

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

MARCH 14, 2025

1:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM 224 AND VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 103 / SR 84
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP
TO INVESTGATE THE EXISTENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF PER-
AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CHEMICALS**

Chairperson Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution 103 / SR 84 requesting the Governor to convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals. The bill requests the Department of Agriculture to serve as members of the working group. The Department is in support of this resolution.

The Department is aware of the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in some products the Department regulates such as pesticides. The Department will commit to providing a representative to serve on the working group to continue discussion of PFAS and its effects upon the environment.

The Department may assist with contacting pesticide registrants and other manufacturers within the jurisdiction of the Department, to further the working group's goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

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March 14, 2025

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: Senate SCR 103 / SR 84: Requesting the Governor to Convene a
Temporary Working Group to Investigate the Existence and Environmental
Dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and Other Related
Chemicals

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) strongly supports the intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 103, Senate Resolution (SR) 84. This bill proposes to establish a working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals.

According to the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC), a national coalition focused on the deployment of innovative environmental technologies and approaches, PFAS chemistry was discovered in the late 1930s. Since then, many products have been manufactured using PFAS substances that contain various perfluoroalkyl chains: sidechain fluorinated polymers, perfluoroalkyl acids and polyfluoroalkyl surfactants.¹ Awareness of public health impacts through occupational studies in the 1970s that found detections of some PFAS in the blood of exposed workers, and further studies in the 1990s that reported detections in the blood of the general human population (Buck et al. 2011).²

Through September 30, 2024, the United States Department of Defense has been conducting preliminary assessments and site investigations on 722 active military

¹ (USEPA 2003 Ref#858; Benskin, DeSilva, and Martin 2010; KEMI 2015 Ref#658; OECD 2018) ITRC History and Use of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances found in the Environment. September 2023.

² Ibid.

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
and Members
March 14, 2025
Page 2

installations across the nation. Of the 722 military installations, 26 facilities are in the State of Hawaii. A mix of Air Force, Army and Navy facilities.

When the U.S. Navy's Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility complex (Red Hill) released over over 19,000 gallons of JP-5 jet fuel in November 2021, another leak of fire suppression system at the Red Hill complex spilled over 1,300 gallons of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) concentrate was released into the environment just a year later on November 29th. Hawai'i's Congressional Delegation acted quickly to respond to the Comptroller General of the United States urging an immediate investigation into the procedures and practices utilized by the DOD and requested the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct an investigation and respond to their concerns.³

The GAO was asked to review the contracts related to Red Hill's operations and selected 16 contracts for review and conducted a site visit to Red Hill, met with DOD officials, contractors, and the local community.⁴ In April 2024, the GAO issued a report on DOD's efforts to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.⁵

Both DOD, DOD Inspector General, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have since completed investigations of the November 2022 AFFF release and issued final reports. On April 10, 2024, EPA announced a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation establishing allowable levels of 4 parts per trillion for certain PFAS in drinking water (one part per trillion is equivalent to a single drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools). Prior to this, PFAS in drinking water were not regulated at the federal level. Ongoing efforts by the Navy and state Hawai'i officials must continue its investigation for ongoing monitoring and long-term cleanup of PFAS in the environment.⁶

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 103, SR 84.

Very truly yours,



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

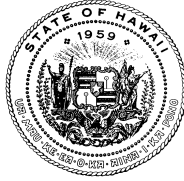


³ Letter from Hawai'i Congressional Delegation to the Honorable Gene Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States Government Accountability Office; dated December 19, 2022.

⁴ Red Hill Fuel Storage: DOD's Contract Approaches and Oversight before and after the 2021 Fuel Leaks. Government Accountability Office, [GAO-25-106572](#) Published: Nov 04, 2024. Publicly Released: Nov 04, 2024.

⁵ Ibid. [GAO-24-106812](#) (Washington, D.C.: April 15, 2024).

⁶ Ibid.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on SCR0103/SR84
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP TO
INVESTIGATE THE EXISTENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF PER- AND
POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CHEMICALS**

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: March 14, 2025, 1:00 PM, Rm 224

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None

2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health ("Department") appreciates the intent of
3 SCR0103 and offers comments.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Administration testimony on behalf of the
5 Department.

6 The Department concurs that Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAs) are present and
7 persistent in the environment and that little is known of their impact in Hawaii. To address
8 these unknowns, the Environmental Health Administration convened a PFAs and Emerging
9 Contaminant Working Group comprised of staff from the State Lab Division (SLD), the
10 Environmental Management Division (EMD), the Environmental Health Services Division (EHSD),
11 and the Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) Office. Each has ongoing studies
12 related to PFAs, which are summarized in the attachment.

13 We believe establishing a temporary working group through the Governor's Office may be
14 redundant. The Department is already engaged in a PFAs working group with our goals

1 consistent with those outlined in SCR0103. We are committed to investigating the
2 environmental and public health risks associated with PFAs exposure and continue to have
3 dialogue and collaboration with researchers at the University of Hawaii who are also conducting
4 PFAs research.

5 All of these ongoing studies are limited by our funding resources, which come directly from
6 federal grants. With the uncertainty of the federal budget, the Department can only commit to
7 the completion and analysis of the current studies.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Division/ Office	Project Name	Project Period	Description	Status/Outcome
HEER	PFAS in aquatic life surrounding Oahu shores	May 2021 - Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the fate and transport of PFAS in fish surrounding Oahu where PFAS content in water is expected to be elevated (e.g., military sites, landfills, sewage runoff, harbors etc.). Understand overall uptake and PFAS concentrations in commonly consumed fish, and identify needs to reassess current guidance and education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study manuscript (first-authored by academic collaborator) completed and submitted for peer-review on Mar 12, 2025. <p><u>FINDINGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFAS analytes were detected in seawater and market fish. Based on available information, this study determined the potential for PFAS-related health effects is negligible for people eating fish collected around O'ahu. However, the understanding of human health risks from PFAS exposure is constantly evolving and further study of frequently consumed fish is needed to further assess potential health risks in Hawai'i.
	PFAS sources in Hawaii	Sep 2021 - Nov 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide understanding of relative makeup of PFAS in environmental media associated with wastewater treatment plants (WWTP; 6), landfills (5) and AFFF-release sites (2). Provide relative source strength of PFAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final study report "Field Study of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Associated with Wastewater Treatment Plants, Landfills and AFFF-Release Sites in Hawai'i" completed Nov 15, 2024; published on HEER office website (https://health.hawaii.gov/heer/files/2024/11/Hawaii-PFAS-Study-HIDOH-Nov-2024-rev-Nov-15-2024.pdf) Results/findings shared via public webinar on Nov 20, 2024 (https://youtu.be/DCbdOyD3QDo?si=6xcd75kbBRgm5sLU) <p><u>FINDINGS</u></p>

			within different media and the potential cumulative health risk posed by long term exposure to impacted media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of this initial study suggests that human health and environmental risks posed by PFAS in Hawaii is relatively low in comparison to industrial contamination on the mainland. • Overall, the results from the tested areas and facilities suggests that there is minimal risk to the human health and the environment associated with PFAS.
	PFAS uptake into food crops	Sep 2021 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on PFAS species and concentrations in compost used as soil amendment when using compostable serviceware and municipal/R1 recycled water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working closely with expert community partner on Maui for field components. • Developed protocols for compost preparation, sampling, and analysis plans. • Received WWTP influent/effluent samples. • Sent compostable serviceware and WWTP samples to contracted laboratories for baseline testing; results pending. • Equipment procurement ongoing.
	PFAS cancer and noncancer toxicity	Jul 2024 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review confidence in studies used to develop cancer-based and noncancer-based toxicity factors for PFAS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants are reviewing PFAS toxicity factors used to generate/update HDOH EALs are ongoing, final report pending.
SLD	PFAS biomonitoring	Oct 2024 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a PFAS biomonitoring program for Hawaii to inform residents about PFAS health risks, contamination pathways, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring PFAS testing in Hawaii residents to assess contamination risks and exposure levels. • Establishing PFAS testing capabilities at the Hawaii State Laboratories Division (SLD) for serum, blood, and potentially other relevant matrices to support DOH PFAS monitoring programs.

			<p>prevention strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of such a program is to share PFAS testing results and biomonitoring data, and compare Hawaii levels to other U.S. states and global populations. 	
	PFAS testing of serum samples	Oct 2024 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot testing of PFAS in convenience sample of human serum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88 serum samples from Hawaii collected and shipped to contracted laboratory for PFAS concentration and speciation. • Initial serum PFAS analyte results received mid-February; analysis pending.
EHSD-FDB	Act 152, 2022	Effective Dec 31, 2024 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibits the manufacture, sale, distribution, and/or use of specific food packaging that contains intentionally added PFAS. Specifically, wraps & liners, plates, food boats, and pizza boxes are prohibited from PFAS coatings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webpage developed and published on FDB site (https://health.hawaii.gov/food-drug/pfas-in-food-packaging/). • Flyer developed in English and translated in sixteen additional languages. • Public outreach campaign with regulated industries to inform about the prohibition. • Distribution of flyers at Chinatown, Kaimuki, Ala Moana, and Kalihi food establishments. • Website & flyer developed; conducted outreach to regulated industries (presentations & flyer distribution) to inform about the prohibition. • FDB has completed its outreach efforts to inform the regulated community and food establishments in specific geographic districts about Act 152, 2022. The program lacks

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				resources to conduct full compliance enforcement but will follow up on complaints when possible.
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SCR-103

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:39:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colehour Bondera	Testifying for Kanalani Ohana Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members:

Please support this legislation.

As a long-standing farmer in Honaunau and an active participant in outreach and education efforts regarding agriculture, it is critical that Hawaii is well informed and looking out for the whole state.

As a past members of the National Organic Standards Board (2011-2016) who advised the USDA Secretary of Agriculture, we were required to review and advise on organic standards before they could be put in place.

Much of the supporting materials came from state and local research efforts to establish issues at hand, including human and environmental health.

From this experience, I know that such a Working Group could and should have important impacts on our well being.

Please support this legislation.

Yours,

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

Honaunau, HI

colemel2@gmail.com



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

March 11, 2025

Testimony in Support of SCR103/SR84 (Requesting Investigation into PFAS)

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

Date: Friday, March 14, 2025 **Time:** 1:00 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii strongly supports SCR103/SR84, which calls for the Governor to convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other related chemicals.

Key Points of Support:

- **PFAS as a Significant Environmental Threat:**
 - PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals," are highly persistent in the environment and linked to serious health risks such as cancer, immune system dysfunction, and hormone disruption.
 - Investigating these substances is essential to mitigate their harmful impact on public health and the environment.
- **Necessity for a Collaborative Approach:**
 - A temporary working group will bring together experts, stakeholders, and policymakers to assess the extent of PFAS contamination and develop actionable solutions.
 - Collaboration across agencies and sectors ensures a comprehensive and coordinated response.
- **Alignment with Public Health Goals:**
 - Addressing PFAS contamination aligns with Hawaii's commitment to protecting human health and environmental sustainability.

- Proactive measures to investigate and mitigate PFAS risks can prevent long-term harm to ecosystems and communities.
- **Support for Science-Based Solutions:**
 - Convening a working group demonstrates a commitment to science-based approaches for addressing emerging environmental threats.
 - The findings will provide valuable insights for future legislative and regulatory actions to protect Hawaii's natural resources.

SCR103/SR84 represents a critical step toward understanding and addressing the environmental dangers posed by PFAS and related chemicals. We respectfully urge the Committee to adopt this measure to safeguard Hawaii's environment and public health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SCR103/SR84. We are available to answer any questions or provide additional information as needed.

Sincerely,

Melodie Aduja and Alan Burdick

Co-chairs, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

SCR-103

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:38:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii **STRONGLY SUPPORT** investigation into the health and environmental dangers of "forever chemicals" PFAS and PFOA!

We are only beginning to understand the health and environmental impacts of these chemicals in Hawaii. We need to investigate now!



SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 14, 2025

**SCR 103/SR 84, REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP
TO INVESTIGATE THE EXISTENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF PER- AND
POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CHEMICALS**

POSITION: SUPPORT

Coalition Earth supports SCR 103/SR 84, which requests the Governor to convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, PFAS can be found in many places, including the following:

- Drinking water: in public drinking water systems and private drinking water wells;
- Soil and water at or near waste sites: landfills, disposal sites, and hazardous waste sites;
- Food: for example in fish caught from water contaminated by PFAS and dairy products from livestock exposed to PFAS;
- Food packaging: in grease-resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, and candy wrappers;
- Household products and dust: in stain and water-repellent used on carpets, upholstery, clothing, cleaning products; non-stick cookware; paints, varnishes, and sealants;
- Personal care products: in certain shampoo, dental floss, and cosmetics; and
- Biosolids: fertilizer from wastewater treatment plants that is used on agricultural lands can affect ground and surface water and animals that graze on the land.

At the same time, the EPA notes that current scientific research suggests that exposure to certain PFAS levels may lead to adverse health outcomes. Research is ongoing to determine how different levels of PFAS exposure can instigate a variety of health effects, especially in

children. According to the latest scientific and medical research, however, some of the potential harms produced by PFAS exposure may be:

- Reproductive effects, such as decreased fertility or increased high blood pressure;
- Developmental effects or delays in children, including low birth weight, accelerated puberty, bone variations, or behavioral changes;
- Increased risk of some cancers, including prostate, kidney, and testicular cancers;
- Reduced ability of the body's immune system to fight infections, including reduced vaccine response;
- Interference with the body's natural hormones; and
- Increased cholesterol levels and/or risk of obesity.

Studies of the harms caused by PFAS are continuing. Yet, research has clearly shown that PFAS carries unintended health risks, much like restricted use pesticides. Rather than waiting to protect public health, we should take action to regulate PFAS spread and contamination, and ensure that future generations are not sickened by forever chemicals.

Coalition Earth is a nongovernmental organization that works to preserve the well-being of people and our planet. We champion policies that advance climate resilience, clean energy, public health, and economic fairness for working families. Contact us at info@coalitionearth.org.

SCR-103

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:15:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

SCR-103

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 8:45:52 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SCR103/SR84 requesting the Governor convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals. 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.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.