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LATE

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
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Before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
AND
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2017
1:15 PM
Room 224, Hawaii State Capitol**

In consideration of
**HB 523
RELATING TO RECYCLING**

Honorable Chair Gabbard, Honorable Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Committee on Government Operations, thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on House Bill 523, relating to recycling.

The objective of HB 523 is to require all State agencies to reasonably provide and maintain onsite collection methods at buildings and facilities under an agency's jurisdiction for the collection of recyclable materials.

The implementation of this bill will be exceedingly difficult for the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) to execute, without the addition of significant resources. The HPHA manages over 6,000 housing units and provides oversight for an additional 3,000 Performance Based Contract Administration (PBCA) units. To manage a recyclable materials program on-site would require adequate and proper storage, as well as costly transfer and handling procedures. Multiple recyclable paper, plastic, and beverage containers would be necessary for every location due to the size of the properties and number of tenants. Additionally, new enclosures would need to be built for the additional separate waste under HUD rules, as well as to prevent individuals from raiding bins for materials.

With severe federal budget cuts being made to the federal public housing program, any additional costs would result in a reprioritization of existing maintenance expenses to cover a

new recycling program. In state public housing, pending sufficient funding, tenant rent increases would need to be considered, providing an additional burden to our most vulnerable citizens, or an increase in future appropriation requests to the legislature.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Government Operations with the HPHA's comments regarding HB 523. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I
MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. *Cherish the Earth.*

SENATE JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT AND
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Wednesday, March 22, 2017 1:15 PM Room 224

In SUPPORT HB 523 Relating to Recycling

LATE

Aloha Chairman Gabbard, Chairwoman Kim and members of the Joint Committee,

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly supports HB 523, which seeks to require state agencies to provide and maintain onsite recycling collection methods for plastics, paper, and beverage containers at all state buildings and facilities.

We have 20,000 members and supporters throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Since 1968, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i has been working to protect the unique natural and cultural resources of our islands. Thanks to our advocacy Hawai'i implemented the Bottle Bill in January 2005, and as a result recycling rates nearly doubled. Today, recycling rates remain well above 68% statewide.¹

Yet, significant challenges remain. Currently, about half of the state's recyclables end up in trash bins rather than recycling bins, which unnecessarily contributes extra waste to over-flowing landfills.² O'ahu alone currently produces 1.74 million tons of municipal solid waste (MSW) per year;³ meanwhile, the island's only MSW landfill, Waimanalo Gulch, lacks capacity to meet even a small fraction of the island's needs. Likewise, Kaua'i also face similar problems with its landfill, and attempts to create a new landfill are fraught with challenges for the local community.⁴

The Club supports HB 523 because recycling reduces waste, saves energy, conserves landfill space, and creates jobs in the waste management sector. A recent study estimates there are 3,000 full-time jobs in recycling. Not only are these jobs on the rise, they also appear to be recession-resistant. "[O]ne big benefit of the recycling programs is they encourage local

¹ Bottle Bill Resource Guide, <http://www.bottlebill.org/legislation/usa/hawaii.htm>

² *The Economics of Recycling in Hawaii*, Hawaii Business Magazine. August 2012.
<http://www.hawaiibusiness.com/the-economics-of-recycling-in-hawaii/>

³ *Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill Expansion Fact Sheet*, Department of Environmental Services.
http://www.opala.org/pdfs/solid_waste/WGSL_Factsheet.pdf

⁴ *Trash Problems Not Only Impacting Oahu*, Hawaii News Now.
<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/9077420/trash-problems-not-only-impacting-oahu>

economic development, create jobs, and recycle money in our community,” noted one report on the study.⁵

As an island community, Hawai‘i faces unique challenges in managing its waste. It is imperative that we adopt all reasonable measures to reduce the stream of waste into our landfills. Requiring that all state buildings and facilities make recycling bins available will help ease the burden on those landfills by reducing the amount of unnecessary waste entering those landfills.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Mahalo,

Marti Townsend
Director

⁵ *The Economics of Recycling in Hawaii*, Hawaii Business Magazine. August 2012.
<http://www.hawaiibusiness.com/the-economics-of-recycling-in-hawaii/>