

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of**  
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
**Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on**  
**WAYS AND MEANS**

**Wednesday, February 26, 2020**  
**1:40 P.M.**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

**In consideration of**  
**SENATE BILL 2548, SENATE DRAFT 1**  
**RELATING TO MARINE DEBRIS**

Senate Bill 2548, Senate Draft 1 proposes to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to implement a pilot project to encourage the collection of man-made marine debris, which would pay fifty cents per pound of eligible marine debris delivered to a marine debris collection center approved by the Department; appropriate \$200,000 in general funds to create the pilot project; and appropriate \$200,000 in general funds for the University of Hawaii water resources research center to research and develop specialized equipment to remove plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines. **The Department supports this measure and offers the following comments.**

For years, the Department has been removing larger types of marine debris from the State's shoreline and nearshore waters, including abandoned fishing nets, logs, and derelict vessels. Removal work is conducted or contracted by the Department's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation, and funding comes from the Boating Special Fund, which is comprised of user fee and lease rent revenues derived from state boating facilities. Many nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations also conduct their own volunteer beach cleanups, to great effect. This measure could complement existing efforts by creating a stronger incentive for members of the public to participate in marine debris removal.

The Department notes the following concerns with implementation of this measure and recommends the Committee address these concerns before moving this measure forward:

- Implementation of the pilot project would incur significant costs, such as providing the facility and equipment to receive, weigh, and store marine debris; payroll for workers staffing the collection center; and transportation and disposal costs. The only facility that

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

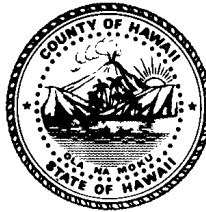
would accept the types of marine debris contemplated by this measure is the Honolulu Program of Waste Energy Recovery (H-POWER) facility on O‘ahu, operated by Hawaiian Electric Company, which burns waste to produce electricity. The H-POWER facility assesses a tipping fee for entry. These costs and fees would reduce the amount of funds available to be paid out for marine debris and may shorten the lifespan of the pilot project. Additionally, because of disposal limitations for Neighbor Islands, the current procedure for marine debris collected on Neighbor Islands is to send the debris to a landfill on the island where the debris was collected. The Department does not believe it will be economically feasible to transport marine debris collected on Neighbor Islands to O‘ahu for disposal at the H-POWER facility.

- There will be difficulty in accurately weighing collected debris, especially nets, to ensure that water weight is minimized. The weight of nets significantly increases when saturated with water and can take weeks or even months to de-water. There is also a concern that some individuals will attempt to defraud weighing stations to maximize their payout by taking advantage of saturated nets or otherwise increasing the weight of submitted marine debris.
- Microplastic marine debris is also a significant threat to the environment, and the Department does not have the funding, capacity, or capability to address this type of marine debris. A large portion of the waste collected during beach cleanups is microplastic and plastic byproducts, and funding constraints are commonly the most significant hindrance to cleanup efforts.
- The Department does not believe it is necessary to fund research and development for specialized equipment to remove plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines, even when the debris becomes microplastics as small or smaller than a grain of sand. The Department is already aware of technology invented to fulfill this need. A device like the Hoola One would take advantage of the natural buoyancy of many plastics to float them free from the sand in seawater, effectively separating them for disposal. This funding could instead be used to purchase and operate this specialized equipment.

The Department supports this pilot project as an opportunity to test the effectiveness of a marine debris reward program. As a more permanent solution, the Department believes a self-replenishing Marine Debris Abatement Fund or some type of recurring appropriation would greatly assist marine debris cleanup efforts. The funding would be administered by the Department, could include funding for a reward program such as proposed by this measure, and would be dedicated to providing funding to any state or county agency for marine cleanup efforts, including large debris, small debris, and vessels on state shores or in state waters. Allowing the Department to administer funds would ensure a central controlling entity for funding while also avoiding jurisdictional conflicts, as agencies would receive funding to handle cleanup efforts with their own staff and methods.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



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**LATE**

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

February 25, 2020

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON SB 2548 SD 1, RELATING TO MARINE DEBRIS

Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

1:40 p.m.

Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2548 SD 1, relating to marine debris. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair of the Hawai'i County Council Public Safety Committee.

The purpose of this measure is to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation to create a pilot program to further rid the ocean of marine debris. Marine debris, such as, discarded fishing gear, nets, lines, and ropes are often discarded in the ocean and causes not only pollution to the environment but causes drastic marine life harm. By creating a pilot program that encourages partnership with ocean crews aboard vessels would assist with the goal to clean up our environments to prevent harm not only to marine life, but to our people as well. Marine debris degrades our habitats and ecosystem services that we use and can directly interfere with navigation, impede commercial and recreational fishing, threatens health and safety, and reduces our tourism, as no one wants to view our beautiful beaches covered in washed ashore marine debris.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the Committee on Ways and Means to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Villegas", is written over a series of horizontal lines.

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

**SB-2548-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 11:16:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2020 1:40:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Climate Protector	Testifying for Climate Protectors Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

Decision making Hearing Wednesday February 26,2020 1:40 pm.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Climate Protectors Coalition **strongly supports SB2548 SD1!**

The Climate Protectors are a new group inspired by the Mauna Kea Protectors but focused on reversing the climate crisis. As a tropical island State, Hawaii will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, and rising sea levels.

We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and eliminate plastic debris, which is mostly made from petroleum, not only in our ocean but also washing up on our shorelines. Marine debris, especially tiny microplastics, is harming marine life including sea birds, turtles, and precious coral reefs, hurting our recreation and tourism, and even endangering human health with adhering persistent toxins that we contact on beaches and enter our marine food chain. We need to clean up these petroleum products that are fouling our beaches, harming our marine life, and threatening human health. Please pass this bill. Mahalo!



February 24, 2020

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair,  
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and Members of the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SB 2548, SD1– relating to marine debris**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 26, 2020, 1:40 p.m. Room 211

Position: **Strong Support**

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

The HAWAI'I REEF AND OCEAN COALITION – HIROC – was formed in 2017 by coral reef scientists, educators, local Hawaii environmental organizations, elected officials, and others to address a crisis facing Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean – namely, the pollution of our near-shore environment by sunscreens that are literally killing our marine life. We are currently asking the Legislature to pass a handful of very important bills to save our coral reefs – they are bills relating to sunscreens, plus bills on cesspools, plastic marine debris, the climate crisis and sea-level rise.

Coral reefs, seabirds, turtles and many other marine species are in crisis! They are suffering damage from marine debris, including plastics and the microplastics that result when plastics break down. Corals and many marine species also face assaults from rising ocean temperatures, increasingly acidic oceans, sewage and polluted runoff, sunscreens and depleted fish stocks. Coral bleaching and death are widespread. This is an existential problem for our State because reefs are critical in protecting Hawai'i beaches and shorelines.

Plastic marine debris is fouling our beaches, harming our recreation and tourism and even endangering human health with persistent toxins that stick to the plastics and travel up the food chain and onto our seafood plates! We need to eliminate petroleum-based plastics from our environment, along with other fossil fuel use that contributes to the climate crisis.

One way Hawaii can help the reefs and oceans be more healthy and beaches and shorelines be cleaner is to fund both the removal of marine debris and research and development

of specialized equipment to remove plastic marine debris from beaches. HIROC strongly supports this bill, which would appropriate the very modest sum of \$200,000 toward such clean-up. This bill is thus a first step toward protecting the coral reefs that protect our beaches, recreational economy and shorefront (including homes). Please pass this bill. Mahalo! Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Alan B. Burdick, for HIROC  
[Burdick808@gmail.com](mailto:Burdick808@gmail.com) 486-1018



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**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

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TO:

Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 26, 2020  
TIME: 1:40pm  
PLACE: Conference Room 211

RE: SB2548 SD1 Relating to Marine Debris

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

We support this effort to find ways to collect and recycle marine debris here in Hawaii. Studies have shown that the vast majority of marine debris originates from outside our state and is not from local sources<sup>1</sup>. This debris originates from all over the Pacific before being washed up on Hawaii beaches by ocean currents.

Last year HFIA partnered with several of our members and other groups to help introduce Seabin marine debris collection technology to our state. Many of our members are also involved in sponsoring and participating in beach cleanups to collect marine debris. A marine debris recycling pilot program is a thoughtful next step in tackling this global problem that winds up on our shores. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2019/10/12/hawaii-news/plastic-marine-debris-on-hawaiis-windward-coasts-comes-mostly-from-abroad-study-finds/>

# Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

P.O. Box 25284 · Honolulu · Hawai'i · 96825

(808) 393 2168 · [www.b-e-a-c-h.org](http://www.b-e-a-c-h.org)

**LATE**

DATE: Wednesday 26th February, 2020

TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Suzanne Frazer, President, Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i

RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2548 SD1** (with amendments)  
Relating to marine debris.  
Committee meeting on Wednesday 26th February, 2020 at 1:40PM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i (B.E.A.C.H.) is an all volunteer, non-profit organization that brings awareness and solutions to plastic marine debris. Marine debris is a threat to marine life, sea birds and the ocean/coastal environment through habitat destruction, entanglement and ingestion. It's imperative that the state takes action on plastic marine debris.

B.E.A.C.H. is appreciative of the amendment to the bill removing "recycling" and is in support of the SD1 version with the following amendments:

We agree with the testimony from the Department of Land and Natural Resources that the funds for developing specialized equipment would be best spent instead on **purchasing and operating already existing equipment** that removes plastic fragments from shorelines. There are two such pieces of equipment that we are aware of that are currently in use - one on Hawai'i Island and the other is on O'ahu. Please amend this bill to "purchase and operate" rather than funding research and development. In this way the funds can be used immediately for removal of plastic debris from shorelines.

In regards to providing funds to pay for collection of the debris, **this pilot program should be available to everyone** who collects marine debris whether on board a vessel or on a beach.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB2548 SD1.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Frazer.  
B.E.A.C.H. Co-Founder & President





**SB-2548-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 11:41:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2020 1:40:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Victoria Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Marine debris, especially tiny microplastics, is harming our precious marine, hurting our recreation and tourism, and endangering human health with adhering persistent toxins that enter our marine food chain. We need to clean up these petroleum products that are fouling our beaches and harming our marine life. Please pass this bill!

**SB-2548-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 6:52:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2020 1:40:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Nandoskar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2548-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 10:25:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2020 1:40:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Plastic marine debris is fouling our beaches and killing marine life, including coral reefs that are crucial in protecting our shorelines, beaches, and recreational and tourist-based economy! The small amount of funding under this bill (\$400,000 total) will be repaid many times over in benefits to the people and marine life in Hawaii. Please pass this bill. Mahalo!

**SB-2548-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2020 9:21:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2020 1:40:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Severine Busquet	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means:**

**We must do all we can to eliminate plastic debris, which is mostly made from petroleum, not only in our ocean but also washing up on our shorelines. Marine debris, especially tiny microplastics, is harming marine life including sea birds, turtles, and precious coral reefs, hurting our recreation and tourism, and even endangering human health with adhering persistent toxins that enter our marine food chain.**

**I clean up beaches where I go and have tried to pick up microplastics. There is a huge amount of them on our beautiful hawaiian beaches and it is very difficult to collect microplastics. Appropriate funds is needed to solve this matter.**

**For these reasons, I strongly support SB2548 SD1.**

**Thanks for your attention**

**Severine Busquet**

**Hawaii Kai, Honolulu**