



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

By
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and
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HB 551 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Wildberger, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) strongly supports this measure. Act 132, Session Laws of Hawai'i (SLH) 2018, appropriated \$500,000 for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the WRRC to conduct a comprehensive state study of sewage contamination in nearshore marine areas. The WRRC recognizes that it would be challenging to encumber the entire \$500,000 by the end of fiscal year 2018-2019. This would significantly impact the results of this work and the WRRC's ability to appropriately inform the Cesspool Conversion Working Group as it informs the comprehensive cesspool conversion plan required under Act 132, SLH 2018. Allowing the unencumbered funds to lapse on June 30, 2020 instead of June 30, 2019 would give the WRRC the additional time needed to encumber the funds for the research required.

In discussion with staff from the Department of Health (DOH), they also support this measure. They would need the additional time to encumber the \$1,000,000 to conduct research or gather technical assistance on other issues as identified by the Cesspool Conversion Working Group in completing its comprehensive cesspool conversion plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.