
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Act 176, Session
2 Laws of 2002, established the deposit beverage container program
3 "to expand participation in recycling programs and to minimize
4 costs to those participating and to government." However, the
5 legislature finds that the costs of recycling have skyrocketed,
6 and it may be beneficial for the State to explore other
7 alternatives to recycling that encourage zero waste.

8 In 2017 alone, 5,900,000,000 pounds of plastic beverage
9 containers were sold nationally, but only 333,000,000 pounds
10 were recycled into new containers, according to the Conservation
11 Law Foundation. Nearly all of the remaining plastic bottles end
12 up in landfills or burned in incinerators.

13 For decades, the United States was sending the bulk of its
14 recycling to China; however, in 2018, China restricted imports
15 of twenty-four types of recyclable material. In 2019, companies
16 from China purchased 2,800,000 pounds of plastic beverage
17 containers from the State's deposit beverage container program



1 but that amount has decreased dramatically due to China's new
2 restrictions. Facing the same issue, many cities across the
3 country are forced to address the environment and financial
4 costs of recycling.

5 The legislature further finds that recycling centers in
6 Hawaii started selling plastic to companies in India, Indonesia,
7 and other South-East Asian countries. However, materials that
8 become contaminated cannot be recycled, including materials that
9 are mislabeled, mixed with non-recyclables, or improperly
10 cleaned; these contaminated materials end up in landfills or
11 dumped in the ocean. For this reason, more countries are
12 prohibiting or restricting the importation of trash for
13 recycling. And it is unclear whether the State's recycling
14 efforts contributes more to the global trash problem -- rather
15 than reducing it -- since Hawaii is unable to account for the
16 end location of its recycling.

17 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
18 health to conduct an economic and environmental study of the
19 deposit beverage container program.

20 SECTION 2. (a) The department of health shall conduct an
21 economic and environmental study of the deposit beverage



1 container program. The study shall include but not be limited
2 to:

3 (1) The environmental and financial costs of the deposit
4 beverage container program;

5 (2) Whether there is a nexus between the revenues
6 collected from the deposit beverage container program
7 and their expenditure;

8 (3) Whether there are more viable alternatives to
9 recycling than the deposit beverage container program
10 that support source reduction; and

11 (4) Whether the deposit beverage container program should
12 cease.

13 (b) The department of health shall submit a report of its
14 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
15 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
16 to the convening of the regular session of 2022.

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 for
20 the purposes of this Act.



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1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of health for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

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INTRODUCED BY: *Samuel E. King*
JAN 22 2021



H.B. NO. 456

Report Title:

Deposit Beverage Container Program; Department of Health;
Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of health to conduct an economic and environmental study of the deposit beverage container program and report to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2022. Appropriates funds.

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