

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

S.B. 1143, RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
CONTROL

Testimony of Gary Gill
Acting Director of the Office of Environmental Quality Control

January 31, 2013
2:45 p.m.

- 1 **Office's Position:** The Office of Environmental Quality Control strongly supports S.B. 1143.
- 2 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill will generate additional funds to improve the State's efforts to
- 3 protect our fragile, beautiful environment, as mandated by Chapter 343, HRS.
- 4 **Purpose and Justification:** S.B. 1143 establishes fees to support OEQC's efforts to create and
- 5 maintain a much needed data-base to keep vital records of the environmental process with
- 6 respect to major land use projects and their environmental, social and economic impacts. The
- 7 fees will also support education outreach and training to State and County agencies, consultants,
- 8 stakeholders, and general public. Finally, the fees will allow OEQC to hire staff and conduct
- 9 environmental stewardship research. Additional staff will assist OEQC fulfill its statutory
- 10 functions which has been a challenge with existing resources and staff.
- 11 A working group of consultants, developers, and environmental groups, formed under the
- 12 auspices of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee on February 12, 2010, was
- 13 established to develop recommendations to improve Hawai'i's environmental review system,

1 specifically HRS Chapters 341 and 343. One of the recommendations of the working group is
2 the creation of the Environmental Review Special Fund to enhance the OEQC budget and
3 support office and Environmental Council activities.

4 **Relation to the New Day Plan:** This bill supports enhancement of the Environment and Natural
5 Resources.

6 **Relation to the Department of Health Strategic Plan:** This measure supports Clean and
7 Sustainable Environments; the goal is to create social and physical environments that promote
8 and support good health for all.

9 I strongly urge your committee to approve this measure.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.