



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI‘I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

March 28, 2024

3:30 PM

Conference Room 225

In SUPPORT of SCR131/SR113: REQUESTING HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO URGE CONGRESS TO FUND CONSTRUCTION OF A LABORATORY CERTIFIED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC ON ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS IN THE STATE.

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i **SUPPORTS SCR131/SR113**, which seeks to provide Hawai‘i residents and communities across the Pacific with a local water testing laboratory, in order to better understand and manage our exposure to toxic compounds including but not limited to jet fuel and per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”), in a meaningful and timely manner.

As we continue to navigate water contamination crises on O‘ahu and Maui, and as we begin to grapple with the implications of PFAS being found in ever more local water sources, it has become abundantly clear that our islands are in need of a local water testing laboratory that can provide timely, meaningful data on our residents’ potential exposure to toxic compounds.

For example, the water contamination crisis resulting from the U.S. Navy’s Red Hill Facility has required and will continue to require continual analyses of monitoring well, sentinel well, and drinking source samples. Currently, this in turn requires the storage and transshipment of potentially volatile contaminants across thousands of miles to backlogged laboratories on the U.S. continent. As a result, water quality results have taken and continue to take months to be returned, leaving our agencies and residents in limbo as we await water test results. A local water testing facility will ensure that we have more sound and timely data to prevent the potentially catastrophic contamination of our municipal water supply, and protect the health of Hawai‘i residents.

A water testing facility will also serve critical needs in circumstances beyond Red Hill. For example, citizens in Waiawa have had to wait for months, simply to know if their drinking water sources were contaminated by PFAS due to military firefighting training at the Waiawa Army National Guard Armory. Given the extent of past training exercises and the persistence of PFAS “forever chemicals” in the environment, ongoing and timely testing will also be required to ensure that these citizens are not exposed to these



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contaminants in the future, as PFAS percolate and migrate in soil, streams, and groundwater for decades and centuries to come.

Similar water testing needs will also be necessary for impacted water systems and water sources in Lāhainā and Kula, where the 2023 wildfires may have resulted in the release of a wide range of toxic, environmentally persistent compounds including PFAS, dioxins, furans, PCBs, and others.

Notably, our local testing needs will only increase over time, as more contamination issues come to light, or are created by future climate-related disasters. Meanwhile, the demand on testing laboratories on the continent is anticipated to significantly increase in the very near future, as maximum contaminant levels are set for PFAS and potentially other compounds by the Environmental Protection Agency. As a result, we may have less and less access to meaningful and timely water testing data, while our need for such data continuously increases.

In addition, the Sierra Club notes that a local water testing laboratory would assist other communities wrestling with water contamination issues, including places such as Guåhan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and other locations across the U.S.-occupied Pacific.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully but strongly urges the Committees to **PASS** this resolution. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I
SENATE COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ON AGRICULTURE
AND ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 28, 2024

SR113/SCR131 REQUESTING HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO URGE
CONGRESS TO FUND CONSTRUCTION OF A LABORATORY CERTIFIED BY THE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC
ON ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS IN THE STATE.

POSITION: SUPPORT

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and esteemed Members of the Committees,

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i is in support of SR113/SCR131.

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."

For decades, Hawai'i has been subjected to environmental degradation caused by multiple entities that have deposited materials that are toxic to human health and the natural environment; but Hawai'i continues to lack a testing laboratory certified by the Environmental Protection Agency that can identify diseases and toxins present in Hawaii's air, water, soil, and biological specimens. The Hawai'i public has had to rely on data relating to environmental toxins that are

often provided by the very entities that may have caused such toxins to be present in Hawaii's environment. We cannot rely on them to provide full and accurate information about testing results.

Please support this measure.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

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SR-113

Submitted on: 3/26/2024 3:35:13 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/28/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is sorely needed. Please support this bill. Mahalo.