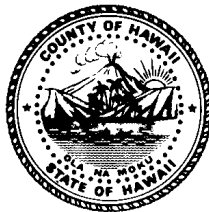


REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



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## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

February 24, 2020

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON HB 2439 HD 1, RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Committee Finance  
Tuesday, February 25, 2020  
12:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committees:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2439 HD 1, relating to the environment. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair of the Hawai'i County Council Public Safety Committee.

The purpose of this measure is to enhance Hawai'i's environment and protect its economy by making an appropriation to the UH Water Resources Research Center for the research and development of specialized equipment for removing plastic marine debris from shores and beaches. Plastic marine debris is fouling Hawai'i's beaches and ocean. Microplastic doesn't break down, and we are finding it in our fish, birds, whales, turtles, seals, and corals. It is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish by weight in the world's ocean. It is important to remove plastic marine debris before it can break down into microplastic as this is a risk to not only our marine environment but to humans as well. Having specialized equipment to assist with removal of these plastics is needed to remove the debris effectively and efficiently from our beaches and shorelines. I encourage you to amend the effective date to July 1, 2022 instead of July 1, 2050.

For the reasons stated above I urge the Committee Finance to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

**HB-2439-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 1:13:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Climate Protector	Climate Protectors Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2439-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 11:44:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Victoria Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Marine debris, especially tiny microplastics, is harming our precious marine life, hurting our recreation and tourism, and endangering human health with adhering persistent toxins that enter our marine food chain. We need to clean up these petroleum products that are fouling our beaches and harming our marine life. Please pass this bill!

**LATE**

**HB-2439-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 6:54:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Nandoskar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support!

**LATE**

**HB-2439-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 8:00:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Phaethon Keeney	Individual	Support	No

Comments: