

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY
KA 'OIHANA WAI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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March 27, 2024

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
and Members
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members:

Subject: SCR No. 132: Requesting the Office of the Governor to Convene a Working Group to Plan for the Remediation of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) in the State

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) No. 132, requesting the Office of the Governor to convene a working group to plan for the remediation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) in the State.

On November 29, 2022, the U.S. Navy (Navy) notified the State Department of Health (DOH) of the release of 1,100 gallons of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) spill at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSF). AFFF have been used to fight liquid fuel fires since the 1970s and are known to contain PFAS, which are linked to harmful effects on humans and animals.¹ PFAS have been known to cause harmful effects in humans and animals as PFAS “binds to proteins in human blood.”² PFAS known as the “forever chemicals” “never break down once released and they build up in our bodies.”³ In 1998, “The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was first alerted to the risks”⁴ of PFAS in which they did not immediately classify PFAS as a hazardous substance until August 26, 2022, when they issued a proposal to designate two of the most widely used PFAS as hazardous substances under CERCLA, or Superfund.⁵

¹ U.S. Fire Administration. “Firefighting Foams: PFAS vs. Fluorine-Free Foams.” May 25, 2023

² Gordon I. Norby and J. Murray Luck at Stanford University. “Perfluorooctanoic acid interactions with human serum albumin.” Journal of Biological Chemistry. August 1, 1955.

³ Christine Ayala. “EPA on ‘forever chemicals’ Let them drink polluted water” The Hill, October 1, 2019. See also: Timeline of events related to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPA Proposes Designating Certain PFAS Chemicals as Hazardous Substances Under Superfund to Protect People’s Health. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). August 26, 2022.

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and Members
March 27, 2024
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While PFAS were not widely known about from the public at large in Hawai'i since November 2022, the PFAS spill is garnering attention.

The DOH has a number of projects in progress to better understand the presence of PFAS in Hawai'i and associated risks.⁶ A total of 21 monitoring wells were tested for PFAS at the RHBFSF and found positive findings. These detections were found in areas that were away from the November 2022 spill site. In a letter dated March 1, 2024, the EPA and DOH requested that the Navy expand its testing for PFAS every two months at all monitoring wells. In response, the BWS sent a follow-up letter to EPA and DOH recommending the regulators require the Navy to test all monitoring wells at a minimum of every month.

The BWS suggest an amendment to add another member to the working group (page 3, line 13), which is the newly established Military and Community Relations Office within the Hawaii Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support on SCR No. 132.

Very truly yours,



ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer





Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

March 26, 2024

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hon. Mike Gabbard, Chair
Hon. Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

Re: SCR 132 SR 114 PFAS Working Group

Hearing: Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 1:00 p.m., Room 224 & videoconference

Position: Strong Support

Aloha, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i comprises of over 7,500 politically active members of Hawai'i's majority political party. We strongly support requesting the Office of the Governor to convene a working group to plan for the remediation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the State.

It is important to request the Governor to convene a working group for the remediation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the State for several reasons.

1. **HUMAN HEALTH.** PFAS is linked to several health problems, including immunotoxicity, thyroid and kidney disorders, and cancer. Some of the health risks and effects of PFAS exposure include: (1) increased cholesterol levels, (2) decreased vaccine response in children, (3) changes in liver enzymes and liver damage, (4) increased risk of high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia, and thyroid disease, (5) small decreases in infant birth weights, (6) increased risk of kidney and testicular cancer, (7) impaired growth and development, (8) reduced fertility, and (9) weakened immune system.

It's important to note that research is ongoing to understand the mechanisms of PFAS toxicity. The epidemiological evidence suggests associations between increases in exposure to specific PFAS and certain health effects. Reducing the presence of PFAS can help protect the health of residents.

2. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.** PFAS are considered "forever chemicals" that do not naturally break down in the environment. PFAS are environmentally persistent and can accumulate in the soil and water. They can contaminate drinking water, bioaccumulate in fish and wildlife, and have multiple adverse health effects on



humans. This means that animals at the top of the food chain, including humans, can end up with higher concentrations of these chemicals in their bodies.

PFAS can cause water contamination. PFAS can move through soil and contaminate drinking water sources. This is a particular concern for communities near waste sites, landfills, disposal sites and hazardous waste sites.

PFAS can cause soil contamination. PFAS can also contaminate soil which can affect plant growth and potentially enter the food chain.

PFAS can also cause air pollution. PFAS can be released into the air during their production or use, contributing to air pollution.

People can be exposed to PFAS through several common sources: (1) **Occupational Exposure:** Working in occupations such as firefighting or chemicals manufacturing and processing (none in Hawaii); (2) **Drinking Water:** Consuming water contaminated with PFAS; (3) **Food Consumption:** Eating certain foods that may contain Pfas, including fish. Direct exposure can also come via food produced near places where PFAS were used or made; (4) **Soil and Dust:** Accidentally swallowing or breathing contaminated soil or dust; (5) **Air:** Breathing air containing PFAS; and (6) **Consumer Products:** Using products made with PFAS or that are packaged in materials containing PFAS. This includes clothing, furniture, adhesives, food packaging, heat-resistant non-stick cooking surfaces, and the insulation of electrical wire. The level of exposure can vary based on the concentration of PFAS in each source and the amount of contact an individual has with each source.

The environmental impacts of PFAS contamination is a growing concern, leading to increased efforts to understand and manage the risks of PFAS to public health and the environment.

3. **LACK OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:** Currently, Hawaii does not have a comprehensive plan to deal with PFAS. Increased testing for PFAS may reveal a problem Hawaii is not prepared to deal with.
4. **COMMUNITY IMPACT:** The Hawaii National Guard has identified toxic chemicals known as PFAS in the nearby groundwater and has tested local private wells. Where levels of the chemicals exceeded federal safety standards, the military has delivered bottled water to property owners whose private wells were impacted.

Reducing exposure to PFAS involves several steps: (1) **Water Filter:** Use a water filter that is certified to remove PFAS, especially if you live in an area where PFAS contamination is known or suspected; (2) **Avoid Certain Products:** Avoid cooking tools, carpets, upholstery, clothing, and other products that contain PFAS or are advertised as nonstick or stain- or water-resistant. Look for ingredients such as PTFE or other “fluoro” ingredients on the label; (3) **Check Local Fish and Game Advisories:** Before eating locally-sourced fish, seafood, or wild game, check your



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The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

local fish and game advisories; (4) **Reduce Exposure During Daily Activities**; and
(5) **Learn more about PFAS**.

By requesting the Office of the Governor to convene a working group, it can help to develop a comprehensive plan for the remediation of PFAS in the state. This can include investigating and implementing policies to reduce the importation of products, packaging, or materials containing PFAS in the state, and developing short and long-term remedial actions to mitigate the hazards.

On behalf of the Environmental Caucus, we thank you very much for your support of these resolutions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these important resolutions.

Melodie Adyja legislativepriorities@gmail.com

Alan B. Burdick burdick808@gmail.com

Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus



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March 23, 2024

TO: Chair Gabbard and Members of the AEN Committee

RE: SCR132/SR114. REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO PLAN FOR THE REMEDIATION OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) IN THE STATE.

Support for Hearing: March 27

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1940s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support this resolution to establish a PFAS Working Group. We believe PFAS chemicals pose a serious threat to our health. This working group would be a good step in the direction of protecting us from these toxins.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

John Bickel, President



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 27, 2024

SRI14/SCRI32 REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO PLAN FOR THE REMEDIATION OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) IN THE STATE.

POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and esteemed Members of the Committee,

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports SR114/SCR132 requesting the Office of the Governor to convene a working group to plan for the remediation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (pfas) in the state.

Our Party Platform states under "Environment and Energy":

"We believe that all people have the right to live in a clean, healthy and safe environment. We believe that the preservation of our natural environment and its ecological well being is essential to ensuring a safe, healthy, bountiful life for future generations in Hawai'i. We support policies that create a more sustainable society. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of native ecosystems."

PFOS, PFOA and other PFAS chemicals are "forever chemicals" because they remain in the environment for long periods of time. Chemical corporations that produce PFAS generate about \$4 billion in annual profits from producing these chemicals in the United States, but they impose monumental costs on taxpayers and the health of the planet's human and animal populations. The public pays about \$17 TRILLION dollars to monitor and clean up PFAS chemicals and for healthcare resulting from PFAS exposures.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Kris Coffield (he/him)

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SCR-132

Submitted on: 3/23/2024 9:02:25 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Bishop	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard and AEN Committee Members,

i strongly support this resolution and urge your unanimous support . it is long overdue!

With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop

Oahu Resident

SCR-132

Submitted on: 3/23/2024 12:26:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

Yes this is well overdue; REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR TO
CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO PLAN FOR THE
REMEDICATION OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND
POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) IN THE STATE