



Feb. 28, 2022

In Support of **HB1806 HD1** Relating to Cesspool Conversion  
House Committee on Finance (FIN)  
Hearing on March 1, 12:30pm

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the non-profit WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, I am writing in **strong support of HB1806 HD1**. This bill would remove the limitation on specific types of wastewater systems to which cesspools must be upgraded or converted to and instead simply requires them to be upgraded to a wastewater system approved by the Department of Health.

Hawaii has more than 88,000 cesspools across the state, discharging 53 million gallons of raw sewage each day into Hawaii's waters. That's similar to a massive sewage spill every day. As a member of the Cesspool Conversion Working Group, I believe this bill provides needed flexibility for DOH's Wastewater Branch to update their rules to allow for innovative and efficient wastewater systems. This will help the state fulfill its mandate under Act 125 to convert all cesspools by 2050 and give homeowners better and often more affordable options.

WAI is a non-profit dedicated to protecting our drinking water, groundwater and near-shore ecosystems by reducing sewage pollution from cesspools and failing septic systems. Our goal is to help find more innovative, affordable, and eco-friendly solutions to wastewater management. Better sanitation systems reduce sewage pollution, protect public health and make properties more valuable, while also protecting our groundwater, streams, coral reefs and coastal areas.

Hawaii is struggling with serious sewage pollution problems, and we need to convert 88,000 cesspools in the next three decades. Previously, DOH required cesspools be converted only to septic systems or Aerobic Treatment Units (ATU's) without allowing for other more efficient and affordable technologies. Though septic systems offer more treatment of pathogens, they do not reduce nutrient pollution, and elevated nitrogen levels can lead to higher risks of cancer and threats to our coral reefs. ATU's offer nutrient reduction but require pumps, annual maintenance and increased utility costs to run properly. The good news is that new passive, nature-based systems also offer nutrient reduction but without pumps, maintenance or increased utility costs. This bill would allow for more innovative new treatment systems like these.

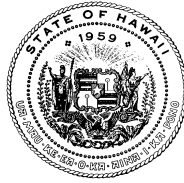
Based on successful bills in other states, this bill creates a practical and expedient way to convert cesspools by allowing for more efficient and affordable options. It will also help homeowners, the counties and the state meet the mandate to convert all cesspools by 2050. Mahalo for your leadership on this issue and consideration of this bill.

Aloha,

*Stuart Coleman*

Stuart H. Coleman, Executive Director

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1806 HD2  
RELATING TO CESSPOOL CONVERSION**

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: 3/23/2022

Room Number: 225/Videoconference

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) supports this measure. The
- 3 bill removes the limitation on specific types (septic and aerobic treatment unit systems) that may
- 4 be installed to replace cesspools. The Department agrees with the current language of this
- 5 measure that states all cesspools shall be upgraded or converted to a director-approved
- 6 wastewater system.
- 7 **Offered Amendments:** None.
- 8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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March 23, 2022

**The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair**

Senate Committee on Health

**The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair**

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Via Videoconference

**RE: H.B. 1806, HD2, Relating to Cesspool Conversion**

**HEARING: Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.**

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Joint Committees,

I am Ken Hiraki, Director of Government Affairs, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its over 11,000 members. HAR **opposes** House Bill 1806, HD2, which requires cesspools in the State to be upgraded or converted to a wastewater system approved by the Director of Health before January 1, 2050

HAR supports the goal of protecting Hawaii's drinking water, streams, ground water and ocean resources. However, Act 132, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2018, created a Cesspool Conversion Working group comprised of various government and industry partners, including Hawai'i REALTORS®. The work of the Working Group is not finalized and as such HAR believes that this measure is premature until a comprehensive plan is finalized to ensure no unintended consequences.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 9:30:56 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: The Honorable Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair, The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health, and

The Honorable Michael Gabbard, Chair, The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

RE: Hearing HB1806 HD2 RELATING TO CESSPOOL CONVERSION,

Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 1:00 pm

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Baker and Nishihara, and Members of the Committees:

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition is a group focused on protecting corals and other ocean species. **The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB1806 HD2!**

Hawaii has nearly eighty-eight thousand cesspools that release more than fifty million gallons of raw sewage into the State's groundwater and surface waters every day! Cesspools need to be phased out in order to protect Hawaii's drinking waters, surface water quality, and coral reefs and other aquatic life!

Although the State established a requirement for the upgrade, conversion, or connection of all cesspools in the State by 2050, **the mandate's language should be clarified, as this bill does, to ensure that cesspools are upgraded or converted to a Director of Health-approved wastewater system, rather than limiting the upgrades to current technologies of just septic systems or aerobic treatment units.**

**Please pass this bill!**

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)



**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:25:35 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mark Wolfendale	Testifying for Rotary Club Hanelie Bay	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Rotary Club of Hanalei Bay has actively supported all private and government actions designed to remove sewage from our rivers and bays. These waters are the primary recreation areas for both visitors and residents and should not be polluted by cesspools.

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 11:39:14 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruta Jordans	Testifying for Zero Waste Kauai	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree that there needs to be a date by which cesspool conversion must happen, but I do not understand why that date is 27 or 28 years from now. At least have a short term goal that 1/2 the cesspools would need to be converted by 2035. If not, what happens in 2049, when nothing has happened? Please include short term goals and how to achieve them.

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:49:58 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support



**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 1:31:11 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The problem is not the Cesspool the Problem is the County Wastwater System they are the Biggest polutors in Hawaii. They are also Ripping off the People with Hight Cost of the Conversion and montly payments. This all needs to be done away with. Suits are comeing!!

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 10:33:25 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roberts "Bob" Leinau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1806 will help resolve a very large cesspool problem in this state. This is a good suggestion to help accelerate EPA compliance.

Please help solve this problem.

Mahalo, Bob Leinau

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 6:10:08 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1806, as it expands the potential options for conversion of cesspits. There are many new systems that are potentially more environmentally friendly and less expensive than septic tanks or aerobic systems. The DOH should establish a program to vet these technologies and determine which ones are suitable for Hawaii.

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 6:32:33 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

My name is Maki Morinoue and I support HB1806.

Requiring cesspools in the State to be upgraded or converted to a wastewater system approved by the Director of Health before 1/1/2050

For me it doesn't come quick enough after many years of cesspool bills being killed and our coral reef dying...Honolulu is already at a gross rate of degradation.

Please pass this bill to stop the leakage as we experience a huge uptake in staph, e coli and other infectious diseases in our beach going experiences.

Amputation is a bit too common...along with psychosis due to heavy infection and high levels of anti viral and bacterial medication being administered. I know a few stories too many.

Mahalo

Maki Morinoue

Holualoa

96725

**LATE**

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/23/2022 3:14:15 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christina Comfort	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB1806. Cesspools cause extensive environmental and public health harm by releasing huge amounts of untreated wastewater directly into Hawaii's environment. The pollution harms coral reefs, makes drinking water unsafe for some Hawaii residents, and can lead to infections and disease when people swim and fish in polluted water. There is also a mandate to convert by 2050. However, the way the law is written now only allows upgrades to sewer, septic system, or aerobic treatment unit. This is limiting and can actually be counterproductive to the goals of reducing water pollution, since septic systems, the most common conversion option, actually do very little to reduce nutrient pollution into the environment. Excess nutrients are harmful to the nearshore marine environment, native limu, coral reef ecosystems, and honu. Instead, we should allow any department approved system to be used as a conversion, since many of these newer, innovative systems do a much better job at reducing pollution while not being as cost-prohibitive to install and maintain as an aerobic treatment unit. This change will give us more flexibility towards the goal of reducing water pollution and converting all cesspools by 2050. Mahalo for supporting HB1806.

Christina Comfort

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/23/2022 9:36:22 AM  
Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Manuel Mejia	Testifying for CORAL (Coral Reef Alliance)	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs and Vice-Chairs of HTH/AEN and WAM Committees,

Please support this critical bill to ensure clean waters for Hawaii's future by mandating cesspool conversions, especially in areas near ecologically sensitive areas. There are indeed many hurdles including financial ones and I applaud bold and creative solutions like this bill, which will go a long way towards enabling the cleaning up of our waters and will benefit both coral reef ecosystems and public health and overall well-being. Thank you for your leadership on this important ecological and public health matter.

Manuel Mejia

Regional Program Director, Hawaii

Coral Reef Alliance

**HB-1806-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/23/2022 9:31:03 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/23/2022 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Henry Deakos	Testifying for Hawaii Association for Marine Education and Research	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members,

Please support HB1806 HD2 to help reduce impacts from wastewater on our coastal shorelines and reef degradation.

Mahalo,

Mark Deakos, PhD

President/Chief Scientist

Lahaina, Hawaii