



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
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By

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HB 1805 HD1 – RELATING TO CESSPOOLS

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) supports HB 1805 HD1. This legislation would help to eliminate the pollution that cesspools contribute to our environment by requiring the conversion of cesspools upon the sale of a property and establishing a tax credit for the costs of cesspool conversion until 2035. This bill also appropriates support for new positions at the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) to oversee cesspool conversions.

This bill would enhance the state's capacity to fulfill its mandate under Act 125, which requires the conversion of all cesspools by 2050. With more than 88,000 cesspools across the state discharging 53 million gallons of raw sewage each day into Hawai'i's waters, both human and environmental health cannot afford to wait for cesspool conversions to occur at the latter end of this timeframe.

Hawai'i Sea Grant supports the amendments included in HD1 focusing on cesspools that are within 1000 feet of a shoreline, perennial stream, wetland, well or sensitive body of water as well as the appropriation of funds for four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) positions for the DOH Wastewater Branch to assist with monitoring and enforcing cesspool upgrades, conversions, and connections.

Hawai'i Sea Grant supports HB 1805 HD1 to facilitate the conversion of cesspools at the point-of-sale, establish financial relief during the conversion process through a tax credit, and create additional capacity within the DOH to guide the state's transition to more appropriate forms of waste management.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.