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In reply, please refer to:
File:

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

S.B. 2571, S.D. 1, RELATING TO FOOD WASTE RECYCLING

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health

March 11, 2008
9:00 A.M.

1 **Department's Position:** The department supports both the prevention of food waste and food waste
2 recycling, but respectfully opposes this measure as worded because of major resource limitations.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** Unspecified amount from the Environmental Management Special Fund. Use of
4 this fund will jeopardize the regulatory functions of the department's solid waste program.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** This bill requires the Department of Education, in partnership with the
6 Department of Health, to establish a three-year food waste recycling pilot project within one or more
7 public schools, to be paid through DOH's Environmental Management Special Fund (EMSF).

8 This bill proposes using the EMSF to fund the recycling program. Because of statutory
9 limitations on the different accounts within the fund, the funding would have to come from the account
10 that collects the solid waste disposal surcharge. This account currently receives about \$500,000 per year
11 for a program that requires about \$800,000 per year to fully meet obligations under HRS Chapters 342G,
12 342H and 342I. This account is also facing reduction in income due to plans by the City and County of
13 Honolulu and private operators to ship waste out of state for disposal. Together, these proposed
14 facilities have the potential to reduce funding by about \$200,000 per year. Any additional burden on
15 this fund account would essentially eliminate our solid waste regulatory and planning program.

1 We estimate that the cost of one vermi-composting pilot project (capital cost and three years of
2 operation) would be about \$100,000 assuming a waste generation rate of 100 pounds of food waste per
3 day and that the composting operation will be contracted out. If existing DOE staff operates the on-site
4 worm bins during the pilot project, the project cost would be about \$30,000. However, based on our
5 discussions with DOE, they do not have staff to segregate waste and operate the bin, and therefore the
6 estimated cost for a pilot project at one school would remain at \$100,000. The solid waste disposal
7 surcharge fund of the EMSF does not have this money available.

8 We request that for any appropriations, the Legislature support the priorities in the executive
9 supplemental budget proposal.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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