for packaging materials and paper products.

Current Waste Management

The state of Hawaii lacks a sustainable solid waste management system. The current practices of landfilling and incineration of packaging waste are costly - detrimental to both environmental and public health. These conventional waste management methods represent a linear waste stream in which products flow in one direction from raw material to waste. These products are generally not used to their full potential, creating excessive waste from valuable materials on a planet with finite resources. The inadequacies of existing solid waste management statewide and the resulting packaging pollution crisis demand a shift away from a linear waste system toward a circular economy.

Geographic isolation has created a dependence on imported goods, accelerating the flow of packaging materials that are brought into the state. Moreover, this isolation presents barriers to conventional solid waste management (Eckelman, 2014) and as a result, the four Hawaiian counties are running out of capacity to landfill or otherwise dispose of its solid waste. The state's high total waste generation rates from de facto population, compared to its relatively small tax base, presents a challenge for the state's ability to finance capital-intensive waste management projects through our current model. This financial strain coupled with the state's lack of existing recycling infrastructure, urge the necessity for reformation of the existing packaging waste generation model.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a Solution

EPR policies offer an opportunity to shift towards a more circular economy by placing responsibility for a product's life cycle management on producers of the product. As EPR incentivizes producers to prioritize source reduction, reuse, and recycling, the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators is reduced.

Many states have implemented or are considering legislation that would require producers of packaging to assume responsibility and expenses for minimizing and managing waste. In the 2023 legislative sessions, legislators reviewed 43 bills in 14 states pertaining to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) standards for plastics and packaging materials. Within the past year, Maine, Illinois, and Maryland passed legislation allocating funds for an EPR needs assessment. Assessing the applicability of an EPR program for packaging in Hawaii will not only bring the state in line with broader national and global sustainability goals, but it will also showcase the state's commitment to environmental responsibility and conservation.

Needs Assessment as a Prerequisite

Prior to implementing an EPR program, it is important to assess the scope of the problem and how it's being managed currently. The state of Hawaii is currently developing a centralized integrated solid waste management plan and because the systems and capacities to manage wastes vary significantly by county, proponents are in consensus that county's needs assessments are a significant prerequisite to drive efforts toward actionable steps to reach packaging reduction targets.

Currently, the state lacks quantifiable data on waste prevention, which is the EPA's preferred strategy for environmental benefit in waste management. Moreover, there is a disparity in the availability of data among different counties. It is essential to develop a uniform and consistent dataset for all counties participating in the study to guarantee equitable implementation of a future program.

It is critical Hawaii designs an EPR program that addresses our unique needs and engages local stakeholders in designing the best structure for our context. A **well-designed EPR policy for Hawaii** will ensure that municipalities continue to bolster recycling operations but will also encourage the private sector to **prioritize redesigning packaging and operations to allow for reduction and reuse, while also funding advancements in infrastructure for local processing of materials and reusable packaging systems**. The first actionable step towards this is allocating funds to a needs assessment.

Mahalo nui loa,

~HECA Solid Waste Reduction Task Force

Jolie Ryff, Jennifer Navarra, Ted Bohlen, Ruta Jordans, and Michele Mitsumori

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 1:49:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Acasio	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in opposition to HB 1688 HD2

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair Keohokalole and Esteemed Members of the AEN and CPN Committees,

While I am currently a commissioner on the Environmental Management Commission of Hawaii County, I am writing to you today in my personal capacity, and not as a representative of the EMC.

Thank you for considering my rationale in opposition to HB 1688, which proposes that the Department of Health conducts a statewide needs assessment using taxpayer funds. While the intention to assess the state's environmental needs is commendable, I believe this bill is not in line with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) principles and unfairly burdens taxpayers rather than holding producers accountable. In other words, it defeats the intended function of true EPR.

There are two additional reasons why I urge you to reconsider this legislation. Firstly, the timing of this proposed needs assessment is ill-advised. The Department of Health is currently engaged in the decennial Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) planning process, which involves numerous stakeholders and covers many of the topics outlined in HB 1688. Given that the ISWM process is scheduled to conclude in early 2025, it would be impractical and duplicative to initiate another assessment concurrently.

Secondly, it's crucial to note that Hawaii recently secured a Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant from the EPA. This grant specifically funds activities similar to those proposed in HB 1688, including waste characterization studies and outreach efforts to increase solid waste diversion rates. The federal announcement of Hawaii's planned activities under the SWIFR grant underscores the redundancy of the proposed legislation.

The ongoing ISWM planning process and the SWIFR grant activities should be allowed to proceed without interference from additional assessments that would strain resources and potentially undermine their outcomes. Redirecting funds to duplicate processes already underway is unjustifiable, particularly at a time when state resources are urgently needed to address pressing issues such as the recent Maui fires and housing.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge you to defer HB 1688 so that we can properly craft a bill addressing Hawaii's environmental and "waste" reduction needs effectively and appropriate for our islands. I urge you all to defer this measure and encourage/facilitate stakeholders to come together to redraft an EPR measure with a focus on rethink-reduce-reuse.

Thank you so much for your service and for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Laura Acasio, Hilo

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2024 12:29:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fred hofer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

That's just more green washing

I strongly oppose !

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 9:02:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Koohan Paik	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote against this bill. Hawaii's extended producer responsibility efforts must focus first and foremost with reuse. This legislation undermines this position. It paves the way for corporate interests to dictate and control the way waste gets managed. Because corporate interests put profit before health of the community and aina, they will be ineffective in managing waste appropriately. We must not go down that path at this critical juncture in the ecological resilience of our islands.

Thank you.

Koohan Paik-Mander

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 8:46:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Diane Ware and I live in Ka'u Moku, Keauhou ahupua'a. Although I support EPR legislation HB 1688 actually has us, the taxpayer, pay additionally for downstream solutions (which aren't even solutions). Also, it is simply a needs assessment which, between the county/ZWHI and Recycle Hawaii, we have over 2.5 million to implement a needs assessment.

I am, however, in support of SB 1458 or something more along these lines where the producers pay/take responsibility for the waste their business models create and where re-use is the focus.

Respectfully submitted

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 3:45:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Palma-Glennie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

aloha,

I ask that you oppose this bill which is a convoluted attempt to circumvent real change.

until we practice the rules of conservation, we'll get nowhere in our quest to protect resources and people from the overuse and degradation of the natural world we depend upon for quality of life and survival. this bill helps corporate interests control the way waste gets managed.

please VOTE AGAINST [HB1688](#).

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2024 3:32:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

YES to requiring the Department of Health to conduct a statewide needs assessment and establish an advisory council to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products. Appropriates fund

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 8:07:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Briana Rodrique	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Please pass HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate. This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

With thanks,

Briana Rodrique, Pana'ewa

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 8:23:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

I'm writing to support HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate. This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

me ke aloha 'āina,
Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili, O'ahu

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 9:54:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Please pass HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. **With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate.** This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

Mahalo for our support.

Sincerely,

Marsha Hee - hulahee@gmail.com

Life-long citizen of Hawaii, current resident of Volcano, HI 96785

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 10:08:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Cooney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let's pass this bill and have producers start thinking more about their waste - so that we don't have to clean up their mess, as much!

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 1:44:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Rich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Please pass HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate. This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

Mahalo,

Laurie Rich

Hilo, HI

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2024 3:24:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Stone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Please pass HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate. This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

'Mahalo,

Monica Stone, kailua-kona, 96740

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 9:12:33 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Brock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass HB1688 HD2. It is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate, and work our way to a circular economy.

This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.”

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 12:31:54 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Mitsumori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Richards, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Agriculture and Environment,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of HB1688 HD2.

Every county in Hawai'i is facing a landfill capacity crisis. The high costs of handling our solid waste falls on county taxpayers, not on packaging producers who profit from sales.

Recycling is limited in Hawai'i by a lack of infrastructure and geographic isolation that substantially increase costs. Materials with value that could be reused or recycled are often disposed of in landfills or incinerators, resulting in harm to public health and the environment.

Given these problems, Hawai'i needs to move from the current linear system of waste handling (use and dispose) to a more circular system that incorporates reduction, reuse, composting and recycling.

Producers of packaging and paper products should be responsible for part of the costs of managing their products post-use through an extended producer responsibility (EPR) system. Bearing these costs will help incentivize better product design to facilitate reduction, reuse and recycling.

The transition to a more circular waste handling system and EPR, however, will require substantial infrastructure and other costs. The transition should be designed carefully, based on a full understanding of the unique infrastructure and operational needs of each county. To transition effectively to a circular waste handling and EPR, a statewide assessment of needs of each county by the Department of Health, with stakeholder and advisor input, is needed. Adequate funding also needs to be allocated, and a reasonable timeline assigned.

HB1688 HD2 is direly needed to help our state prepare wisely and sufficiently in managing our waste management, in order to protect the health of our people and our land.

Please pass HB1688 SD2!

Mahalo,
Michele Mitsumori
Hilo, Hawai'i County



Date: March 18, 2024

To: The Honorable Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Commerce and Consumer Protection

From: Hawaii Environmental Change Agents (HECA) – Solid Waste Task Force

Re: HB1688 HD2 – Statewide Needs Assessment for Packaging Materials

Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the Committees,

We are writing in **support** of HB1688 HD2 which will require the department of health to conduct a statewide needs assessment to determine what would be needed to transition to a more circular system with less waste generation, more reuse, and an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials and paper products.

Addressing our packaging waste problem requires a shift in mindset, beyond focusing on incremental packaging improvements and focusing on recycling. It is about rethinking how we get products and services to users without creating waste. Life Cycle Assessments demonstrate that reuse of packaging has the greatest reduction in greenhouse gas emission. These systems also create local economic opportunity and green jobs – as you need service operators to recollect, sanitize, and redistribute containers back to vendors.

Since 2022, ZWHI has been working to design and implement reuse systems for food and beverage packaging in Hilo in partnership with reuse experts at Perpetual (<https://www.perpetualuse.org>). Perpetual is currently working with four US cities to design and implement reusable foodware systems that operate at city-scale. For the last year we have been conducting community outreach and have engaged 38 stakeholders and potential partners. Outreach has been conducted at 22 events engaging approximately 726 community members and included a workshop held to involve Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians in recognition of cultural connections to the reusable foodware project.

We are now working in partnership with the County of Hawai'i and The University of Hawaii Sea Grant program and have secured two federal grants from the Environmental Protection Agency summing to 2.1 million dollars that will fund infrastructure costs (i.e. dish washing facility, vehicles, return bins) and staff costs to assist in the transition.

While we understand that reuse systems will not be fully embraced until it has been demonstrated that they can work, we want the legislature to understand that work is under way to demonstrate its feasibility with public funding. There is enormous potential of Extended Producer Responsibility programs to fund the upfront costs of establishing infrastructure as we make the transition to more sustainable systems of packaging.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,



Jennifer Navarra

Program Director

Zero Waste Hawai'i Island

Zero Waste Hawai'i Island's mission is to engage diverse Hawai'i Island communities to achieve zero waste.

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 10:52:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 8:18:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellie Moss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairs Gabbard and Keohokalole, Vice Chairs Richards and Fukunaga and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Please pass HB1688 HD2. This bill is vital to help with the costs of managing packaging waste in the state. With every island within the state facing landfill capacity issues, it is necessary that we reduce the amount of waste we generate. This needs assessment bill will help us to better understand our needs and the costs of developing better packaging waste diversion programs with the participation from producers that currently do not bear any of the costs of managing packaging waste.

HB-1688-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 6:40:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

GOOD IDEA TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT.

MAHALO!