



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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Testimony COMMENTING on HCR 97

**REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ASSURE THAT ANY
SUBSTANTIAL LAND DISCHARGE OF WASTEWATER, OCCURRING BY
INJECTION WELL OR OTHER MEANS, IS IN ALL CASES, ADEQUATELY
REVIEWED AND PERMITTED.**

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS LEE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Hearing Date: 3/19/2015 Room Number: 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This resolution may impact the priorities as set forth in the Governor's
2 Executive Budget.

3 **Department Testimony:** The resolution currently addresses the discharge of both domestic and
4 non-domestic wastewater to injection wells and land application. The issue of requiring a permit
5 for all land applications of non-domestic wastewater should be considered cautiously because it
6 could have a significant negative impact on farmers, other agricultural businesses, and industrial
7 businesses. Also, permitting may be complex; the Department is not aware of any other state
8 that has permit limits for land application of effluent from non-domestic wastewater treatment
9 systems.

10 Discharges closer to the ground surface have the potential to receive the natural filtration effects
11 of the surface soils and vegetation. The prolonged travel time through the ground during which
12 natural attenuation and breakdown of a contaminant can occur is more beneficial to the
13 environment.

14 The resolution should exclude the permitting of all individual wastewater systems (IWS), such as
15 septic tank systems. The Department currently reviews and approves approximately 1,200 IWSs
16 per year, but does not formally permit them. The permitting of IWSs could be burdensome for
17 homeowners and would require additional staffing for the Department.

- 1 To protect drinking water sources from contamination, the Department currently issues permits
- 2 for the discharge of treated domestic wastewater with design flows of 1,000 gallons per day or
- 3 greater into injection wells which are below the Underground Injection Control (UIC) line. New
- 4 injection wells for sewage or industrial discharges are prohibited above the UIC line.
- 5 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this resolution.

Comments submitted in support of HCR97

To All Concerned:

I fully support the regulation of wastewater treatment discharges by the Dept of Health in Hawaii. The most recent example in west Maui shows that injection wells and other land based source pollutants can significantly affect the coastal resources that support our tourist industry. My expertise is in nutrient runoff, and there is clearly a connection between excess nutrients (nitrate, phosphate) and coastal water quality.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kim Falinski
Water Resources Research Center
University of Hawaii at Manoa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 10:08 PM
To: EEPtestimony
Cc: councilmemberholmes@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HCR97 on Mar 19, 2015 08:30AM



HCR97

Submitted on: 3/18/2015

Testimony for EEP on Mar 19, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steve Holmes	Individual	Support	No

Comments: We have a serious problem statewide with wastewater injection wells which are contaminating our coastal waters. Maui County was sued by Sierra Club and other groups to stop this practice in federal court. judge Susan Mollway ruled against Maui which now faces massive fines. Kealakehe Wastewater Plant is another one facing fines over illegal discharges over the last 20'years. The Kona Coast is now listed as impaired under federal law. The State Department of Health has allowed this practice to go on for far too long. Cesspools and injection wells are having a serious impact and it is time for this to end. Steve Holmes Sierra Club Hawaii Chapter Conservation Chair

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