

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY  
KA 'OIHANA WAI  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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April 10, 2025

The Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Chair  
and Members  
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Lowen and Members:

Subject: Senate SCR 103, SD1: Requesting the Governor to Convene a  
Temporary Working Group to Investigate the Existence and Environmental  
Dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and Other Related  
Chemicals

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The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) strongly supports the intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 103, Senate Draft (SD) 1. This bill proposes to establish a working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and other related chemicals.

According to the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC), a national coalition focused on the deployment of innovative environmental technologies and approaches, PFAS chemistry was discovered in the late 1930s. Since then, many products have been manufactured using PFAS substances that contain various perfluoroalkyl chains: sidechain fluorinated polymers, perfluoroalkyl acids and polyfluoroalkyl surfactants.<sup>1</sup> Awareness of public health impacts through occupational studies in the 1970s that found detections of some PFAS in the blood of exposed workers, and further studies in the 1990s that reported detections in the blood of the general human population (Buck et al. 2011).<sup>2</sup>

Through September 30, 2024, the United States Department of Defense (DOD) has been conducting preliminary assessments and site investigations on 722 active military

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<sup>1</sup> (USEPA 2003 Ref#858; Benskin, DeSilva, and Martin 2010; KEMI 2015 Ref#658; OECD 2018) ITRC History and Use of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances found in the Environment. September 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

The Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Chair  
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installations across the nation. Of the 722 military installations, 26 facilities are in the State of Hawaii. A mix of Air Force, Army and Navy facilities.

When the U.S. Navy's Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility complex (Red Hill) released over 19,000 gallons of JP-5 jet fuel in November 2021, another leak of fire suppression system at the Red Hill complex spilled over 1,300 gallons of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) concentrate was released into the environment just a year later on November 29, 2022. Hawai'i's Congressional Delegation acted quickly to respond to the Comptroller General of the United States urging an immediate investigation into the procedures and practices utilized by the DOD and requested the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct an investigation and respond to their concerns.<sup>3</sup>

The GAO was asked to review the contracts related to Red Hill's operations and selected 16 contracts for review and conducted a site visit to Red Hill, met with DOD officials, contractors, and the local community.<sup>4</sup> In April 2024, the GAO issued a report on DOD's efforts to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.<sup>5</sup>

Both DOD, DOD Inspector General, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have since completed investigations of the November 2022 AFFF release and issued final reports. On April 10, 2024, EPA announced a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation establishing allowable levels of 4 parts per trillion for certain PFAS in drinking water (one part per trillion is equivalent to a single drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools). Prior to this, PFAS in drinking water were not regulated at the federal level. Ongoing efforts by the Navy and state Hawai'i officials must continue its investigation for ongoing monitoring and long-term cleanup of PFAS in the environment.<sup>6</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 103, SD 1.

Very truly yours,



*fw* ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.  
Manager and Chief Engineer



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<sup>3</sup> Letter from Hawai'i Congressional Delegation to the Honorable Gene Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States Government Accountability Office; dated December 19, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Red Hill Fuel Storage: DOD's Contract Approaches and Oversight before and after the 2021 Fuel Leaks. Government Accountability Office, **GAO-25-106572** Published: Nov 04, 2024. Publicly Released: Nov 04, 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. [GAO-24-106812](#) (Washington, D.C.: April 15, 2024).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

**SCR-103-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 7:18:40 PM

Testimony for EEP on 4/10/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition SUPPORTS this concurrent resolution!

We need to have more information on the environmental and health effects of PFAS to protect Hawaii's residents!



## **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**APRIL 10, 2025**

### **SCR 103, SD1, REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP TO INVESTIGATE THE EXISTENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CHEMICALS**

#### **POSITION: SUPPORT**

Coalition Earth supports SCR 103, SD1, which requests the Governor to convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, PFAS can be found in many places, including the following:

- Drinking water: in public drinking water systems and private drinking water wells;
- Soil and water at or near waste sites: landfills, disposal sites, and hazardous waste sites;
- Food: for example in fish caught from water contaminated by PFAS and dairy products from livestock exposed to PFAS;
- Food packaging: in grease-resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, and candy wrappers;
- Household products and dust: in stain and water-repellent used on carpets, upholstery, clothing, cleaning products; non-stick cookware; paints, varnishes, and sealants;
- Personal care products: in certain shampoo, dental floss, and cosmetics; and
- Biosolids: fertilizer from wastewater treatment plants that is used on agricultural lands can affect ground and surface water and animals that graze on the land.

At the same time, the EPA notes that current scientific research suggests that exposure to certain PFAS levels may lead to adverse health outcomes. Research is ongoing to determine how different levels of PFAS exposure can instigate a variety of health effects, especially in

children. According to the latest scientific and medical research, however, some of the potential harms produced by PFAS exposure may be:

- Reproductive effects, such as decreased fertility or increased high blood pressure;
- Developmental effects or delays in children, including low birth weight, accelerated puberty, bone variations, or behavioral changes;
- Increased risk of some cancers, including prostate, kidney, and testicular cancers;
- Reduced ability of the body's immune system to fight infections, including reduced vaccine response;
- Interference with the body's natural hormones; and
- Increased cholesterol levels and/or risk of obesity.

Studies of the harms caused by PFAS are continuing. Yet, research has clearly shown that PFAS carries unintended health risks, much like restricted use pesticides. Rather than waiting to protect public health, we should take action to regulate PFAS spread and contamination, and ensure that future generations are not sickened by forever chemicals.

*Coalition Earth is a nongovernmental organization that works to preserve the well-being of people and our planet. We champion policies that advance climate resilience, clean energy, public health, and economic fairness for working families. **Contact us at [info@coalitionearth.org](mailto:info@coalitionearth.org).***



# Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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April 9, 2025

**Testimony in Support of SCR103 SD1 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO CONVENE A TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP TO INVESTIGATE THE EXISTENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CHEMICALS**

**TO:** Chair Nicole E. Lowen, Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso, and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

**DATE:** Thursday, April 10, 2025 **TIME:** 9:00 a.m. **PLACE:** Conference Room 325 & Via Videoconference

**FROM:** Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

**Aloha** Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee,

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SCR103 SD1, which requests the Governor to convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other related chemicals.

PFAS, often referred to as "forever chemicals," are persistent pollutants that do not readily break down in the environment and bioaccumulate in living organisms. These chemicals pose severe risks to public health and the environment. Key arguments in support of SCR103 SD1 include:

- **Health Impacts:** PFAS exposure is linked to significant health risks, such as cancer, developmental delays, thyroid dysfunction, and immune system suppression.
- **Ecosystem Threats:** PFAS contamination compromises Hawai'i's unique ecosystems, affecting soil, water quality, and biodiversity.
- **Local Incidents:** Recent contamination events, including the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility spill, highlight the urgent need to address PFAS pollution.
- **Preventive Action:** Convening a working group allows experts and stakeholders to identify sources of contamination, assess environmental dangers, and propose solutions.
- **Environmental Justice:** Investigating PFAS aligns with the commitment to protecting public health and Hawai'i's natural resources for future generations.

This resolution serves as a critical step toward understanding and mitigating the risks associated with PFAS and other related chemicals. We respectfully urge the Committee to pass SCR103 SD1. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**Mahalo nui loa,**

Melodie Aduja and Alan Burdick

Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus Democratic Party of Hawai‘i

**SCR-103-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/7/2025 8:33:33 PM

Testimony for EEP on 4/10/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I strongly support SCR103 SD1 requesting the Governor convene a temporary working group to investigate the existence and environmental dangers of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other related chemicals. PFAS--forever chemicals linked to significant health risks, including but not limited to cancer, liver damage, developmental issues, weakened immune systems, and endocrine disruption--have already been detected in the Navy's water system and near military sites across Hawaii due to the military's criminal negligence.

To protect the health and safety of our communities, it is critical that we take steps toward assessing and then remediation of PFAS contamination throughout the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**SCR-103-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 1:52:13 AM

Testimony for EEP on 4/10/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eva Majerova	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this