



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

March 19, 2025

To: Chair Nicole E. Lowen, Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso, and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Date: Thursday, March 20, 2025 **Time:** 10:00 a.m.

Place: Via Videoconference and Conference Room 325

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of HR183/HCR189 - Test sewage sludge and reclaimed water for PFAS

Aloha Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee,

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii strongly supports HR183/HCR189, which urges the Department of Health and the University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center to take all necessary actions to incentivize wastewater treatment plants to test sewage sludge, reclaimed water, and other residual materials for the presence of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Key Points in Support:

1. Protecting Public Health and Agricultural Safety:

- Testing for PFAS is critical to ensuring the safety of reclaimed water and sewage sludge used for agricultural purposes. These chemicals, known for their persistence in the environment and potential health risks, must be monitored to prevent contamination of food sources and drinking water supplies.

2. Examples of PFAS Concerns:

- **Schofield Wastewater Treatment Facility:** Through Aqua Engineers, reclaimed water and sewage sludge from this facility are sold for agricultural purposes, yet there is currently a lack of mandatory testing for PFAS in these materials. This absence of testing raises serious concerns about the potential spread of these toxic substances into crops, soil, and groundwater, jeopardizing both public health and environmental integrity.

3. Aligning with Best Practices:

- Encouraging testing aligns with national and global efforts to address PFAS contamination. Establishing robust testing practices in Hawaii would ensure that

the state remains proactive in protecting its environment and residents from exposure to harmful substances.

4. Building Public Confidence:

- Implementing comprehensive testing for PFAS in wastewater treatment products will strengthen trust among consumers and agricultural producers, demonstrating a commitment to safety and environmental stewardship.

This resolution represents a crucial step toward safeguarding Hawaii's water resources, agricultural lands, and public health. We commend the Legislature for addressing this important issue and urge the committee to pass HR183/HCR189.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodie Aduja and Alan Burdick

Co-Chairs Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

HR-183

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 9:26:41 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

HR-183

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 9:11:38 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Requiring monitoring for PFAS at wastewater treatment plants consistent with environmental regulations and public health guidelines demonstrates responsible management of wastewater facilities.

PFAS--forever chemicals linked to significant health risks, including but not limited to cancer, liver damage, developmental issues, weakened immune systems, and endocrine disruption--have already been detected in the Navy's water system and near military sites across Hawaii due to the military's criminal negligence. To protect the health and safety of our communities, it is critical that we take steps toward assessing and then remediation of PFAS contamination throughout the State.