

JAN 23 2020

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that plastic marine
2 debris is fouling Hawaii's iconic beaches and the ocean, harming
3 recreation and the State's largest industry: tourism. Most of
4 this debris comes not from Hawaii, but from around the world,
5 transported by ocean currents and accumulated in the State from
6 the North Pacific Gyre, also known as the Great Pacific Garbage
7 Patch. Plastic marine debris is essentially indestructible. It
8 does not go away over time but breaks down into smaller and
9 smaller fragments, especially on beaches where it is exposed to
10 sunlight and wave action. Both larger and smaller pieces of
11 plastic marine debris have significant negative impacts on the
12 environment and contribute to the potential death of marine
13 animals and bird populations through ingestion. The smaller
14 fragments, referred to as microplastics (less than five
15 millimeters, or about the size of a sesame seed and smaller),
16 are much more difficult to remove. Therefore, it is important,



1 where feasible, to remove plastic marine debris before it breaks
2 down into smaller fragments.

3 Harmful substances attached to plastic marine debris pose a
4 risk to the marine environment and humans. Persistent
5 bioaccumulative and toxic ("PBT") chemicals or substances resist
6 degradation and are biomagnified up the food web, leading to
7 toxic effects. This poisonous plastic food chain impacts many
8 ocean species, including birds, whales, turtles, seals, corals,
9 small organisms, the fish that form the foundation of the local
10 fishing industry, and potentially even humans that eat fish. It
11 is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish
12 by weight in the world's oceans.

13 The legislature further finds that plastic marine debris is
14 creating unsanitary conditions and public nuisances and that
15 removal of plastic marine debris from beaches is critical to
16 Hawaii's economy and environment. However, the legislature
17 finds that removal of plastic marine debris has been hampered by
18 disagreement over which agencies have responsibility and
19 jurisdiction. Whichever agencies or groups remove the plastic
20 marine debris, specialized equipment will be needed to remove
21 the debris effectively and efficiently from beaches and



1 shorelines. Funding is needed for research and development of
2 equipment that can most effectively and efficiently remove the
3 debris.

4 The purpose of this Act is to enhance Hawaii's environment
5 and economy by appropriating funds for the University of Hawaii
6 water resources research center to research and develop
7 specialized equipment for effectively and efficiently removing
8 plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines. For purposes
9 of this Act, "plastic marine debris" means any discarded or
10 abandoned plastic found on any shore, beach, or any beach
11 right-of-way.

12 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
15 the University of Hawaii water resources research center to
16 research and develop specialized equipment for effectively and
17 efficiently removing plastic marine debris from beaches and
18 shorelines. The University of Hawaii water resources research
19 center may contract with other entities as needed.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
21 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.



S.B. NO. 3125

1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.

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S.B. NO. 3125

Report Title:

Plastic Marine Debris; University of Hawaii; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for research and development of specialized equipment for effectively and efficiently removing plastic marine debris from beaches and shorelines.

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