



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB2726
RELATING TO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS LEE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Hearing Date: February 15, 2018
Time: 8:35 AM

Room Number: 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The measure has appropriations of \$3 million general funds for the plastics
2 recycling grant program and \$169,466 for new positions to support the Glass Advance Disposal Fee
3 program.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) supports the intent of the bill,
5 but defers to the Governor's Supplemental Budget Request for appropriation and personnel
6 priorities. The Department would like to offer the following comments for further consideration.

7 **Offered Comments:**

8 (1) Hawaii's Deposit Beverage Container (DBC) Program achieved a redemption rate high of
9 seventy-seven percent in fiscal year 2012 that declined to an average of sixty-six percent over
10 the last three fiscal years (FY15,16,17). While the decline is concerning, the establishment of
11 benchmarks without a clear understanding of the causes of the decline is unlikely to result in
12 higher redemption rates. The Department is performing studies that may help with the
13 identification of beneficial benchmarks and actions to increase the redemption rate.

14 (2) The scope of the proposed \$3 million plastic recycling grant program is unclear. While the
15 development of an in-state "closed loop system" for plastics (e.g., manufacture, recycle,
16 re-manufacture or re-use) appears to make sense, we are not aware of any legitimate
17 assessments of the economic or environmental feasibility of such systems, thus the Department
18 believes that planning to determine a) which plastics would be included in the program,
19 b) which existing statutes might be implicated, and c) an operational plan for administering the

1 program is necessary prior to implementation. The Department would also like to convey that
2 Hawaii Certified Redemption Centers mitigated the global effects of China's increased
3 selectivity of scrap imports (not a "ban") by establishing agreements to ship their plastic DBCs
4 to end users in other countries. Importantly, DBC plastic scrap was not one of the plastic scrap
5 materials restricted for import into China.

6 (3) The Department annually reports the DBC Program redemption rates and activities in the Office
7 of Solid Waste Management Report to the legislature.

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

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 7:49:40 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

**PRESENTATION OF THE
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018
Thursday, February 15, 2018
8:35 a.m.**

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2726, RELATING TO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

To the Honorable Chris Lee, Chair; the Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Vice-Chair and the Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No .2726 relating to the Deposit Beverage Container Program; Plastics Recycling Grant Program; and Advance Disposal Fee Program.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of House Bill No. 2726 and supports its passage as plastic scrap has low economic value, is difficult to recycle and does not easily break down in the environment.

House Bill No.2726 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it (1) requires the department of health to set benchmarks to reach an eighty-five percent redemption rate by 2023, (2) establishes and appropriates funds for a plastics recycling grant program to identify Hawaii-based alternatives for the sustainable recycling and reuse of plastic commodities, (3) requires the department of health to annually report to the legislature on redemption rates, progress, and plans regarding the deposit beverage container program, and (4) appropriates funds to establish two positions for the glass advance disposal fee program.

The DPH Platform states that State and county governments have a key role to play in setting reasonable standards for industry and trade. As market conditions change, government agencies must adapt and revise regulations to promote "green" sustainable industries that are compatible with preserving the natural and scenic beauty of Hawai'i. In this regard, we must find ways to stimulate recycling and biodegradable packaging to minimize landfill needs. We must move from carbon-based power to electric power." (Platform of DPH, P. 1, Lines 44-48 (2016)).

"[W]e must abandon the "throwaway" economy to avoid wasting our valuable resources." (Platform of DPH, P. 1, Line 54 (2016)).

We believe in supporting best management practices in sustaining our environment and in increased citizen involvement. We support programs that encourage sustainable clean, efficient, creative and environmentally friendly modes of transportation, recycling, and waste reduction. (Platform of DPH, P. 8, Line 413-415 (2016)).

Given that House Bill No.2726 requires the DOH to set benchmarks to reach an eighty-five percent redemption rate by 2023; establishes a plastics recycling grant program, requires DOH to report on the deposit beverage container program; and appropriates funds for the glass advance disposal fee program, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/**Melodie Aduja**

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

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HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 5:39:21 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Milholen	Kokua Hawaii Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

We support this measure as a necessary step in support of the waste reduction goals set at the state and county levels. Many municipalities have set ambitious redemption goals and met them. We are more than capable and creative enough to grow our redemption rates here in Hawaii. As the program coordinator for the 3Rs Recycling Program, I see first hand that the word is not getting out about recycling options and services. An increased education initiative and DOH milestones would help to move us toward recapturing the materials that are currently escaping our materials rescue efforts.

Particularly important in this bill is the implimentation of a local grant program aimed at processing and managing plastic commodities on the islands. Everyone agrees that shipping plastics off-island is not the answer given the volatility and fluxuations of the commodities markets. Supporting local, entrepreneurial innovation in plastics recycling and reuse, in place of the conventional management model, could be an enormous breakthrough for Hawaii to remove itself from the closing markets and move toward materials self-sufficiency. Please support this measure.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. Cherish the Earth.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Thursday, February 15, 2018 8:35AM Room 325

In SUPPORT of HB 2726 Relating to solid waste management

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen and members of the Committee,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i, a member of the Common Good Coalition, **strongly supports HB 2726**, which requires the Department of Health (DOH) to set benchmarks to reach an eighty-five percent redemption rate by 2023. The bill establishes and appropriates funds for a plastics recycling grant program to identify Hawai'i-based alternatives for the sustainable recycling and reuse of plastic commodities. It also requires the DOH to annually report to the legislature on redemption rates, progress, and plans regarding the deposit beverage container program, as well as to appropriate funds to establish two positions for the glass advance disposal fee program.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i is committed to supporting efforts seeking to reduce waste and consumption across the islands, that initiate on-island recycling and processing, and that explore innovative ways to upcycle and reuse various waste materials, notably plastics. The above efforts reduce the volume of waste being sent to H-POWER, which is inefficient when burning water-saturated food waste and creates pollution when burning plastic¹². Our communities have come so far in their support for recycling programs, and *we should continue moving toward a zero waste Hawai'i in a way that is clean, efficient, and causes minimal harm to the environment.*

For over a decade, China has been importing a majority of the United States' plastic scrap, including Hawai'i. However, in July of 2017, China announced that it will

¹ <http://www.kanuhawaii.org/story/?id=1321565150464636>

² <http://www.climatecentral.org/news/community-activists-rally-against-proposed-trash-incinerator-15605>

effectively ban imports on twenty-four types of scrap³. This decision has impacted the recycling stream for Hawai'i, requiring us to innovate and appropriate funds to find local alternatives to plastics recycling in the market. In order to mitigate future problems with exporting waste, and to avoid overflowing our landfills, Hawai'i must move forward in appropriating the time and funds for identifying sustainable recycling and reuse of plastics on-island. Continuing to rely on other countries for our recycling production is costly to both our economy and the ecosystem, with high spending and carbon dioxide emissions from land and ocean collection and transportation. By creating a market on-island for recycling, we can be innovative with upcycling and plastic reduction standards.

Currently, there are many gaps between public recycling knowledge and the actual recycling system on the island. Sometimes it can be confusing which bottles can go to HI-5, and which are for the deposit beverage program⁴. The redemption rate of the deposit beverage container program is 67 percent, down from 78.7 percent in 2009. Although the rate has shown to be decreasing, the efforts and habits of the general public have been consistent and supportive. Many homes and apartment buildings, as well as hotels do not have a convenient option to recycle. The increased recycling pick up fees have decreased the efforts and motivation to recycle, although the habit is still in place. This recycling system has been in place for a number of years, growing to educate the public on recycling, reuse, and the source reduction of plastic. Further efforts in education and site pickup need to be taken to increase the redemption rate to 85 percent and ensure that less plastic is being deposited in landfills and the ocean.

HB 2726 will require the DOH to annually report to the legislature on redemption rates, progress, and plans regarding the deposit beverage container program, in addition to appropriating funds for two positions in the glass advance disposal fee program. Both programs are crucial to the efficiency of recycling in Hawai'i, and will continue to encourage the public to recycle. It is important for the general public as well as the department to be tracking and benchmarking the deposit beverage container program in order to increase performance and identify gaps between purchase and return.

The recycling program has only just begun through the islands, and with HB 2726, we can take measures to the next level with innovative and efficient ways to reduce plastic consumption, as well as to upcycle used plastics for further reuse. The waste stream cutoff from China has given Hawai'i an opportunity to showcase sustainability with on-island source reduction and efficient recycling methods.

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/world/china-recyclables-ban.html>

⁴ <http://health.hawaii.gov/hi5/>

We urge the committee to pass this measure, which will serve our collective efforts to keep Hawai'i's land, freshwater bodies, and oceans free of plastic pollution and other waste.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in strong support of HB 2726**.

LATE

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 7:10:10 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sylvia Dolena	Pele Lani Farm LLC	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 8:40:13 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Scott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 11:37:25 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Circe Carr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 5:01:22 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Maupin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 8:11:57 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kat Culina	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 10:00:41 PM
Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cody Moniz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2726

Submitted on: 2/15/2018 10:25:31 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/15/2018 8:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments: